

# THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



## Important Information

**STREET ADDRESS:** 121 North Pleasant Street,  
Amherst, MA 01002

**MAILING ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 502, Amherst, MA  
01004-0502

### **INTERIM MINISTER**

Rev. Stephen Cook

413-253-2848 (office) or [minister@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:minister@uusocietyamherst.org)

Contact for an appointment.

### **OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**

Lea Douville

413-253-2848 (office) or [office@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:office@uusocietyamherst.org)

Office hours: 9 AM - 2 PM

### **DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Rebecca Fricke 413-687-8722 or [frickeDRE@gmail.com](mailto:frickeDRE@gmail.com)

### **DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**

Brenda Miller 413-253-7855 or [bmmiller.music@gmail.com](mailto:bmmiller.music@gmail.com)

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

President: Karen Fisk

413-210-0960

[karenmargaretfisk@gmail.com](mailto:karenmargaretfisk@gmail.com)

Vice President: *To be chosen*

Clerk: Lynne Latham

508-308-5877

[latham.lynne.m@gmail.com](mailto:latham.lynne.m@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Peter Lacey

413-665-3198

[placey1@comcast.net](mailto:placey1@comcast.net)

## **N E W S L E T T E R**

Copy Editor: Janis Gray, 413-259-1584  
Production Editor: John Foster, 413-253-2632  
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](mailto: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



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## Schedule of Services

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**Sunday, December 2, 10:30 A.M. – *Letter to the Future***

**The Rev. Cook**

In the distant future, a youth discovers an ancient letter secreted within the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House. What can it say?

**Sunday, December 9, 10:30 A.M. – *Daring Hope***

**The Rev. Cook**

Hanukah is both the commemoration of an historical event and a mythic story that inspires many to this day.

**Sunday, December 16, 10:30 A.M. – *Christmas Pageant***

A whole-congregation service featuring a partly improvisational Christmas Pageant.

*Today is our Dedicated Offering Sunday.*

*Our Holiday Lunch Potluck will immediately follow the service.*

**Sunday, December 23, 10:30 A.M. – *Choose Something Like a Star***

**The Rev. Cook**

It is, of course, the season of the great Christmas star, but in his wonderful poem, Robert Frost reminds us that, in guiding our lives, we may always choose something like a star.

**Monday, December 24**

**5:30 P.M. – *Christmas Eve Family Service***

**The Rev. Cook**

A traditional celebration of the season, along with a visit to two old friends, Frog and Toad, who also keep a special Christmas Eve.

**7:00 P.M. – *Keeping Watch***

**The Rev. Cook**

By now, all of the players in the traditional Christmas story are very familiar to us. But what of the shepherd who did not go to Bethlehem?

**Sunday, December 30, 10:30 A.M. – *The Fish Who Dares to Develop Lungs***

**Carol Rothery and Janis Gray**

Today is the second-to-last day of our meetinghouse's 125<sup>th</sup> year. After our forebears joyfully opened its doors, they'd face hard times again and again. But they persevered, leading one minister to liken them to "the fish who dares to develop lungs." As one year draws to a close and another begins, let's reflect on what it takes to move from adversity into accomplishment – both as a community and in our personal lives.

*Many sermons and readings are posted on our website, [www.uusocietyamherst.org](http://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.*

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## Along the Way

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A traditional description of Christmas, one steeped in piety and sentiment, is "The Season of Miracles." Miracle, as it is generally understood in this context, refers to the supposed conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit of God to the young Virgin Mary, followed by his birth in that humble stable in Bethlehem, a birth announced by a "heavenly host" of angels. Such a tale fits the definition of miracle, "an object of wonder," a thing unexpected and unexplainable by any normal standards.

Miracle stories, if intended to be taken literally, have long since been "outlawed" by science. There are still certainly many "objects of wonder" in the universe but science regards them as just *not yet* explained. Rejecting supernatural causes, science regards them as susceptible eventually to explanation as our knowledge of the universe grows.

