

UUMH Newsletter

236 Commercial St. Provincetown MA

October 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

“Prior to the arrival of the white man[sic], Cape Cod was inhabited by the Wampanoag Indian Federation. The Nausets, one of six sub-tribes, lived at the end of the Cape, one of their territories being Mee-shawn in what is today Provincetown and part of Truro, although their headquarters was in present-day Eastham.”
(from I Am Provincetown)

Indigenous people have lived on the land now called Cape Cod for thousands and thousands of years thousands and thousands thousands and thousands thousands and thousands thousands



I grew up in Tatnuck, the westernmost neighborhood of Worcester, Massachusetts. The word “Tatnuck” was perhaps originally “Tataessit” and became corrupted to the term still used today. I went to Tatnuck Grammar School, located in Tatnuck Square. If people asked me where I was from when I was a little girl, my answer was, “Tatnuck,” not Worcester.

We were taught in grammar school “all about” the Indians who had given our location its name. We learned they were called the Nipmucks, and that they met in long houses made out of the bark of trees. I remember imagining those houses out on the schoolyard. This tribe had three villages, Tatnuck, Quinsigamond, and Pakachoag where the College of the Holy Cross now stands.

These three villages were at peace with one another and enjoyed commerce and society.

We learned that “Tatnuck” means “at the great hill.” (The airport is built on that hill, actually, and is considered a high altitude airport at 1,008.9 feet above sea level.)

I am proud, in a way, that my teachers knew to teach us about the peoples who lived on the land before we did, but I realized in adulthood that there was little if any mention as to what happened to those people.

Nipmuc (pl. Nipmuc)

Any of a people descended from the indigenous Algonquian peoples of Nippenet, corresponding to central Massachusetts and immediately adjacent portions of Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Where did they go?

Some do remain today; the Nipmuc Nation Tribal Council is located in Grafton, Massachusetts about a half hour from Tatnuck. They hold regular powows and are a respected part of the Worcester community.

But what happened and what was that like for these people? Was there violence as happened so horrifically in other parts of the country of the United States, or, was it more of an assimilation? My teachers did not touch on that at all.

Our own church building, built in 1840’s, no doubt stands on land that was once considered Wampanoag. The recently updated exhibit at the Pilgrim Monument includes much information about this history.

Remember what is beneath our feet, what lives walked this ground, what richness was lost, but, also, what contributions were made. We are standing on holy ground. I invite you to look up what native people lived where you grew up or once lived. -- Kathleen Henry

Worship Worship Worship
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October



Sunday, October 8: "Fractured World" Rev. Kate Wilkinson

We'll be talking about living in a polarized world, and acknowledging Indigenous People's Day

Sunday, October 15: "Liking Yourself is Radical" Rev. Kate Wilkinson

With a nod to National Coming Out Day, we'll be talking about how, in a world that profits from your self doubt, liking yourself is a form of radical resistance

Sunday, October 22: Ellen Anthony Preaching

Sunday, October 29: "Midnight Library" Rev. Kate Wilkinson

(The book The Midnight Library asks you to imagine different versions of your life. We'll talk about dreams, regrets, and Halloween costumes as a chance to try on different versions of yourself)

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

"Through life, I want to walk gently. I want to treat all of life – the earth and its people – with reverence. I want to remove my shoes in the presence of holy ground."

-- Steve Goodlier

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



On the floor of my office right now you will see lines of blue painter's tape zig zagging across the floor. It looks like a cross between an abstract painting and a crime scene. I am thinking of getting some new furniture, you see.

Back when we were battling a mold issue at the Meeting House (a flood affects a building for years to come), I had to throw out the upholstered chairs that used to be in my office. It was ok. They were chairs that used to be in my house growing up, and which then spent some years in my mother's attic. Their time in my office was kind of a third life for them.

