

**DEC
2021**

Parish Notes

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Concord



Making History & Making Friends



Fellowship on Sunday Mornings

The name tag rack is now located in the rear of the sanctuary for easy access no matter which entrance you use. After the service, please keep your name tag on for social time. Then, drop it in one of three baskets conveniently located: 1) outside the front Sanctuary entrance, 2) in Fellowship Hall, or 3) inside the east entrance. Someone will return them to the rack before next Sunday.

Until COVID subsides, we won't be offering refreshments during social time. If you tend to be parched after the worship service, please bring along a beverage to enjoy outdoors.



Winter Weather Plans

Sunday Mornings

Because we live stream our worship service, we plan to offer worship service every Sunday, regardless of what Mother Nature sends our way. If a serious storm is expected to create dangerous road conditions on a Sunday morning, we encourage you to watch our livestream. The Sanctuary will be open for Michael or Lyn to broadcast the live stream and you are welcome to join them if you feel safe going out. Support staff and volunteers are not expected to attend if they don't feel safe doing so.

In the unlikely event we must cancel (such as in case of power outage) it would be announced as follows:

1. notice on our website www.concorduu.org
2. an email will be sent to our eBulletin mailing list
3. on the church's Facebook page [Unitarian Universalist Church of Concord (NH)]
4. WMUR-TV Channel 9, cancellations are posted on a crawl at the bottom of the screen – we will be listed as “Unitarian Universalist Church of Concord”

For events other than Sundays

Group leaders are responsible to decide whether to cancel their group and should let their group members know. The church parking lot is regularly plowed until 10pm; but walkways may or may not be shoveled/sanded when you arrive. Shovels and sand buckets are provided at the entrances. Group leaders should email lea@concorduu.org if you are cancelling so office staff can help keep folks informed of your cancellation via our church calendar and Facebook. (We do not use WMUR except on Sundays.)

Cover photo by those attending Church Thanksgiving Dinners in member's homes.



Minister's Musings

Opening to Joy

Our theme for exploration this month is “Opening to Joy.” December is the month where we are most likely to feel pressure to be cheerful, to smile for the camera, go to parties, decorate, give gifts... but we can go through those motions without experiencing any joy at all. If we are depressed, grieving, stressed by work or relationships or finances, we can easily feel out of sync with the world we think everyone else is living in - full of sugar plums and good will. How might we open to joy, a deeper joy that can quietly sit next to sorrow without making us feel worse?

I encourage you to pay attention to the ordinary things that make you smile inwardly. It might be the warmth of a radiator in a chilly room, the smell of wood smoke in the evening air, the texture of clouds in a wintry gray sky, the voice of a dear friend, the taste of your morning oatmeal... When we take the moment to notice the gifts that come free with being alive, to savor them and be grateful, we are opening ourselves to joy without demanding that we set aside the aches and pain that also come with having a human life.

I have pretty much stopped sending holiday cards, I do very little purchasing of gifts, and I feel more joy each year as we gather in community to light candles, to sing, and to wonder at how one life can make a difference. May you find ways to open yourself to joy this month, and to talk with others about their joy and yours.

Lyn

Lyn Marshall is the Minister of Lifespan Faith Development



December Worship Services | Theme: Opening to Joy

Live stream our worship services at concorduu.org/live

12/5/2021 “Opening to Joy” Rev. Michael Leuchtenberger

“Joy is a way of approaching the world.” says Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his dialog with the Dalai Lama. Joy is a way of being, not a temporary feeling. Joy can become tangible and real even in times of struggle, anxiety, and despair. What are the pre-conditions of joy? How do we create space to embody joy? How do we allow for the joy within us to appear? How do we open to joy right now, right here? There might be drums, there might be silliness, and it might involve you (if you can balance an imaginary ball).

Our First Sunday drop-in covenant group will focus on our monthly theme of “Opening to Joy.” All are invited to participate. Revs. Lyn Marshall & Michael Leuchtenberger will facilitate on Zoom and in person.

