

THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

121 North Pleasant Street, P.O. Box 502, Amherst Massachusetts 01004

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Important Information

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Appointment

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NEWSLETTER

Copy Editor: Janis Gray, 413-259-1584
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Deadline for submissions: 15th of each month.
Please sign submissions, so we may reach you if
we have questions. Submit entries one of two
ways:

1. Email it to jsgray@crocker.com.
2. Mail it to 219 Wendell Road, Shutesbury MA
01072.

Please limit entries to 500 words (100 for the
“For Your Information” section). Submissions
may be edited to save space or to maintain a con-
sistent style. Thank you!

Printed on recycled paper



Schedule of Services

Sunday, April 2, 10:30 A.M. – *Circle of Life*

UU Society of Amherst Youth Group

In this service the UUSA Youth Group will explore the concept of the circle. Circles are used by many different religions to mean different things. There's no end or beginning to a circle — or is there? Circles are everywhere! Please come and be part of our circle.

Sunday, April 9, 10:30 A.M. – *Embodying Dayenu*

The Reverend Cynthia A. Frado preaching

Passover has so many rich metaphors for living, whether you are Jewish or not. Join us for this wonderful celebration of gratitude and liberation!

Sunday, April 16, 10:30 A.M. – *What IS the Kingdom of God?*

The Reverend Cynthia A. Frado preaching

This being Easter Sunday in the Christian tradition, Christianity places an emphasis on the death and resurrection of Jesus. While that is not a theological tenet of our faith, this morning we will explore Jesus' understanding of the Kingdom of God and how it informed his ministry. You just might be surprised! This is a great day to bring visiting family and friends to UUSA.

Sunday, April 23, 10:30 A.M. – *Earth Day Service*

The Reverend Doug Wilson preaching

The Rev. Doug Wilson is the 2012 Minister Emeritus of Rowe Camp and Conference Center, where he served in various positions, including Director, for 39 years. He walks gently upon the earth! For many, many years he has been at the forefront of social justice and earth justice issues, and he has worked with activists and reformers of great renown. Doug is very much an intellectual with a passion for our 7th Principle and a Mark Twain sense of humor.

The Green Sanctuary Committee will be leading the service, and The Rev. Wilson will give the sermon, for our Earth Day service. Please join us. Our planet needs our love and care more than ever!

Today is our Dedicated Offering Sunday

Sunday, April 30, 10:30 A.M. – *Yes, We Can!*

The Rev. Cynthia A. Frado preaching

Today is the kick-off for our annual Stewardship Drive. It's a day about celebrating our community and looking toward the future. Join us for this inspiring Sunday!

Most sermons and readings are posted on our website, www.uusocietyamherst.org. Click on the "SERMON ARCHIVE" button on the right side of the home page, and then on the title of the sermon you wish to read.

Musings from the Interim Minister's Inkwell

I'm writing this on the Ides of March, looking out my window at the piles of snow left over from yesterday's late winter storm. In an odd sort of way, this reminds me of the final month of pregnancy. Those last few weeks of anticipation feel longer than the previous 34-36. There is such a yearning for new life to bless the world at this time of year, and I feel it rising within myself. I'm ready to do the Daffodil Dance!

When my son, Alexander (who is now 32), was a young Cub Scout, his troop sold daffodil bulbs in the fall as a fundraiser. Because I didn't have time to take him around the neighborhood selling them, I bought 100 bulbs myself. The day after Halloween we realized that we hadn't planted them yet, and the weather was starting to get cold. So, that afternoon when he got home from school, with garden tools and fertilizer in hand, we started digging an enormous trench in our front yard. There was a chorus of moaning and groaning going on between us, and I momentarily escaped into the warmth of the house to make hot chocolate while he assumed his solo performance of "WHY DID WE BUY THESE DUMB THINGS, ANYWAY?" Night came quickly that time of

year, and I had to bring out a flashlight in order for us to finish our task. Cold and exhausted, we stood there staring at our hard work and agreed that it looked non-impressive, and wondered if this was all done for naught. All we could do was wait and trust that everything we did would give us the desired result. Patience, patience, patience.

November.

December.

January.

February.

