

UUMH Newsletter


236 Commercial St. Provincetown MA

November 2023



“The members of the UU Meeting House hold sacred each individual’s spiritual and ethical development. We welcome all and seek unity in diversity. We commit ourselves in service to the wellbeing of the congregation and to all of life.”

~Mission Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House of Provincetown



“Blessed be you, universal matter, immeasurable time, boundless ether, triple abyss of stars and atoms and generations: you who by overflowing and dissolving our narrow standards of measurement reveal to us the dimensions of God.”
— Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Hymn of the Universe



Listening to the radio while driving the other day, I heard an interview which mentioned the fact there are trillions of planets in our galaxy.

TRILLIONS OF PLANETS. IN OUR GALAXY.

I probably have heard that before, but something in that moment clicked, popped, in my brain and I almost shut my eyes and shook my head except I was driving on Route 6 and that would not have been a good idea. The voice on the radio repeated: there are trillions of planets in our galaxy AND there are billions of galaxies in our universe.

BILLIONS OF GALAXIES . . .
IN OUR
UNIVERSE.

I am attempting here to express the magnitude of my reaction in that moment by putting words in CAPITAL LETTERS, increasing the font size, applying the color red, and by repetition of the statements.

But all the graphics and typography tricks don't come close to expressing what I experienced.

My thought upon coming back to the here and now was: what does this awareness do to my idea of God? of eternity? of the meaning of life? the meaning of my life?

Okay, THEN I thought about how many trillions of cells and atoms and *what all* are within my own, single, personal human body. A universe of them.

Let's think about all this.

Kathleen Henry, Editor

Worship Worship Worship
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November



Sunday, November 5
(daylight savings)
We Remember Them
Rev. Kate Wilkinson

Tying in the traditions of All Souls Day we will have a service dedicated to remembering people who have died. People will be invited to place a framed photograph of a loved one on our altar.

Sunday, November 12:
"The Things They Carried"
Rev. Kate Wilkinson

A service for Veteran's Day, drawing on Tim O'Brien's book *The Things They Carried*

Sunday, November 19:
Thanksgiving Sunday
"Oh We Give Thanks"
Rev. Kate Wilkinson

Sunday, November 26:
Kenneth Sutton preaching

LIVE!
and
On-line
Sundays
11 am
We live-stream
via YouTube.
Join in at 11 am
www.uumh.org
Click on Sermons

"Not only are we in the Universe, the Universe is in us. I don't know of any deeper spiritual feeling than what that brings upon me."
— Neil deGrasse Tyson

A note from Rev. Kate
A note from Rev. Kate
A note from Rev. Kate

The Peace of Wild Things



Sometimes when my heart is heavy,
I look to nature for comfort.
A walk in the woods.
Some time in my vegetable garden.
Finding my way to
an abandoned cranberry bog
to collect the
tart, red berries
for Thanksgiving.

My heart has been very heavy these days, as the news reminds me of the violence erupting around the world. I'm also watching communities around me tear apart as people struggle to express their feelings about what is happening in Israel and Gaza. In addition to the pain and suffering happening in the Middle East, feelings are hurt here as ancient wounds are re-opened and complex politics play out in individual relationships.

I fear things will get much worse before they get better.

I am trying to educate myself about the history of Israel and Palestine. It seems like the least I can do. I speak carefully these days. Try to listen more. Make space. Remember that there are not just two sides but rather millions of people involved in this. And each one of those people has a story, a history, a connection to the land, to their ancestors.

When I am overwhelmed I return to nature to hold me for a little while.

I love that Wendell Berry poem...

**When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.**

We cannot ignore the world. We cannot bundle up our pain and ship it off. And we must not ignore the voices calling for our help or our understanding.

And yet if we do not know peace ourselves how can we pray for it for others? So I allow myself these moments of peace to re-ground me. I allow nature to remind me what peace feels like. I allow it to tenderize me so that my heart re-opens when it wants to close, harden, protect itself.

Sometimes we feel guilty experiencing peace when others are suffering so immediately. But seeking peace in our lives is one of the ways in which we grow peace in the world. And it's one of the ways we ready ourselves to be helpers when the need arises.

If you are struggling with a heavy heart because of what's happening in the world, I invite you to come and talk to me. Talk to each other. I remind you of the soothing balm of nature. And I wish you moments of peace.

Rev. Kate



“The universe is my country
and the human family is my
tribe.”
Kahlil Gibran



“Our world hangs like a magnificent jewel in the vastness of space. Every one of us is a part of that jewel. A facet of that jewel. And in the perspective of infinity, our differences are infinitesimal.”