12/12/2021 “Sharing Joy” Rev. Lyn Marshall

There is a proverb, “Joy shared is joy doubled; sorrow shared is sorrow halved.” While the recipe’s ratios might need some adjustment for individual situations, it feels emotionally true that joy increases when it is shared, and sorrow is easier to bear if we don’t feel we are alone. We practice this each week when we share Joys & Sorrows during the service - how else do we cultivate and share joy with one another and with the community around us?

We will be welcoming our new members at this service - a shared joy indeed!

12/12/2021 Taizé Service (please see page 10 or for more information [visit concorduu.org/worship/taize-services/](https://concorduu.org/worship/taize-services/).)

12/19/2021 “The Joy of Simplicity” Rev. Michael Leuchtenberger

‘Tis a gift to be simple. So true. So often ignored. It is a gift because simplicity opens space in the webs of our inner and outer worlds. Space for wonder, for pleasure, for amusement, for contentment, for relief, for gratitude and all the other feelings that make up the emotional expanse of joy. Slowing down - our pace, our consumption, our output - helps create the space and fuel needed for joy to be felt, and for joy to be sustained as a way of being.

12/21/2021 “Yule” (please see page 6 and for more information visit concorduu.org/worship/ecsg)

Christmas Eve Services please see next page for all the details! 

12/26/2021 “The Joy of Singing” Rev. Lyn Marshall

It has become a tradition for us to share stories of the hymns that touch us deeply. If there is a hymn that is especially meaningful to you that you would like to share with the congregation, please be in touch with Lyn. Everyone will have the opportunity to request the hymns that bring you joy, and we will sing some of the favorites together. If you are concerned about singing in person (with masks, vaccines for all eligible, and distancing required!) please join the live stream so you can sing your heart out with maximum safety.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

We are pleased to bring back our beloved Christmas Eve services this year – both in-person and live streamed. To ensure everyone's safety, capacity will be limited to 50 people per service in the Sanctuary.



Our services are:

4:30 pm “Christmas Eve Carols, Candles & Stories” Revs. Michael Leuchtenberger & Lyn Marshall

A service for all ages full of tradition, music, candle lighting, and a pageant with in-person and pre-recorded appearances of animals, angels, kings and more. If your kids would like to participate, please let Lyn know at Lyn@ConcordUU.org.

This service requires pre-registration. Please register at rsvp.church/r/uK5HvmAL. If all 50 slots for the 4:30 pm service are reserved, we may add a 6:00 pm service, which will be a repeat of the 4:30 pm service.



9:00 pm “Christmas Eve Music & Reflection” Revs. Michael Leuchtenberger & Lyn Marshall

A contemplative service of music, readings, carols and reflections. May peace come to our hearts and the world. This service does not require pre-registration; however, if capacity is reached, overflow seating will be offered in Fellowship Hall to watch the live stream.

If you prefer or need to celebrate from a distance, you'll be happy to learn that these services will also be live streamed!

We will also need volunteers to help make these services extra special; as a bonus, volunteers get first dibs at registration! If you'd like to help as an usher/greeter or with lighting, please visit uuconcordnh.breeze-chms.com/form/deaa49

Please note that we are maintaining our safety guidelines for all holiday worship services. Masks are to be worn throughout the service, either a N95- or KN95-style mask or a disposable/surgical mask with a well-fitting cloth mask over it. Masks are provided at the church if you forget to bring yours. Further, all those 16+ must be fully vaccinated. Kids age 5 to 15 must have received their first dose. Starting January 16, we'll ask that all kids be fully vaccinated as well (meaning two doses).

Whether it be in-person or online, we can't wait to celebrate this special time with you!

We are not offering a Christmas Eve dinner, but we don't want anyone to be alone on this special night. If you live alone and would appreciate being invited to the home of another family to join them for their Christmas Eve meal, please email lea@concorduu.org.