There is, as well, a looser definition of miracle, that of the unexplained and unaccountable that just seems to happen through grace, serendipity or the surprising power of love and good will. This kind of "miracle" occurs when good things that don't need to happen do happen, when people do kind and loving things they don't need to do for people they don't even know, when people sacrifice their own time, talent and treasure for causes that might not personally benefit them in the least. This is the kind of "miracle" I have in mind when I say that

every Unitarian Universalist congregation is an ongoing miracle.

Unitarian Universalism holds out no promise of supernatural rewards for believing and belonging; we hold out no threat of supernatural punishment for not believing and belonging. We offer next to no answers to the questions of the religious quest, or perhaps, a bewildering variety of different answers. In any case, those looking for theological certainty will not find it in our churches.

We cherish personal and congregational independence so highly that it's often difficult to agree on much of anything or financially to support our regional and national organizations. Some of our historic congregations in this area feel the weight of their heritage so heavily it's hard for them to acknowledge changes that have occurred since the 17<sup>th</sup> Century; some of our newest congregations out west think they invented the whole movement 30 years ago.

So why, given all that openness and uncertainty, do so many nonetheless give up their Sunday mornings, often the only free day of the week, to come to church? Why do so many give of their time, talent and treasure to an enterprise that does not always reflect their particular beliefs, or perhaps, evinces more belief than they care to espouse? By the expected and normal standards of explanation, we should probably all be found sleeping late on Sunday, or holding on to our precious free time with family and friends instead of going to one more evening meeting. By those standards we should not be handing over substantial amounts of money to an institution that pays no tangible dividends and, in fact, is prone to asking for more.

Why do we do it? Personally, I call it a miracle — and leave God out of it, if you wish. I believe that there is a concatenation of grace or loving, human serendipity that moves us all, week by week, year by year, to manifest these ongoing miracles we call UU congregations. We don't have to, we want to, we choose to. In this "season of miracles" especially I am reminded that your congregation, as all UU congregations, is an ongoing, living miracle, and for that, I humbly offer thanks.

Rev. Steve

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## 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. 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.

Our November offering raised \$990.85 for the **Friends of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke, Inc.** Our December Dedicated Offering will be for **The Literacy Project.**

**“Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope.... Literacy is, finally, the road to human progress and the means through which every man, woman and child can realize his or her full potential.” Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the UN.**

*Director: Judith Roberts*

Imagine a world where you can not read or do simple calculations required in grocery shopping, or a world where most jobs that you know you can do are closed because you did not graduate high school. It's a pretty bleak scenario and the limited adult education programs that exist to address these issues are either too costly, not flexible or inconveniently located. The Literacy Project has made strides to address these issues and since 1984 has provided opportunities for a better future.

The Literacy Project offers free adult literacy and high school equivalency classes in five locations in western Massachusetts: Amherst, Northampton, Greenfield, Orange and Ware. It serves over 400 adult students each year, helping them to build reading, writing, math and computer skills in an environment that encourages and nurtures critical thinking, dialogue and confidence. Students learn at their own pace in small, comfortable classes taught by professional instructors and supported by dedicated community volunteers. The project supports students to take the next steps in their life whether it be college, job training or employment.

Adult students, once forgotten and marginalized, not only learn the basics to move on and improve their lives and their families, many have fallen in love with reading.

One adult student, Benny, a homeless veteran, read his first book ever in his Literacy Project class. When asked what he wanted to do next, he said, "I want to read and read and read!" Another student, Alana, said, "What this program has given me you cannot begin to imagine. It has given me back my tomorrows."

The funds received in this donation drive will be used to buy much-needed books and educational material.

The Literacy Project...building a bridge from misery to hope.