— Fred Rogers

“There are as many atoms in a single molecule of your DNA as there are stars in the typical galaxy. We are, each of us, a little universe.” — Neil deGrasse Tyson



“There are about 100 trillion cells that make up the human body.”

--Mark Atkinson

“You are not IN the universe, you ARE the universe, an intrinsic part of it. Ultimately, you are not a person, but a focal point where the universe is becoming conscious of itself. What an amazing miracle.” — Eckhart Tolle

From the Board
From the Board
From the Board



Our Annual Meeting will be on December 3, at 2 PM on Zoom.

The Annual Meeting is a forum in which we can celebrate our accomplishments and make plans for our future. Your participation is so important to these plans. We need a quorum, at least, of the members to make our votes legal--so please join with the others members of your Meeting House in thanksgiving, celebration, and hope. on December 3rd.

Have you every wondered how things work behind the curtains? Here is your chance to learn about all things UUMH.

The budget for fiscal year 2024, which reflects the expenses of ministering to our caring community, will be presented and voted on. Your input is valued and encouraged as a part of our budget review.

We will also vote to fill vacancies and confirm current roles on the UUMH Board of Directors. As many of you know, Kat Black stepped down as Treasurer July 1st due to her accepting a co-ministry position at the Christian Union Church in North Truro. The BoD shifted positions to cover the Treasurer's role until our December meeting. Now is the time to vote to fill the positions affected by this shift.

We convene in community to help with the administration of our beloved UUMH. You can remain in the comfort of your own home and still partake on Zoom of this yearly ritual. We need you; we want you. Please come!

Jen Shannon
Interim President

“Any faith that admires truth, that strives to know God, must be brave enough to accommodate the universe.”

--Carl Sagan

November 4
5 to 7



Ptown Chili Cookoff

www.ptownchilicookoff.com

Saturday November 4th 5-7 pm



Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse
of Provincetown

Visit the website above for more info

\$10 per person, \$20 for families.

236 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA 02657

JOIN RACIAL JUSTICE PROVINCETOWN FOR

A SILENT VIGIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE



**THE FIRST
SATURDAY**
OF EVERY MONTH

**FROM NOON
UNTIL 1PM**
AT TOWN HALL ON
COMMERCIAL STREET

**WEAR A MASK AND MAINTAIN
SOCIAL DISTANCING OF 6 FEET**

[FACEBOOK.COM/PROVINCETOWNRACIALJUSTICEPROJECT](https://www.facebook.com/provincetownracialjusticeproject)





"The people who give you their food give you their heart."
Cesar Chavez

Please remember our
Little Free Pantry.
People are depending on our
contributions as prices climb.



Rev. Mary Katherine Morn met with me last month to talk about the projects around the world that the UUSC leads and supports.

It is a heartwarming and hope-strengthening thing to visit with her. Every project epitomizes our UU principles. We have reason to be grateful and proud of the work done in our name.

Dear UUMH-ers, remember the UUSC and its fine work when, as 2023 comes to a close, you make your decisions about charitable contributions.

To donate,
please go to
UUSC.org
and follow the
prompts
there.

Poet's Corner



Provincetown Pantoum

Here, lives our small stage in a cosmic theater. Commercial Street is center stage, a well-worn runway, a gathering spot witnesses small dramas- absurd daily life. Yes, Life is the play. Over and over again we (re)turn the page. We do not know each other's name; we may never speak a word.

The well-worn runway, a gathering spot witnesses small dramas absurd behind the scenes. Ordinary mornings in the Post Office we sort our mail. We may not know each other's name; we may never speak a word, as you pass me in Stop&Shop, I glance in your grocery cart- detail.

Behind the scenes, ordinary mornings in the Post Office we sort our mail, you walk at Herring Cove, attend PAAM's art openings alone; as you pass me in Stop&Shop, I glance in your grocery cart- detail. You always sit in the back row at Town Meeting, unknown.

I walk at Herring Cove, attend PAAM's art openings alone. I'm a proud washashore, since 1983, living in the Light. I always sit in the back row at Town Meeting- microphone. Repeated over time- a strange intimacy afar recites

I'm a proud washashore, since 1983, living in the Light. People come forever in a day, surprised by their dream: I Want to Be Here. Repeating over time- a strange intimacy afar recites, connecting in the spirit of the living Light: We Want to Be Here.