Yule/Winter Solstice Ritual Has Returned

Tuesday, Dec. 21 @ 7 pm

Our annual tradition has returned! The annual Winter Solstice service at the Concord UU!

We'll have music, candles, songs and the enchanting Stag Dance!

We invite all of our friends, old and new, to join us for a night of spirit and celebration. We will share the story of the fading and return of the light. There will be music and meditation with an opportunity to reflect on the year ending and the promise of the new year. There will be dancing, both the stag dance and a closing dance with song and merriment for everyone who attends. The ECSG looks forward to seeing you all.

And please pray/spell/wish for clear weather so we can make the final offering in the grove immediately following the service.

More to come in the eBulletin

We're working in accordance with church safety protocols to help keep all participants safe.

In alignment with these efforts we're limiting the number of people attending inside the church sanctuary to 50 participants. Currently there is no sign up required.

Participation is first come first seated with overflow folk welcome to join via live stream in the the church fellowship hall. People may also choose to join the live stream from home at www.concorduu.org/live/.

Vaccination is required (if eligible) to attend in person (ages 16+ must be fully vaccinated. Ages 5 to 15 must have had their first dose.) Those attending in person will need to wear a mask (N95, KN95, or surgical/disposable with a well-fitting cloth mask over it) for the duration of the service, maintain social distance and be prepared to enjoy!

Grounds Gratitude . . .

to: LeRoy Anderson, Bob Lyon, Belinda Nerl and Fran Philippe

for: participating in our Fall Family Grounds Clean-up



Our Whole Lives Human Sexuality Program for Grades 7-9

Required Parent Information Session Sunday, December 19, 2021

Although the pandemic cancelled Our Whole Lives (OWL) last year, we're back, and excited to be offering this comprehensive human sexuality program for our 7-9th graders this winter and spring. There will be a required

Parent Information Session on Sunday, December 19, 2021 from 4:00-5:00 pm where our facilitators, Intern Minister Jeff Beland, Karen Cox, and Rev. Lyn Marshall will give an overview of the topics covered and answer your questions. Permission slips will be available for parents at this session, which will be offered both in person and on Zoom.

Classes will begin on Sunday, January 2, 2021 and will run weekly from **4:00-7:30 pm**, with a **dinner break from 5:30-6:00** between sessions. Parents will be asked to sign up to provide meals. There will also be optional (but recommended!) parent sessions every other week led by experienced OWL Facilitator Alison Stuart, so that parents have an opportunity to learn along with your youth to support you in having open conversations as you share your values about relationships and sexuality with them.

Please go to (<https://uuconcordnh.breezechms.com/form/14e63573>) to sign up for the parent information session on December 19, 2021. You may share this information with parents outside the congregation who you think might be interested; it helps motivate kids to attend if they have a friend coming with them!

New Soul Matters Circle forming in January!

Our congregation has had a robust small group ministry program through our Covenant Groups for many years. Last year, we piloted a new small group ministry program offered by Soul Matters, in which participants receive a packet of spiritual exercises, deepening questions, and resources for exploring our monthly themes individually before coming together to share those experiences as a group. The participants in that group agreed it was a program worth offering to more people, and we will be forming a second Soul Matters Circle that meets on **3rd Saturdays from 1:00-3:00 pm**. If you would like to join this group, please register by going to <https://uuconcordnh.breezechms.com/form/26353d65460>

"The Messenger" by Sue Posluszny
Mixed media. Tissue paper, acrylic paint and acrylic marker, stamping, spray paint/stencil. The raven is white acrylic paint/marker on black tissue paper.



December BIRTHDAY WISHES

Happy birthday to our Members, Friends, and their children, for whom we have birthdays in our church records. If you want to be included on future birthday lists, enter your birthday in your Breeze profile or email it to heidi@concorduu.org.

