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# The Mail Pouch

WORSHIP: Sunday at 10 a.m.



# "The Important Things"

This first service of the year, we consider intention! Reflecting on what is most important to us can help us bring our best selves to 2025. Come gather in the spirit of paying attention to what matters.

**Young People's Program with Marion and Alice Posner**

*For this week's Coffee Hour, the 1st Sunday of the month, last names A-F are invited to bring refreshments. Thank you!*

**Zoom service link: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/92959299766>**

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## View from The Pulpit

The lens through which we look at the world makes all the difference. A traumatic brain injury and spinal fusion surgery has given my brother a new lens. Everything for him - how he moves, feels, thinks, and even eats - has changed since a bike accident a year ago. Family interactions have shifted, too. Today, we see him through a tender new lens. Before, everyone went to him for advice. Middle child, he's had a knack all his life for smoothing ruffled feathers. Now, his daily challenges put ours in sharp perspective.



We'd hoped for a big family Christmas this year, but first he insisted on no gifts - too hard. Then, to our dismay, he said no gathering for him - too loud, too much stimulation. We dearly missed him though he did surprise us with gifts, including a remarkable one for us, speaking of lenses. For someone forced to find new ways to do life, break through pain, and think clearly, his focus and thoughtfulness amaze me.



He created "a distraction" - a sculpture of found objects in his basement, including a copper roof. Our neighborhood has become a construction site of dust and dirt, jackhammering, tractors, trucks, and stone saws with big houses going up around us. In theory the sculpture could hold birdseed, but it exists, Bill says, to draw the eye away from the tear-down in our back yard and tall walls affecting our light and privacy. And it works! This year, we'll look at the huge new house next door through the lens of Bill's whimsy.

Here in Tamworth, we are also looking through a new lens. It's my honor and joy to continue serving UUFES until either a new minister arrives or June 30, whichever comes first. Please know that I will continue to provide pastoral care during this time. **[Read about ministerial transition plans here.](#)**



### **[New Year's Greetings from Your Governing Board!](#)**

The year we are entering is already brimming with anticipation and anxiety. We wonder how we can handle the news we hear and the changes we expect from around the world, within our nation, in our local communities, and here at UUFES.

Our best preparation is first to take care of ourselves as individuals and then to be there for one another. We can plan to be socially active in broad justice issues or simply accept that even the smallest effort of listening with an open mind and heart to one other person can be life changing.

We face challenges and opportunities in 2025. May we continue to find and give the love and support that our Beloved Community offers. May this be a Happy New Year.



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**Young People's Program**  
**Solstice Creations**



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## 2024 A Full Year at UUFES

Rev. Betsy writes a monthly Minister's Report as part of Governing Board meetings. Barbara Lubin's sharing the past year of Special Collections a few weeks ago inspired Betsy to devote her December report to "2024 at a glance." It begins....

**January:** Willie Farnum re-installed the original blackboard - a gift. UUFES hosted the Winter Landscape Coffee House, kick-off event for the yearlong community-wide creative response to climate change organized by Cook Library and Chocorua Conservancy.

**February:** The Needlecraft Ministry resumed, with shawls going out to four UUFESians. "Seriously" resumed. Staff evaluations, too. No heat on 1st floor, two months running.

**March:** Regular meetings began with the Young People's Program, Betsy L, and me, starting with agreement on contract terms. GB began Pledge Drive planning: "Imagine the Possibilities." Incident forms were updated (tx, Kathy Bird).

See the full report [here](#).

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**Every UUFES group and every UUFES ministry is cis, trans, and non-binary inclusive. All are warmly welcome!**



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### **Book Group - Mondays at 10 in the Library**

Zoom option: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/104432872>

**Jan. 6:** *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* by Mark Twain

**Jan. 27:** *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver

**Feb. 24:** *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows

On other Mondays, the group discusses what arises – drop-ins welcome.

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# Tamworth Meditation Group - Tues/Thurs 4:30 in the Sanctuary

Co-sponsored by UUFES & the Tamworth Community Nurse Association

"...most of us tie ourselves up in knots trying to micromanage what we really can't control."

In Breathing Room issue #77, editor Mark DuMars invites readers to begin each day in this new year by listening to **The Great Bell Chant**.

Read Breathing Room Issue #77 [here](#).

"Maybe right now would be a good place to be at peace, to quiet our minds and simply listen."