March. The watch begins. March 1st. No daffodils. March 2nd. No daffodils. March 3rd. No daffodils. March 4th. No daffodils. March 5th. **Cat caught frog flipping around the Great Room.** No daffodils. March 6th. No daffodils. March 7th. No daffodils. March 8th. **First crocuses.** No daffodils. March 9th. No daffodils. March 10th. **Kids dye Easter eggs, and table cloth, and dish towels, and clothes they were wearing.** No daffodils. March 11th. No daffodils. March 12th. **First sighting of robins.** No daffodils. March 13th. No daffodils. March 14th. **Geese returning.** No daffodils. March 15th. No daffodils. March 16th. No daffodils. March 17th. No daffodils. March 18th. No daffodils. March 19th. **NO DAFFODILS!**

March 20th, mid-afternoon, I heard the school bus stop at the corner. A minute or two later I heard screaming and whooping coming from the front yard. “MOM, MOM, COME OUT, COME OUT!” I quickly dropped what I was doing and ran outside to see my son dancing in the front yard. Little green shoots were peeking out of the ground where we had planted all those daffodils. For the next week or so we danced every afternoon until all those daffodils were in bloom! (I drove by the old house two years ago and was delighted to see many of them still blooming!)

In this era of instant gratification, we oftentimes forget that sometimes we have to wait for all of our hard work to bear fruit. For example, several people have been wondering why the search process for a new minister takes so long. There are many good reasons, much hard work, and several necessary steps that will ultimately lead to finding the best possible settled minister for UUSA. It all takes time, and we must trust that everything we do to support the effort will yield a positive result. Once the Search Committee is in place and begins their work, everyone will have to wear their Patience Hat. Then, next spring, if all goes well, we can all do the Daffodil and New Minister Dance together!

May spring bring renewed wonder and awe and possibility for us all...

Rev. Cindy

Dedicated Offerings

Dedicated Offerings provide a way for our Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst community to recognize and financially support worthy organizations engaged in projects that reflect our guiding Unitarian-Universalist principles.

On one Sunday every month (except for June, July, and August) we schedule a Dedicated Offering (DO), recognizing that our Society needs our support on the other Sundays of the month. Dedicated Offerings are suggested by both individuals and committees of the Society, and the program is managed by the Minister and the Dedicated Offering Committee.

A form for you to suggest a Dedicated Offering recipient is available in the office. Our goal is to cover a wide range of areas of need in our area and in the larger world, including these categories: local, regional, national, international, environmental, medical, educational, animal rights, arts/music/culture, and different ages and genders.

Thank you for showing your support for the Dedicated Offering program, not only with your contributions to the DO recipients themselves, but also with your contributions to the Society on other Sundays when our budget counts on those receipts. Remember that no one is required to contribute to our Dedicated Offering recipients – this is a voluntary initiative.

On February 19, we collected \$780 for **ARISE for Social Justice.**

On March 19, we collected \$1,059 for the **Kestrel Land Trust.**

THOUGHTFUL ENDINGS

March 29, April 5, and April 12 (6:00pm-7:30pm)

UU Society of Amherst, Willie Eaton Social Hall



Our April Dedicated Offering will be on April 23 (the fourth Sunday of the month this time, *not* the third!) for **The Connecticut River Watershed Council**.

The Connecticut River Watershed Council works to protect the watershed from source to sea. From alpine forests to tidal estuaries, rural farmlands to urban riverfronts, spotted salamanders to bald eagles and mussels to salmon, the Connecticut River watershed unites a diversity of habitats, communities and resources.

The Council states, “As stewards of this heritage, we celebrate our four-state treasure and collaborate, educate, organize, restore, and intervene to preserve the health of the whole for generations to come. Our work informs our vision of ecological and economic abundance.”

The Council undertakes a wide variety of projects to preserve and maintain the river and its watershed. Of these, UUSA members are perhaps most familiar with the annual Source to Sea Cleanup, in which we participate every year. UUSA member **Andrew Fisk** is the Executive Director of the Council; Andy and his wife **Karen Fisk** are active supporters of our Society.

Thank you from a Dedicated Offering recipient

On behalf of Amherst A Better Chance, I would like to thank you for your recent donation of \$1,142.50 which we received on 2/27/2017. It takes the support of our friends like you in the community to sustain this program and ensure that each ABC Scholar thrives academically and socially, developing his true potential through this better chance.

Since Amherst ABC’s founding in 1968, nearly 130 young men of color from underserved school districts have graduated from ARHS as ABC

It is never too early to start preparing for end-of-life concerns. This is not just for seniors!

March 29, 2017

How to choose appropriate living arrangements, costs involved available services, what you need to know before there is a crisis and more...

Speakers: Maura Plante, Program Director/Services and Helen MacMellon, LCSW, Social Worker, Bangs Sr. Center

April 5, 2017

Legal and Financial considerations, wills, trusts, protecting assets, MOLST forms and more.....

Speaker: Michael Hooker, Esq.