For more information go to <https://www.literacyproject.org/>

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#### IN MEMORIAM

George Theodore Sulzner III

December 3, 1937 – October 28, 2018

We mourn the unexpected passing of a longtime and very active member of our UU Society, George Sulzner. He and his twin sister Barbara were born in Pittsburgh, PA. George developed a life-long love of baseball and other sports at an early age, and an interest in political science while a student at Muskingum College. He earned a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Michigan, and came to Amherst in 1968 to join the faculty of the political science department at the University of Massachusetts, where he taught American Politics, Personnel Management, Union and Management Relations, and Canadian Studies. Between 2001-2007, he served as Vice President and President for the Association of Canadian Studies in the United States (ACSUS). ACSUS presented him with a 20/20 Vision Award in 2009, and its prestigious Donner Medal in 2011 for distinguished achievement, scholarship, and program innovation.

George loved singing with his wife, **Fran Plumer**, in our UU choir and in the Valley Light Opera, Hampshire Choral Society and Berkshire Choral International. In addition to Fran, he leaves behind his daughters Sarah and Katie Sulzner and sons-in-law Alex Darcy and Jerome Christensen; his stepson Stephen Snyder; his sister Barbara Greenwood and family; his former wife, Lee Bridegam; and grandchildren William, Lydia, Zeya, Arlo, and Connor.

George will be deeply missed. A memorial service and celebration of his life was held on November 9 at our UU Society. Donations in his honor may be made to our UU Society's Music Program or to Craig's Doors in Amherst.

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### Notes from the President

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Dear friends,

The Board met November 11 to consider the proposed Ministerial Compensation Package our Ministerial Search Team will include with our Congregational Record as we seek a new, settled minister.

Our conversation about meeting the monetary goals of this package and the increased hours we would like to offer our staff was spirited and heartfelt and overwhelmingly filled with hope.

To begin this meeting, we checked in by answering why we give money to the UUSA. The answers were variations on a theme.

- “Because Unitarian Universalism is a transformative faith and I want this congregation to always be here ready to welcome those who walk through our doors.”
- “Because it is the right thing to do.”
- “Because I believe in the power of the next generation of youth brought up as UUs.”
- “Because the messages we hear in this Society are an important antidote to what we are hearing in the larger world.”
- “Because within this community, I feel at home.”

The Board has time and time again come to the Congregation in need of greater monetary commitment in order to realize tremendous visions — a brand-new, expanded and refurbished meetinghouse; a larger compensation for a new minister to enable us to continue to share our faith of hope and light and love and faith-in-action with more and more people. And time and time again you have all stepped up and said: “I will help!”

The Board approved \$63,000 (salary and housing) with a total compensation package of \$87,000 (including salary, housing, development, dental, etc.), which is slightly larger than last year’s and in compliance with the UUA’s recommendation for a church our size in our region. We approved this package with the knowledge that we are ready to work hard to realize the vision of a deep, powerful, outward reaching and inward nourishing ministry that will continue to amplify the message of Unitarian Universalism: Learn, Love, Work, Give, Hope.

Yours in faith, Karen

Please note the topics of upcoming Board Meetings:

- December: Committee Term Limits, Succession Planning, and Goals
- January: Canvass: Canvass Task Force
- February: Canvass: Dedicated Offerings and Fundraising/Candidating Week Planning
- March: Candidating Week Planning: scheduled for April 27-May 5.
- April: Our Children and Youth: The future of our congregations.
- May: Annual Meeting and Board Handbook, Bylaw Changes (New board members)
- June: Annual Meeting

Please note:

- Board Notes from our clerk **Lynne Latham** will appear regularly in our e-newsletters to keep you aware of Board meeting work. Congregants can also read full minutes posted in the office.
- Board members are always available to chat. Please don’t hesitate to ask questions and to simply check in and thank a Board member for the work they are doing. Board members are: myself, **Lynne Latham, Peter Lacey, Bo Mack, Fran Plumer, Emily Shankle, Rob Fuderich, Casey Flueckiger, Jeanne Ballantine, Rosie Cowell, Susan Rice, and Joe Flueckiger**, our leadership consultant.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to **Brooke Burrows**, who signed our Membership Book on November 11, and to **Linda Robinson, Rachel Gibson and Craig Gibson**, who joined our UU Society on November 18!