- 1 Molly Dunham
- 3 Teresa Lacey
- 5 Patty Bass
- 6 Noah Devlin
- 8 Andrew Clough
- 9 Everett Olsen
- 10 Paula Van de Werken
- 17 CJ Donachie
- 17 Reese Donachie
- 19 Angus Fredenburg
- 20 Katelynn Ahern
- 20 Jenna Bourassa
- 25 Cathy Menard
- 26 Helga Barnard
- 30 Matthew Downie

Soul Matters Themes Coming Up

Dec | Opening to Joy

Jan | Living with Intention

Feb | Widening the Circle

Mar | Renewing Faith

Apr | Awakening

May | Nurturing Beauty

June | Celebrating Blessings



Families & Friends Ministry Meet-Up Opening to Joy

Sunday, December 5, 2021 from 2:00- 3:00 pm

Families and friends are invited for activities related to our December theme of Opening to Joy. There will be take-home activities for children and packets for parents/guardians to explore the theme of Opening to Joy in daily family life throughout the month. Join Minister of Lifespan Faith Development Lyn Marshall for fun and connection with other families. (Although you do not have to have kids to join us - All are welcome!)

Images from past walks/ hikes, and history tour.



Chocolates Outdoors & Games Indoors

Friday, Dec 3, 2021 6:30-8:30 pm

Front Courtyard & Fellowship Hall

Bring a favorite game to share or play one from the church collection as we gather for games (in Fellowship Hall) and chocolate (outdoors) from 6:30-8:30 pm on the first Friday of each month. Masks required indoors.



Exploring Membership Group

If you've been attending in-person or via live stream for a couple of months (or a couple of years!) you might be ready to connect more deeply with the church. Consider joining our next Exploring Membership Group to meet some other newcomers, to learn more about the church, and to consider whether becoming a Member is the right next step for you.

The group meets four times: **Jan. 16, Jan 23, Feb. 13, and March 27.** Attending all four sessions is required if you'd like to be part of our **New Member Covenanting on April 3.**

To get more info or sign up for the group, email membership@concorduu.org.

Taizé Service

Second Sundays @ 7 pm

(October to April)

Unitarian Universalist Church

274 Pleasant St, Concord, NH
(603) 224-0291 • www.concorduu.org

Live Streaming and In Person



Join us for an hour of

Meditative Singing

with instruments,
a brief reading, silence, and candlelight.

"A time of beauty and peace for body & spirit."

A contemplative and spiritual experience
for people of any faith tradition or none. All are welcome!



Please hold the date...

Eighth Annual Mindfulness Meditation Retreat

Friday, March 25 - Sunday, March 27, 2022

...details to follow.



2022

New Years Day Games & Chocolate

Saturday, January 1 from 1 - 3 pm

Gather in Fellowship Hall for our now-traditional New Year's Day Games (& Outdoor Chocolate) on Saturday, January 1, 2022 from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. We have lots of games, or bring a game you want to play, and we will have hot cocoa for outdoor sipping. Children over 5 should have at least one vaccination. Masks required for all over 2 years.

New Years Annual Silent Retreat

Saturday, January 8 from 9 am - 4 pm

Start your 2022 off with a day of contemplation at the UU Church's Annual Silent Retreat.

Questions? Email co-facilitators betsy.black333@gmail.com or kgillis@live.com.

Men's Covenant Group to Launch in January

The first meeting of the new UU Men's Covenant Group takes place on **Tuesday, January 11, beginning at 7:00 PM, on Zoom.**

Many UU churches have men's groups that share a common thread that will also be the foundation for UU Church of Concord: to welcome everyone who identifies as male, of any age, to share mutual support and discuss our lives, our triumphs, and our struggles.