Northampton based attorney whose practice specializes in compassionate assistance for elders and their families. elderservice.com

April 12, 2017

Taking the conversation deeper: Final Wishes and Legacy, creating a packet for family, clergy, lawyers, doctors and more....

Speaker: The Rev. Cynthia A. Frado, UUSA

Scholars, and virtually all of them have gone on to pursue higher education and fulfilling careers as they have taken on leadership roles in our society. Amherst ABC is a volunteer-run, community-funded organization. All of our current scholars have bright futures ahead of them thanks to members of the community like you who donate their time, their dollars and/or their services, and who are committed to fairness and the ideal of leadership based on character, shared values, and diverse perspectives.

Your generous contribution to Amherst ABC is especially meaningful right now. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Wendy Kohler

Healing and Reconciliation After War: Sunday, April 2, 4:00—5:30 P.M. Ed Tick Ph.D. and Kate Dahlstedt MACP will share stories and lessons from Soldier's Heart journeys to Viet Nam in the UUSA Social Hall. Ed and Kate, experts in tending the invisible wounds of war and co-founders of Soldier's Heart, Inc., have led annual healing and reconciliation journeys to Viet Nam for the past 17 years. These journeys have proven to be profoundly transformative healing experiences for veterans with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder.

They have also enabled Kate and Ed to penetrate Vietnamese culture and history, study the Vietnamese peoples' stories

of war and recovery, understand why there is no PTSD there, and experience the extraordinary spirituality and healing available in their culture.

Join us for an evening of lecture, poetry, slides, stories and discussion about these journeys in Viet Nam and what they can teach us about healing and transforming war trauma into the nutrients of peacemaking. In Viet Nam, with survivors from all sides, we practice Buddha's lesson that permeates Vietnamese people and culture:

*Hatreds never cease
By hatreds in this world.
By love they cease.
This is an ancient law.*

Please sign up for the Seder by April 2



**COMMUNITY
PASSOVER SEDER**

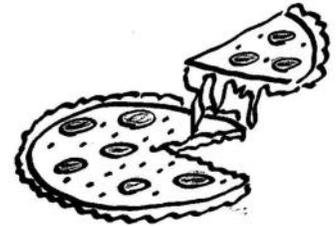
UUSA Sanctuary
6:00 pm

Join us for the first night of Passover. We will share a traditional seder ritual and meal, telling the ancient story of the journey from enslavement to liberation. Our Haggadah is a chorus of contemporary voices that connects us to ancient wisdom while guiding us through the challenges and spiritual struggles of today. It is a gathering of the generations, with food, song and storytelling at its very best. If you would like to attend please sign up at the Welcome Table in the Social Hall or call Rev. Cindy at 413-253-2848 Ext. 2.

UUSA RE Family Pizza and Game Party!

April 8th, 6-7 PM

(Donations will gladly be accepted to cover costs. This event is before the Contra Dance)



UUSA Contra Dance

April 8th 7-9 PM

Fun for all ages

Bring family and friends!

No Experience Necessary
\$5/adult and kids are free

Music by Ron, Louise and Anna Grosslein
Calling by Anne Louise White

SAVE THE DATE – Saturday May 6 @ 5:30 –

Talent and Treasures Auction!

JOIN US for low-key fun and to help raise

\$ for the UUSA.

- 5:30 – 7:00 P.M. Silent auction,

delectable drinks, hors d'oeuvres & desserts

- 7:00 P.M. Live auction begins!

DONATE your talents and treasures by April 16.

Big-ticket items and little gems are all needed: Host a picnic at your vacation home. (Please, no tag sale items.) *Use the fillable donation form that you should have received from the office as an attachment to a global email*, or pick one up in the UUSA entry lobby.

APRIL 30, after the service: You'll be able to bid on silent auction items. Get a head start!

COME ON SATURDAY EVENING, MAY 6: Bring

your friends and neighbors for a good time, delectable food and drink, and to bid in the silent auction and to join in the live auction fun.

VOLUNTEER ON MAY 6: Help us with big and little tasks on May 6. There will be a job for everyone – we'll have signup sheets soon.

ON MAY 6 we can accept cash or checks (sorry, no credit card or phone charge systems).

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT: Carol Johnson at our auction email: UUSAuction@gmail.com

Our April Social Supper will be held on Saturday, April 22, at 6:00 P.M. the home of Karen, Bo and Emma Mack, 61 Hulst Road, Amherst. You'll also be able to meet Luna, their new puppy! Please call them at 413-253-3530 to let them know what you are bringing to this potluck meal and to get directions if needed. In keeping with our Eating Locally project, we encourage the use of local foods at our gatherings. Although it's by no means a requirement, consider using even one local ingredient in whatever dish you prepare. And, if you bring a dish containing shell-fish or nuts, please label your dish. Thanks, and we look forward to seeing you at the supper!