STAFF NEWS

**We welcome Phil Gilfeather-Girton** as our bookkeeper. Phil is a consulting bookkeeper with decades of experience. He applied to the job for our congregation specifically because we are a Unitarian Universalist community doing good work. The search committee – Elliot Kelly, Peter Lacey, and Karen Fisk – was very impressed with Phil’s skills, his ability to explain finances, and his willingness to help us all better understand the Society’s financial systems.

**Report on the UUA’s Interim Training**

*by Rebecca Fricke*

The online Professional Interim Training (PIT) offered by the UUA was a valuable experience for **Rev. Steve Cook**, DRE **Rebecca Fricke** and Office Administrator **Lea Douville** for several reasons, including

providing:

- an increased awareness of the Interim process
- an overview of the challenges involved for everyone in the organization during an interim session
- a shared vocabulary
- and an opportunity to work together on a hypothetical plan.

During the eight-week session the UUSA team met and held discussions based on the classwork (blog postings, readings and videos). The final project required Rev. Steve, Lea and Rebecca to think about a hypothetical situation from their three perspectives. The hypothetical plan which they came up with presented the hypothetical board of trustees of the made-up church a way of moving forward which included re-evaluating the church's mission statement. Although not exactly applicable to the UUSA's situation, they are in fact putting elements of their plan in place.

*“Having worked through the past two years of Interim, it was interesting to learn the vocabulary and the theory behind the process of organizational change. I think the UUSA has held remarkably steady through what could have been an incredibly rocky time. I think that in this third year of Interim we should push ourselves to really open up and embrace the uncertainty that is part of experimenting with new ways of operating and new ways of interacting. I am confident that Rev. Steve, Lea and I can help the congregation through the next Interim steps.”*

– Rebecca Fricke

*“The PIT Training created a venue for me to learn from other's experiences – especially my new colleagues – in navigating the complexities and opportunities of the Interim period here at the UUSA. I leave the course with increased sensitivity to the concerns of the congregation and admiration for the deep level of commitment I witness here on a daily basis through my interaction with members and friends of the UUSA.”*

– Lea Douville

*“While for me, the PIT materials were somewhat of a refresher, that in no way diminishes their relevance or importance. It is always worthwhile to revisit familiar materials and apprehend them in new ways based on new situations and with new colleagues, as for me here at UUSA. I think we established that the interim period is not something that just ‘happens’ to a church, but rather an important inflection point during which staff can help lead the congregation in ways most needed based on the staff's analysis of the church's history, assets and challenges.”*

– Rev. Stephen Cook

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## Fundraising



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### STONE SOUP BAZAAR & CAFE – December 1 – DON'T MISS IT!

Back by popular demand, we will be hosting this fundraising event again on Saturday, December 1 from 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. Save some of your holiday shopping and enjoy the many artisans and craftspeople who will be present. And don't forget the yummy homemade soups, breads and baked goods available for breakfast and lunch. Parents, grandparents and people of all ages are sure to find that special something for the people on their lists.



A beautiful quilt has been donated by **Rachel Peterson** for the Quilt Raffle this year! The quilt and the famous UU gift baskets are on display and raffle tickets will be available for purchase.

Save the date and join in the fun! We'll be looking for volunteers for day-of jobs such as helping vendors, staffing the kitchen and Café and hosting kids' activities.

If you are able to help, email **Libby Stanforth** at [bstanforth@comcast.net](mailto:bstanforth@comcast.net).

## STONE SOUP BAZAAR: Gift Basket Raffle

Each year UU committees contribute baskets to raffle off at the Stone Soup Bazaar, this year on December 1. (The raffle is at 3:30 P.M. that day.)