Meeting format

Chalice lighting and moment to settle in

A short reading to help "ground" the group

Discussion of a specific topic or question (sent in advance)

Voluntary open sharing about our lives (challenges, struggles, victories, etc.) – supporting one another

Closing

In addition to being a special opportunity for men of the church to come together, during each meeting we will discuss a meaningful issue or question that relates to ourselves as men as well as UUs. Here is the discussion topic for January's meeting:

"What was the model of masculinity you grew up with, and how did you receive messages about the attitudes, values, behaviors, and roles that are expected of a man? Who were the key people, entities, etc. who modeled and communicated that model and those messages? How did that model affect your relationships? How, if at all, has your model of masculinity changed over the years, and what have been the consequences of that change?"

Other topics we'll cover in future meetings address men and --

Identity	Partnership
Purpose	Faith
Occupation	Health
Service	Recreation

The January and February meetings are a chance to "check out" the UU Men's Covenant Group, to see what it will be like to participate in a men's group. Following the February meeting, those interested in continuing will be asked to sign up. The January 11, February 8, and March 8 meetings will take place via Zoom. We'll determine the location for meetings on April 12, May 10, and June 14 as the dates draw closer. We expect that the group will not meet during July and August and will reboot in September.

Interested?

To attend the first "no obligation" meeting of the Men's Covenant Group on January 11, at 7:00 PM please fill out this [form https://uuconcordnh.breezechms.com/form/f7f63d](https://uuconcordnh.breezechms.com/form/f7f63d) to receive the ZOOM link.

Used Clothing Drop-Off Shed | Spread the Word to Your Friends

Located in our parking lot near the East Entrance

Why donate? Reduce waste in landfills, Clothing is used at disaster sites throughout the US and worldwide, If our refugee families or local homeless shelter needs clothing we can provide it to them.

Only Items Accepted: All clothing, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, blankets, towels, sheets, pillowcases, curtains, and stuffed toys. Your donations will be redistributed as whole garments.

More Information please contact Craig Whitson for more information at Office@ConcordUU.org

If you are reading a print copy and need a link to an event, our Parish Notes is also online at concorduu.org/pn or you can contact us by email at Office@ConcordUU.org and we can send it to you.

UU Ministry for Earth Climate Crisis: Act Now December 7, at 7:00 pm ET

Join UU Ministry for Earth as we partner with several UU leaders in New York for "[Climate Crisis: Act Now](#)," a special panel discussion on faith leadership in a post COP26 world.



UUSC's virtual Human Rights Leadership Celebration

Thursday, December 9, at 7:00 pm ET

The evening's keynote presentation will be presented by [Isabel Wilkerson](#), winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Humanities Medal, and author of the critically acclaimed, New York Times bestsellers *The Warmth of Other Suns* and *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*.

The event is open to all and free to attend - we invite you to share this invitation with friends, family, and fellow congregants! If you are able to join, [please register in advance](#). While donations are not required to attend, they hope you will also consider making a special gift in support of UUSC's critical work.

You can also be a part of this special evening by sharing a photograph illustrating why human rights are important to you. [Visit this page for more details](#).



Ending Homelessness is Possible December 20 at 7:00 pm ET

NH Peace Action has been hosting a Zoom-based Peace and Justice series of conversations every other Monday evening from 7 to 8 PM. The topic on December 20 is: Ending Homelessness is Possible, with Ellen Groh, CCEH ED, as the speaker. This is a great opportunity to learn about what is being done nationwide, statewide, and in Concord.

For the past 20 months NH Peace Action has been hosting a Zoom-based Peace and Justice series of conversations every other Monday evening from 7 to 8 PM.

Each program features an issue that needs to be addressed in our community, and the speakers are each deeply knowledgeable about the issue they are addressing. They are given about 35 minutes to present the issue, how it is or isn't being addressed currently, and what needs to be done. That is followed by about 10 minutes of moderated Q and A. There's no charge to attend and groups have varied in size from 10 to 70 attendees.

TO ATTEND RSVP [HERE](#) FOR A LINK TO THE PROGRAM



DECEMBER Special & Ongoing Events

Please see our calendar online for the most up-to-date listing of meetings, events, and happening:
Be sure to check out our NEW website calendar by [clicking here at concorduu.org/calendar!](https://concorduu.org/calendar/)

Links are available through private emails, through eBulletin, and Parish Notes.