People come forever in a day, surprised by their dream: I Want to Be Here. Daily life is the play. Over and over again, we (re)turn the page connecting in the spirit of the living Light, We Want to Be Here. In a cosmic theater, here lives our small stage.

Mary DeRocco
October 20, 2022
Witnessing each other

[Ed. The pantoum is a poem of any length, composed of four-line stanzas in which the second and fourth lines of each stanza serve as the first and third lines of the next stanza. The last line of a pantoum is often the same as the first.]

Grace



It's November. Wind howls through the oak
and whines down the chimney. A squirrel scampers
with bulging cheeks, grabbing the last few acorns.
Stockpile seconds while you may.

Hordes of ghosts rampage across the moon.
Somewhere beyond Earth a telescope sits,
harvesting the faintest light from an early star:
Earendel! So it begins.

All around us, our universe mirrors itself,
multiplies itself compulsively
in a vastness emptier than ever.

-- Heather Ferguson

ITSELF

Each month for a while we'll be highlighting something about our beautiful and unique building. The building itself.

If you have a question about something to do with the art in the building, or its history, or have photos, please let us know at meetinghousenews@gmail.com.



“The clock in the back of the sanctuary [of the UUMH] was given by Captain Joseph Atkins, a whaling captain and one of the original forty-seven organizers of the church.” [UUMH pamphlet, *The Great Building Era of Provincetown, an Historical Symposium*, Jane Lea, Chair, 1999]



When Joseph Atkins was born on 14 October 1766, in Truro, Barnstable, Massachusetts Bay Colony, British Colonial America, his father, Silas Atkins, was 34 and his mother, Lydia Hatch, was 34. They were the parents of at least 7 sons and 6 daughters. Joseph Atkins died on 22 January 1851, in Provincetown, Barnstable, Massachusetts, United States, at the age of 84, and was buried in Hamilton Cemetery, Provincetown, Barnstable, Massachusetts, United States.



Capt. Joseph Atkins was responsible for “the magnificent home at 160 Commercial Street, [and] he also built Central Wharf” opposite, which was located where the Boatslip is now. [David Dunlap]



160 Commercial Street, built by Captain Joseph Atkins

Among Ourselves



We are holding Susan Downey and Loretta Butehorn on our hearts as they mourn the death of Susan's brother, John.

Sending love to our dear Sheila Ryan, who has moved into a memory care unit. Her dog, Coaly has been placed in a wonderful new home, but we are sad that they had to be separated.

Blessings on Augie as he navigates his very first year of school!

Healing prayers to John Thomas as he recovers from surgery on his leg.

And please send those prayers, too, to Dianne Kopser and her fractured ankle! Casts are no fun!

“There are as many atoms in a single molecule of your DNA as there are stars in the typical galaxy. We are, each of us, a little universe.” — Neil deGrasse Tyson

Love is the Spirit



COME YE
THANKFUL
PEOPLE, COME...

YOU ARE INVITED TO
THE NAUSET INTERFAITH ASSOCIATION'S
THANKSGIVING SERVICE

WHEN: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2023

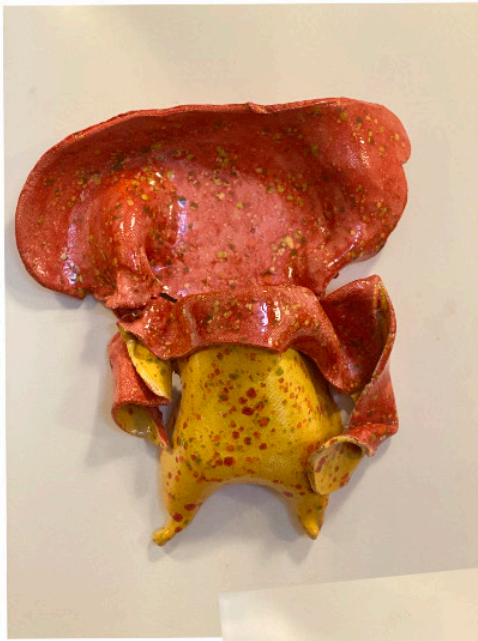
TIME: 2:00 pm

WHERE: PROVINCETOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
20 SHANK PAINTER ROAD, PROVINCETOWN

**JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE AS ONE THE SPIRIT OF
THANKSGIVING WITH MEMBERS OF FAITH
COMMUNITIES FROM THROUGHOUT THE CAPE.**