Read Breathing Room Issue #78 [here](#).

## *The Great Bell Chant*

Read by Thich Nhat Hanh, chanted by Brother Phap Niem

May the sound of this bell  
penetrate deep into the cosmos  
Even in the darkest spots  
Living beings are able to hear it clearly  
So that all suffering in them cease  
Understanding comes to their hearts  
And they transcend the path  
Of sorrow and death.  
The universal Dharma Door  
Is already open  
The sound of the Rising Tide is heard clearly  
The miracle happens  
A beautiful child appears in the heart of a lotus flower  
One single drop of this compassionate water  
Is enough to bring back the refreshing spring  
To our mountains and rivers.  
Listening to the bell  
I feel the afflictions in me begin to dissolve  
My mind calm, my body relaxed  
A smile is born on my lips  
Following the sound of the bell  
My breath brings me back to the safe island of mindfulness  
In the garden of my heart  
The flowers of Peace  
Bloom beautifully.

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## Experience Kirtan - Sacred Chanting

**Wednesday January 8 - 4:30 in Sanctuary with Shana**

Many traditions embrace chanting, developed in India over 2,500 years ago. Chanting - especially with others - shows effects such as calming the mind, reducing stress, healing, and generating feelings of peace.

Shana teaches Sufi, Jewish and other chants by ear. Adherence to any religious belief system and previous musical experience not necessary. Donations

gratefully accepted.

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## Poetry Group - Tuesday at 4 (Zoom)

<https://uuma.zoom.us/s/5022081578>

All are welcome every Tuesday to consider a poet's work. Next week's poem is "Forgetting" by Joy Ladin, with thanks to Shana for this suggestion. To receive a reminder Tuesday morning, please contact David Wilkins.

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*Thanks to Deborah Guryn for her wintery photos.*

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## Men's Group - 3rd Wed, 2-4 p.m. Resuming January 15

We will discuss the longstanding theme, "This I Believe," for its own sake and in preparation for a Sunday service that the Men's Group will lead sometime in the new year. Zoom link and other details tba.

The Men's Group always welcomes transgender, nonbinary, and cisgender persons

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## Women's Lunch Group (cis, trans, non-binary inclusive)

**1st Thursday, 12 noon - UUFES Library unless otherwise noted**

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## Links to Recent Services

"Welcoming the Solstice" - 12/22 our annual celebration

While we do not have a public link to this service for music copyright



reasons, Rev. Betsy will gladly send you a link for your own use.

“Looking Ahead” - 12/29 a time of sharing

While we do not have a public link to this service for music copyright reasons, Rev. Betsy will gladly send you a link for your own use.

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*Dear UUfarrians,*

*As a UUfarrian myself on many Sundays, I always notice when I think "we" are not being fully included in the service. Last Sunday I myself neglected to ask "you" to offer your HOPES AND INTENTIONS in Chat so they could be shared with those present in the sanctuary. When I reflected on this afterwards, I realized once again how many working parts it takes to pull off a meaningful service in an hour while remembering to be sensitive to the need to create an engaging experience for those in the room and those on ZOOM.*

*Our ability to be united on Zoom has been a silver lining from the pandemic, but it's not easy to remember to always integrate the two congregations. My apologies, and my best wishes for our success as a congregation and your success as an individual in 2025! - David Wilkins*

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## Another Way to Support DEI Locally

**Monday, January 6, 6:30-8**

Cook Library hosts an evening continuance of last year's facilitated conversation about issues of race, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in this area - a program of "DEI in the Lakes and Mountains."

More at [info@lakesmountainsdei.org](mailto:info@lakesmountainsdei.org).

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## Important Dates:

Stay tuned, and enjoy post-holiday repose!

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### **Rev. Betsy Tabor:**

Email is preferred contact, and by all means call when in need. I'm in the office most Tuesdays if you would like to arrange a meeting.

Email: [revbetsytabor@gmail.com](mailto:revbetsytabor@gmail.com)

Cell: 603-431-6693

**UUFES Office:** Danielle works in the office two midweek afternoons. One morning/week, Becky Thompson manages bills, deposits, and payroll. Please send office business to Rev. Betsy/Barbara Lubin and Mail Pouch correspondence to Rev. Betsy.

### **Using the Online Directory**

If your email address is in the UUFES directory, you can access the directory online. Log in as an InstantChurch member:

<https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com>



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