Since then I've been making do with chairs from our board room table. But they aren't very comfortable and they don't have arms that help people to get out of them. They are straight-backed chairs that let you know you should only stay for a few minutes, not comfortable ones that invite a longer conversation. I'd like to create a cozier feel.

I have my eye on some pieces from Bob's Discount Furniture. They are a wonderful blue/teal color. I'm deciding between two chairs or a loveseat. I think it would be WONDERFUL to have a couch in my office. But would it fit? What would need to be removed?

I'm using the tape to IMAGINE the furniture. The space they would take up. The feel of it. What would be gained and what would be lost.

Change is hard. Even small changes like office furniture. Things take getting used to. Planning helps. Plotting things out. Imagining.

How do you use your imagination to envision the changes that you need to make in your life? What is your metaphorical blue tape that allows you to try on ideas and see how they feel? What "life furniture" are you thinking of shifting in the coming month or year?



Once I get my new couch (or chairs), I hope you will come in and talk to me about it! Talking about change is another way to smooth the way for it. And my door is open.

Rev. Kate

“Hospitality means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend. . .”
Henri Nowen

From the Board
From the Board
From the Board



a little humor from your Clerk to the Board!
-- Kathleen

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**

At your discretion >

[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.



To donate,
please go to
[UUSC.org](https://www.uusc.org)
and follow the
prompts
there.

“Providing families who are migrating due to fear and persecution with safe housing, food, and health care — while helping them access legal aid on their journey to seek asylum.

“Supporting youth activists taking climate justice to the world’s highest court — ensuring governments compensate impacted communities for the loss and damage that is caused by the climate crisis.

“Connecting refugees displaced by war to humanitarian aid and trauma-informed care — so they can begin to rebuild their lives in a new home country.

“We urgently need more caring people like you to join with us in advancing social justice.”

Rev. Mary Katherine Morn

Poet's Corner



Solace

Where was god at before the creation?
In her mind all space and time is now,
kind of like a permanent vacation,
not so much what and if, but more like how.
Gathering the wherewithal paint and brush,
thought brought into form, fully expectant.
There, faint echoes of a terminal hush,
ecstatic when finally extant.
No one wants to be alone, hear her prayer.
Share the cup that overflows with promise.
Spindrift slows, be thou at home everywhere
on pinions of storm across the abyss.
Nursery solace, shape-shift near and far.
Universe! My beloved baby star.

Tulare Lake

A lake has returned uninvited. We have lost our calendar of predictions. Humans step back in awe as farmlands flood.

As I once was, says Tulare Lake unperturbed. The lake is a thin mirror that cannot be broken or stolen. It spreads out like a skycatcher. Where almonds once grew, the sky tosses hail like dice and wins every time. Storms spawn dreams of minnows. Memories of reeds whistle down the wind, and a whole orchestra rises anew amid cabbages and wheat.

Loons and herons are coming home. You took everything, they tell us. We could not stay away forever. Let humans cede this water to trout, eels and frogs. Name a Madonna of the Lake for your own protection.

. . .

- 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.



**“Presented by Henry Sachs
in memory of
William E. Nickerson
a life long friend”**

William E. Nickerson. . .
a life long friend. . .



William Emery Nickerson, born in Provincetown in 1853, was an engineer and inventor. He worked with the founder of the Gillette Company, King Gillette, at the beginning of that business and also served on the Board of Directors. He invented the machinery that created the thin razor blades that could be produced so inexpensively they could be considered "disposable."

He went to M.I.T. and trained as a chemist. He made elevators safer through his inventions. He was involved in light bulbs, inventing a method to remove air inside the bulb which was a requirement for light bulbs to work. But, Edison had a patent on all things glass light bulbs, so Mr. Nickerson made no money on his idea.

Nickerson Field, longtime a name for the major playing field at Boston University, is named for him.