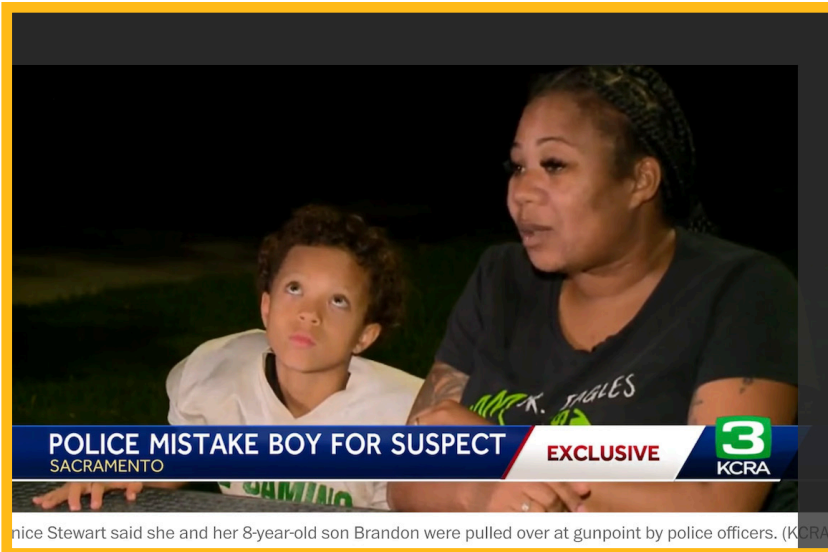
Rik Kapler aka ~WAVE
Ceramic 'Wall-pocket' Vessels
Artist Reception

Saturday, November 18th 3-6 PM



The COMMONS 46 Bradford Street, Provincetown
November 14~26, 2023

Every month, it seems, we have a page commemorating yet another life lost or tragically wounded because of systemic racism. If we fight the good fight together, if we make “good trouble,” we can change the world.



He’s eight years old. His mom is eight months pregnant. They are driving to football practice. He is in his uniform. Police see him through the tinted windows of the family’s car as it passes by and they think he looks like the suspect they are after. They stop them and pull them over. They draw their guns.

The little boy, Brandon, “exited the car and walked toward the officers. Through tears, he told them that his mom was only driving him to football practice. . . . After officers realized that Brandon — who is about 3-foot-10 and 56 pounds — wasn’t the suspect, they explained the misunderstanding and apologized. . . .”

The incident is being investigated by the police department. Pregnant mom is okay. Little Brandon, the third grader, is upset but is still going to football practice.

Could have ended very differently.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2023/10/26/sacramento-police-mother-son-mistaken-identity/>



A couple of decades ago there was a popular exercise for people interested in doing their inner work and freeing deeper parts of themselves. It was called Non-dominant Writing. The particular example that was powerful for me called for a single sheet of paper, a comfortable writing instrument, and one question that was to be answered in writing immediately upon hearing the question. You were to write your answer with your non-dominant hand. The question-which you first wrote down with your dominant hand-was:

Who am I?

I followed the instructions and my non-dominant hand sprang into action without the slightest hesitation. My left hand wrote:

You are the starshine of God, the beauty of the universe, simple and complex.

It didn't feel like it was I who wrote that, but rather, that a voice within me was leaping at the chance to finally get a word in.

I have never forgotten that experience and the phrase comes back to me at low moments, a reminder, an inspiration, a call.



“We are not figuratively,
but literally
stardust.”

— Neil deGrasse Tyson

And we might, in our lives, have many thresholds, many houses to walk out from and view the stars, or to turn and go back for warmth and company. But the real one — the actual house not of beams and nails but of existence itself — is all of earth, with no door, no address separate from oceans or stars, or from pleasure or wretchedness either, or hope, or weakness, or greed.

How wonderful that the universe is beautiful in so many places and in so many ways. But also the universe is brisk and businesslike, and no doubt does not give its delicate landscapes or its thunderous displays of power, and perhaps perception, too, for our sakes or our improvement. Nevertheless, its intonations are the best tonics, if we would take them. For the universe is full of radiant suggestion. For whatever reason, the heart cannot separate the world's appearance and actions from morality and valor, and the power of every idea is intensified, if not actually created, by its expression in substance. Over and over again in the butterfly we see the idea of transcendence. In the forest we see not the inert but the aspiring. In water that departs forever and forever returns, we experience eternity.

— Mary Oliver, *Long Life*

Back Page

The
Meetinghouse News

Kathleen Henry, Editor

Submissions are welcomed
and encouraged!

Please submit written work,
announcements,
and artwork,
by the 20th
of the month
to

meetinghousenews@gmail.com