The Women's Lunch Group meets every other Thursday at noon for spirited conversation over local, inexpensive cuisine. Our April 6 luncheon will be at Bertucci's, 51 East Pleasant St., Amherst. We welcome

every woman, whether she is new to our Society or a longer-time member or friend. It is not necessary to RSVP, but if you have questions or want to be on the e-notification list, contact **Janis Gray** (filling in for coordinator **Sophie Rogers**) at jsgray@crocker.com or 413-259-1584.

The Men's Breakfast Group meets on Wednesdays at 7:00 A.M. at Kelly's Restaurant (314 College Street, Amherst). Contact **Michael Sussman** at msussma@music.umass.edu for details.



Religious Education Ministry

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

It is difficult to write about April in the middle of a March snowstorm, but here I go! We have a lot going on in RE this April. Here is a list of descriptions in age order:

Preschool - With **Jacy's** help, the preschoolers will continue to investigate the UU principles through hands-on activities and discussion. The children will also be learning the principle song which should help us all out when it comes to trying to remember all seven of them.

Elementary - We have a small, but steady group of children who have been working with **Lesley** on meditative practices and with me on thinking about elements of worship, doing social action and we have also been learning about important men and women UUs consider sources of our faith.

Coming of Age - In March the COA youth finished learning about the five smooth stones—learn, give, love, work, hope. In April the youth will be talking about the idea of liberal religious faith and will begin writing their credos.

High School - In April the youth will be leading a whole-congregation worship service and also hopefully going on a field trip together. Two of the youth will be going to the UU UN Intergenerational Workshop in NYC.

Bridging - The high school senior youth are invited to work with **Karen Fisk** and myself on their bridging ceremony at the Flower Communion Service in June.

Adult Programming - Have an idea? Come talk to me!

Special Event - RE Family Fun and Pizza Hour - April 8th from 6-7 PM (before the UUSA Contra Dance).

Donations will be gratefully accepted to cover the pizza costs.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to anyone who might like to volunteer with the children downstairs during the spring or in the summer. Come and share your talents, or if you would prefer, accompany me in a planned lesson.

Thank yoUU,

Rebecca Fricke

DRE

Mindfulness Group: UUSA member **Jessica Murphy** offers mindfulness classes to our UUSA congregation. This month the dates and times are Tuesday, April 11 and Tuesday, April 25, 7:00-8:00 p.m. If you are interested in participating, please contact Jess at 413-575-1963 or jessica.mindfulness@gmail.com for details.

Membership

We are delighted to report that three people signed our membership book on March 5: **Naomi Yanis** of Northampton, and **Susanne Personette** and **Jim Lee** of Belchertown (the couple is shown below at the Women's March in Boston on January 22). Welcome to the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst!

Becoming an official member of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst represents a serious step and significant commitment – both to this congregation and to the larger voice of Unitarian Universalism in the world. Membership is not only about what we, as individuals, will get from this UU Society, but what we might have to offer as well. Many of us have found our lives more fulfilled by the act of giving of ourselves to this beloved community. If you are considering membership, we encourage you to talk to the volunteers at the Welcome Table in the Social Hall!



New member Naomi Yanis



New members Susanne Personette and Jim Lee

WEDNESDAY COMMUNITY BREAKFAST

The recent March snowmageddon proved challenging for everyone. However our UU volunteers are dedicated and were able to open up the Meetinghouse and have hot coffee and hot food ready for those who may have no other warm option during the morning. What a gift.

Please consider volunteering an hour or two between 6:00 -11:00 A.M. Wednesday mornings. Craig's Doors shelter is doing very well this year but it is at capacity each night. So our Wednesday morning breakfast means a lot to those guests as well as many of our neighbors in town who enjoy the company and good food provided. Please sign up online and join us. <http://signup.com/go/83M6sv> or email clarebertrand@gmail.com

Our Caring Ministries

“Infinitely more important than sharing one's material wealth is sharing the wealth of ourselves - our time and energy, our passion and commitment, and, above all, our love.” - William E. Simon

Our minister, Caring Circle, and Pastoral Care Team are all available to help during difficult times.