Henry Sachs was a successful businessman. His fortune came from his investment in the Gillette Safety Razor Company. This is probably where his friendship with Mr. Nickerson began. As quoted in the Colorado Springs Pioneer Museum publication:

"In 1903, businessman Henry Sachs came to Colorado Springs to cure his tuberculosis. Of Jewish descent and alert to discrimination, he created a charitable fund to help local Blacks receive tuberculosis treatment. Starting in 1927, Sachs paid the Colorado College tuition of Effie Stroud. After graduating cum laude in 1931, Stroud could not find professional work in Colorado Springs. When Sachs discovered her working as a domestic servant, he arranged for her to receive a Rosenwald Fellowship to study library science at the Hampton Institute in Virginia."— From the CSPM Curator of History

This was the beginning of the Sach Foundation which has been dedicated to providing college scholarships for black students from Colorado since the 1930's.

"In 1931 with help of Rev K.D. Stroud and his wife Lulu, he established the Sachs Foundation of Colorado Springs for Negro Welfare. He was the first president of the Foundation. Sachs stated, "I don't think there's any better way to spend money than by investing in people. If you want them to be successful, to contribute in some way to society, education is the key." The intended purpose of the Foundation was to recognize the injustices of the past." Ibid.

A search through UUMH records would probably reveal that Mr. Nickerson was a member. Perhaps his funeral service was held in our building. The lamp dedicated to him that graces our sanctuary reminds us of the value of friendship, the talent of ingenuity, and the power of dedication to social justice and to a diverse and egalitarian society.

Among Ourselves



Love is the Spirit

- Love and support go out to Bruce DeSteCroix, as he deals with unexplained pain and family illness. Love also to Bill Clark and Dianne Kopser.
- Bonnie Breidenbach, we send you and your new puppy, Giselle, lots of love.
- We send all our love to Frank Bellistri in the wake of his mother's passing. Frank, you showed such loving attention to your mom for ever so long. We are in awe of your steadfastness and love.
- Len Bowen's sister died. This loss, so close to the anniversary of Gary's death is very hard. Please know we have your back...and your heart.
- So long, Jane and Mason, please hurry back.
- We are missing a few folks right about now: Cricket, Susan, Loretta and Lawrence, you are sorely missed.
- So great to see Mary DeRocco in our midst. What a light is she!
- Welcome home to Anne Cowie and Amy Grave's new little kitten, Button.
- We are so sad to hear of Moses' sister passing. Moses, we are holding you.
- Best of luck to Carolyn Collins as she cares for her aging mother.
- So great to see Ken Wozniak when he was in town!

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.



“In a 2021 study of emergency room data from hospitals in five states, researchers found a correlation between police killings of unarmed Black people and a rise in the number of depression-related E.R. visits among Black people. A 2018 study found that Black people who were exposed to news about police shootings in the states where they lived reported adverse mental health effects for up to three months after the shootings.”

“Black people in America are killed by the police at three times the rate of their white counterparts. And the number of deaths has remained consistent from year to year.”

“I just pray for peace and comfort for the family. I don’t want to have a heart of bitterness.”

To read the entire New York Times’ article, search for “How Police Violence Weighs on Black Americans.”