The baskets are creative and fun and make wonderful gifts! And this is a great fundraiser for UUSA. Please buy raffle tickets! They will be on sale at the Bazaar: 1 for \$1; 6 for \$5; and 12 for \$10. (Note: The odds of winning are usually pretty good!)

Thanks for any help to make this a successful fundraiser! For questions contact **Jeanne Ballantine**, or 937-767-

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## Music Notes

We mourn the loss of one of our wonderful tenors, **George Sulzner**. The choir misses him dearly. George was a long-time member of the choir at the UUSA, and involved in many other choral organizations in the region over many years. Contributions can be made in George's honor to Craig's Doors in Amherst or to the UUSA Music Fund.

December is always exciting at the UUSA, and the music will be plentiful and beautiful, celebrating the many holidays of the season.

If you would like to join the choir, please see **Brenda Miller** after a service or email:

[bmmiler.music@gmail.com](mailto:bmmiler.music@gmail.com).

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## Ministerial Search Committee

Our Negotiating team has written up a Ministerial Agreement with help from the Personnel Committee and recommended a salary. The Board of Trustees had a special meeting to discuss the proposed budget for a new Minister and approved our recommendation. The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), reasonably enough, raised their guidelines for fair compensation this year in order to offer a cost-of-living increase, so we asked the Board to increase the amount that we will be offering. We know it will be a challenge to raise a higher amount for our new minister's salary than what we approved for last year's budget, but we also know that we must offer a competitive package. While we love **Rev. Steve**, we are very hopeful that we will call a new settled minister this spring, rather than embarking on a fourth year of Interim Ministry.

We are still compiling information and updating the work of last year's Search Committee. By the time you read this, we will have finished that work and are about to post our "Congregational Record" on the UUA website. Ministers who are "in search" will have access to it in December. Hopefully, many ministers will be intrigued when they read about us and will throw their proverbial hats in the ring. In the meantime, we will be getting ready to interview applicants and their references by deciding on interview questions and practicing our Skype interview skills.

One of the things the UUA recommends for all congregations in Search is to do a "Beyond Categorical Thinking" workshop to help us think about our biases – all the "isms" that get in the way of right relationship – to help us proceed with an open mind. The congregation did a workshop last year, so we did not want to ask everyone to do it again. We did want to spend some time on it as a committee, before we begin reading applications and interviewing applicants. **Jess** and **Kiana** planned a discussion for us, which we did as part of one of our weekly meetings. We know there is always more work to do, but the discussion was very helpful.

Thanks to all of you who are doing the congregation's other important work. We are grateful for your support, as we continue our work on the Search Committee.

Carol Johnson, Charlie Atwood, Janis Gray, Kiana Diggs, Sue Kelly, Jess Murphy and Louise Grosslein (co-chairs)

## UUSA Holiday Lunch Potluck

Sunday December 16<sup>th</sup>

Immediately following the Solstice Service

Suggested Food Contributions by Last name:

A-E: Desserts

F-K: Main Dishes

L-S: Salads

T-X: Main Dishes

Come Enjoy our Community,  
Holiday Music and Good Cheer!

Questions? Call Rebecca Fricke 413-687-8722.



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## Religious Education



Happy Holidays!

May this holiday season be filled with love and light. Here's a sampling of what is happening this December:

- The Whole Congregation service on December 16 will feature a partly improvisational Christmas Pageant.
- Elementary will continue to work on learning the 7 UU Principles using drama, art and action.
- In the preschool **Jacy** will talk about families and start to explore the different winter holidays celebrated around the world.

Youth Group will be cooking for Lucio Perez and his family on December 9.

Thank you to the adult Sanctuary Keepers – **Kyle Cave**, **Elliott Kelly** and **Steve Ransford** – for welcoming the middle schoolers into the Sanctuary Keeper program. Once a month the youth meet at 9:45 to learn and do one part of the service. By the end of the year these youth will be familiar with the whole Sunday worship process and I am hoping the experience will help them feel like they are an integral part of our congregation.