Caring Circle coordinators are **Carolyn Cave** and **Clare Bertrand**. Please contact one of them or your own Caring Person for rides, food, and simple needs. Caring Circle members are **Clare Bertrand, Linda Callahan, Carolyn Cave, Sue Kelly, Karen Mack, Martha Nelson, Susan Rice, Chas Stevenson, Lynn Sussman** and **Gordon Wyse**.

Our Pastoral Care Team coordinator is **Pete Rogers**. Other members are **The Reverend Elizabeth Alcaide, The Reverend Cindy Frado, Bo Mack, Fran Plumer, Libby Stanforth, and Mary Wyse**. Please contact one of them for more complex or personal needs.

We send warm thoughts of caring and support to all those who are ill, bereaved, or struggling in some way, and to those who are caring for them.

Green Sanctuary

Save the date! Climate March in Springfield on Saturday, April 29, coinciding with national and international climate marches that day. Carpooling will be arranged. Details to follow.

The Green Sanctuary Committee will meet on Thursday, April 27, at 7:00 P.M. at the home of **Gordon and Mary Wyse**, 219 Lincoln Avenue, Amherst.

Social Action



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The UUSA recently voted unanimously to sign the UUA/UUSC Declaration of Conscience, a statement about putting our Unitarian Universalist values into action to resist hate, fear and bigotry. Below are resources that make it easy for you to do just this in these times of great challenges to our values. The first three are websites that keep abreast of important policy issues and make it easy for you to contact your elected officials.

1. <https://5calls.org> — really easy. They list about seven issues that change weekly, clear explanations and give names and numbers of who to call.
2. <https://roganslist.blogspot.com> — also gives clear directions about actions to take as well as other information about social actions.
3. 413stayingconnected — <http://eepurl.com/cbMW1L> — a local group sharing information about what is happening in the Pioneer Valley, what you can do and how you can get involved.

These two sites are related to how to put our values into action while shopping, either online or in retail stores.

1. <https://grabyourwallet.org/> — a detailed spreadsheet of companies including ones recommended to patron and others to boycott for various reasons.
2. <https://donegood.co/> — helps consumers discover businesses that align with their values. They just launched a new version of its Chrome extension that makes it easier for people who may wish to boycott certain stores, companies and products.

Just One Thing On the second Sunday of April a basket will be placed in the foyer for donated foods and goods for the Survival Center. During these challenging times, anything given is most appreciated. For information contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, 413-253-0894, mbsem@comcast.net. Thank you!

Not Bread Alone On Saturday, April 29, eight UUs are needed to prepare and serve a scrumptious lunch at this local soup kitchen. No experience is needed as we work under the direction of the kitchen leader. If you can hold a knife, you can help prepare the many dishes we create from salad, side dishes, entrees to dessert. We work in shifts. Meal prep is 9:30 A.M. - noon; serving 11:15 A.M. - 1:15 P.M. and clean-up 12 - @ 2:30 P.M. NBA is located in the lower level of the First Congregational Church with access off the Spring St parking lot. If you can help, please contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, 413-253-0894, mbsem@comcast.net. THANK YOU.

Interdenominational Affairs



Dear Friends,

These are challenging times. People of faith around our country and here in the Pioneer Valley are concerned for the welfare and safety of all God's children and for this precious creation God has given us. On Saturday, April 1 at 7:00 P.M., many congregations are joining together with civic organizations across the valley in a "Justice for All" Sing-along Concert at First Church in Amherst. The concert will be led by Lea Gilmore, a powerful blues/gospel/jazz singer and civic activist, who was recognized by *Essence Magazine* in 2005 as one of the "25 Women Shaping the World." Lea works tirelessly to advance racial justice and build bridges in her native Baltimore. She will be joined by the Amherst Area Gospel Choir along with song leaders Annie Patterson and Peter Blood, creators of the songbooks *Rise Up Singing* and *Rise Again*. This concert is an opportunity to stand together with those facing serious threats to their safety, rights and dignity. Coming together in community helps keep our sense of hope and resilience strong. This event will lift up the work being done by many across the region to protect the rights and dignity of all regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or economic circumstances.

Proceeds from the concert will benefit Springfield Area NAACP and Arise for Social Justice. Suggested donation \$20 adult, \$5 (under 18). No one turned away for lack of funds.

For more information on the concert, visit www.riseupandsing.org/events/justice-amherst.

Yours in peace,

Rev. Vicki Kemper, First Church Amherst (UCC)
Dr. M. Saleem Bajwa, President, Islamic Society of Western Mass
Rabbi Justin David, Congregation B'nai Israel
Naz Mohammed, Hampshire Mosque
Ann McNeal, Clerk, Mt Toby Friends Meeting