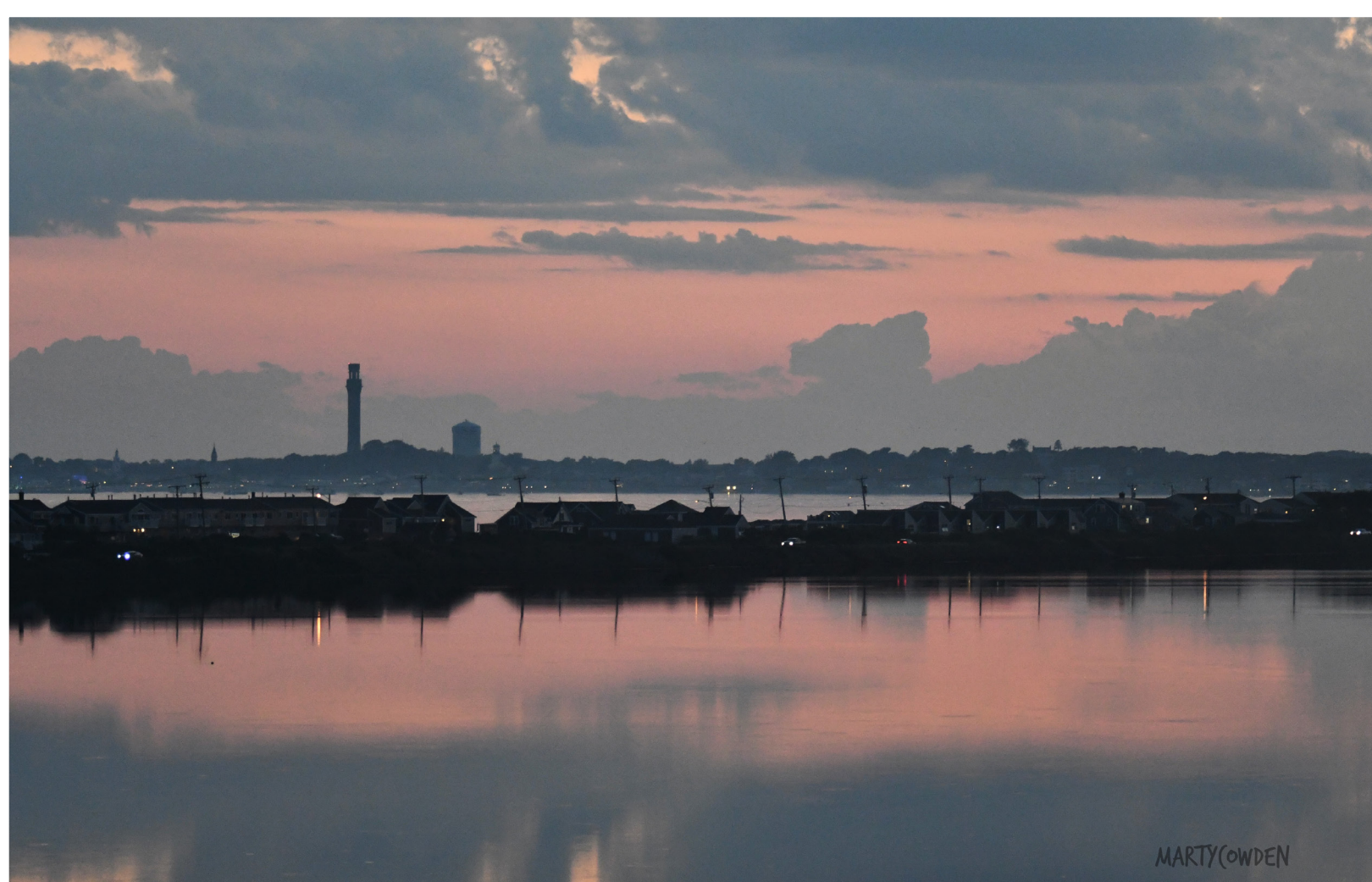


This coming Sunday, October 8, Rev. Kate's sermon will be about acknowledging Indigenous People Day. In case you're wondering, Rev. Kate and I rarely discuss the upcoming month's newsletter theme. Sometimes I announce it when I send out the newsletter to the mailing list, but many of us receive our newsletter through the UUMH listserve, and the theme is not announced there. It is remarkable how often the theme and one of Rev. Kate's sermons nod to one another!

With Rev. Kate's upcoming sermon in mind, and my mention, too, of indigenous people on these pages, please think about looking up who lived on your hometown's land before the colonies were colonies. I think it will make the sermon all the more meaningful for us if we have reflected on our historic neighbors and what happened to them.

This beautiful symbol, with the tree and the water, is the symbol of the Nipmuck tribe from my hometown.





MARTY COWDEN

Photo: Marty Cowden

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