If you are interested in getting involved with RE please come and talk to me. We welcome new ideas and new perspectives.

Finally, I want to say how grateful I am to the volunteers who are putting time and energy into making the RE program vibrant.

YoUUrS,

Rebecca Fricke, DRE



## ***Resisting White Supremacy Workshop Series***

The “Dismantling White Supremacy” Task Force will be hosting a workshop series at the UU meetinghouse entitled “Resisting White Supremacy.” The workshop consists of eight two-hour sessions, one night a week. The focus is on allowing white people to understand the racial component of their identity, how to live with authenticity and integrity as a white person in a society grounded in white supremacy. Although the workshop is free, a very important part of the workshop is that participants need to commit to the entire eight weeks, not just come to a session or two.

Ken Wagner, president of the UUA’s *Allies for Equity*, has facilitated these workshops at more than a dozen congregations and community groups across New England. He will be speaking at the Sunday Service on January 20. **The eight-session workshop begins Wednesday, January 30.** The two-hour sessions will begin at 7:00 P.M.

We want to provide this workshop to our congregation, AND if there is room, open it up to our neighboring UU congregations.

If you are interested in participating or have any questions please contact **Susan Rice** or **Steve Rice** at 413-253-4485.

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## **Denominational Affairs**



The Winter 2018 issue of *UU World* includes a story about Jeffrey Campbell, an African-American who was our part-time minister from 1967-1974. By the age of 10, his family had begun attending the First Universalist Society of Nashua, NH. When he was 12, his father was killed in a racial incident. Campbell was ordained as a Universalist minister in 1935, and in 1940 wrote an essay for the Universalist publication *The Christian Leader* about the latent discrimination he’d observed in a congregation that professed the universal brotherhood of man.

When current members of the Nashua congregation learned that Campbell, his wife and his sister were buried in an unmarked grave in a Nashua cemetery, they began raising funds last spring to erect a marker. This fall, they renamed their chapel Campbell Chapel.

## **ION (Interfaith Opportunity Network) Corner**

At the November ION meeting, people shared a deep sense of grief and determination to respond to the Pittsburgh massacre. We decided to write the following statement for *The Daily Hampshire Gazette* as well as for inclusion at the Tuesday Interfaith Thanksgiving service or in the program:

The Interfaith Opportunities Network is united in our deep grief in response to the recent senseless tragedy at Tree of Life Congregation in Pittsburgh.

We are not immune in the valley to such hateful bigotry. Two years ago, hateful and horrifically threatening statements towards Jews and African Americans were painted on Mount Tom. The next day interfaith residents and leaders climbed to the area to remove these acts of desecration.

Last November over 40 area faith congregations and businesses joined together with ION to support the opening of Hampshire Mosque's new home on Route 9 in Hadley. Our intention was to express our solidarity and support for area Muslims as they established a permanent House of worship.

We are all enriched by the diverse faiths, races and national backgrounds that make up our community in the valley. In this time when many are using fear and hatred to drive people apart, we must stand together in solidarity with all who are threatened and intentionally targeted. Attacks on any specific group, such as Jews, Muslims, African Americans, immigrants and sexual minorities, are attacks on all of us.

The letter to the editor also encouraged people to attend the Interfaith Thanksgiving service being held at South Congregational Church the Tuesday before Thanksgiving with an offering going to the Jewish Family Services of Western Mass for work with Jewish refugees.

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## Social Events

**The Women's Lunch Group** meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at noon for spirited conversation over local, inexpensive cuisine. Our luncheon December 13 will be at 30 Boltwood (at the Lord Jeffery Inn, 30 Boltwood Ave., 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 **Sophie Rogers** at [sophiesailing@gmail.com](mailto:sophiesailing@gmail.com) or 413-772-9814.

**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 [msusma@music.umass.edu](mailto:msusma@music.umass.edu) for details.