NOTE: the office will be closed from Monday, December 27, 2021 thru Saturday, January 1, 2022

Fri, Dec 3 @ 6:30 pm | Games (inside) & Chocolates (outside) | Fellowship Hall & Front Courtyard

Sun, Dec 5 @ 2 pm | Family & Friends "Opening to Joy"

Sun, Dec 12 - Sun, Dec 19 | Family Promise

Sun, Dec 12 @ 7 pm | Taizé Service | Sanctuary & Live Streaming

Sun, Dec 19 @ 4 pm | OWL (Our Whole Lives Human Sexuality Program) Mandatory Parent Mtg

Tues, Dec 21 @ 7 pm | Winter Solstice\Yule Ritual

Fri, Dec 24 @ 4:30 pm | "Christmas Eve Carols, Candles & Stories"

Fri, Dec 24 @ 9 pm | "Christmas Eve Music & Reflection"

Sat, Jan 1 @ 1-3 pm | New Years Games & Chocolates

ONGOING EVENTS

Mondays @ 6 pm | Kripalu Yoga | Meditation | YogaMeds | **NOTE: Zoom**

Mondays @ 6 pm | LGBTQ+ AA mtg Come As You Are*

1st Tuesdays @ 7 pm | UU Friends of Refugees (UUFOR) Committee Mtg | **NOTE: Zoom**

2nd Tuesdays @ 1 pm | Chronic Pain Support Group* | **NOTE: Online**

1st Wednesdays @ 3 pm | Friendly Kitchen Prep & Serve Day

1st Thursdays @ 7 pm | Showing Up for Racial Justice | **NOTE: Online***

Fridays @ 7 pm | Youth Group

3rd Fridays @ 4 pm | Insight Meditation Sangha | **NOTE: Zoom**

2nd Saturdays @ 4 pm | Renaissance New England* | **NOTE: Fellowship Hall**

Sundays @ 5 pm | Augustine Fellowship*

4th Sundays @ 7 pm | Caring for Aging Loved Ones | **NOTE: Zoom**

*Support or special interest groups that meet at the UU, Zoom, or hybrid during COVID and who are not affiliated with the church, but open to anyone interested in attending.



Office Hours

**NOTE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED:
Monday, Dec. 27- Saturday, Jan. 1**

**Regular Hours (Sept-Mid June)
Tues, Weds, Thurs, and Fri. | 10 am - 3 pm**

Interfaith Holidays/Rituals

- [Click on each to learn more about:](#)
- [Advent \(Christian\) Nov. 28 -Dec. 24, 2021](#)
 - [Bodhi Day \(Buddha's Enlightenment\) - Dec. 8](#)
 - [Chalica \(UU\) Dec. 3 - Dec. 9](#)
 - [Hanukkah \(Jewish\) - Nov. 28 -Dec. 6, 2021](#)
 - [Yule, Solstice \(Pagan/Wiccan\) - Dec. 21](#)
 - [Christmas Eve - Dec. 24, 2021 \(Friday\)](#)
 - [Christmas Day - Dec. 25, 2021 \(Saturday\)](#)
 - [Holy Innocents Day \(Christian\) - Dec. 28](#)
 - [Watch Night/Freedom's Eve \(Christian\) - Dec. 31](#)
 - [Kwanzaa - Dec. 26 - Jan. 1](#)

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- Custodian of Trust Funds** | Jack Wakelin
- Assistant Treasurer** | Lorraine Ellis
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

A photograph showing the silhouettes of a boy and a girl holding hands against a sunset sky. The boy is on the left, with his right arm raised high. The girl is on the right, with her left arm extended. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and long shadows. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The foreground shows the dark silhouettes of grass and small plants.

What brings you joy?