**Come to our Holiday Potluck Lunch on December 16!** See page 8 for details.

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## Social Action

**Just One Thing** On **December 9**, the second Sunday of month, a collection for the Survival Center will occur. Our Society has a very long history of helping the Survival Center fulfill its mission of helping community people in their daily lives feed and support their families. As the days get colder, everyone needs more nutrition. **Can you give just one item to help a needy neighbor?** Two weeks before, more specific information is provided of specific food needed in the weekly Bulletin. A basket will be placed in the foyer for these items. For information contact Mary Beth Seminario, [mbsem@comcast.net](mailto:mbsem@comcast.net), 413-253-0894.

**Not Bread Alone** On **Saturday, December 29**, our Society is responsible for providing lunch at Not Bread Alone. Eight people are needed to help and serve the meal as well as help clean up. We have fun and meet new people as time passes quickly while creating new dishes. We work in shifts: cooking 9:30 A.M. -12:00 P.M.; serving 11:45 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.; and cleanup 12:00 - @ 2:30 P.M. No experience is necessary as we work under the direction of the kitchen crew chief. NBA is located in the lower rear of First Congregational Church with access off the Spring St. parking lot. If you can help please contact Mary Beth Seminario, [mbsem@comcast.net](mailto:mbsem@comcast.net), 413-253-0894.

**Sanctuary Help Needed – Cooking for Lucio** The week of **December 10** our Society will be responsible for providing evening meals for **Lucio Perez and his family at First Congregational Church in Amherst**. The Youth Group and other adults have volunteered. THURSDAY DECEMBER 13 is the only night people are needed to cook for Lucio and three of his children. Can you help? Please contact Mary Beth Seminario, [mbsem@comcast.net](mailto:mbsem@comcast.net), 413-253-0894. THANK YOU.

**UUSA Community Breakfast Needs You!** The UUSA has been providing volunteers for the free Community Breakfast in the Willie Eaton Social Hall every Wednesday for three years. We serve 80-120 guests a freshly cooked hot meal of eggs, home fries, sausages, pastries, cereal, toast, juice and coffee or tea – all provided by Amherst's Craig's Doors. Our breakfast is important as the Amherst Survival Center, which is open other days, is closed on Wednesday. Our breakfast team works closely with Craig's Doors, which helps people find ways to become empowered and improve the quality of their lives through the creation of safe, respectful shelter and housing. We regularly experience a shortage of volunteers. Dishwashers and cleanup crew are especially difficult positions to fill, but many other jobs are also available. Contact **Clare Bertrand** at [clarebertrand@gmail.com](mailto:clarebertrand@gmail.com). She will send you a weekly email reminder with a link where you can see what positions are available for each week. For questions or more information contact Clare, or **Sophie Rogers**, [sophiesailing@gmail.com](mailto:sophiesailing@gmail.com).

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## Our Caring Ministries



Our Minister, Caring Circle and Pastoral Care Team are all available to help during difficult times. They also invite you to read the poem by the Rev. John Q. Parkhurst on the following page.

**Our Caring Circle** coordinator is **Catharine Porter**. Please contact her or your own Caring Person for rides, food, and simple needs. Other Caring Circle members are **Linda Callahan, Carolyn Holstein, Gabriella Horvay, Mary Latham, Martha Nelson, Susan Rice, Lynn Sussman and Gordon Wyse**.

**Our Pastoral Care Team** co-coordinators are **Pete Rogers and Mary Wyse**. Other members are **Rev. Elizabeth Alcaide, Rev. Stephen Cook, Charlie Atwood, Rob Fuderich, Mary Herman, Carol Johnson, and Fran Plumer**. Please contact one of them for more complex or personal needs.

We send love and support to all those who are struggling with illness, bereavement, or difficulties of any kind in your lives or the lives of your loved ones.

Let us possess ourselves

calm in mind...quiet in heart.

Let us take time to watch the candlelight

and know it is the same

vast glory of the shimmering stars.

Let us be of time dispossessed,

be present at the birth

and humbly stand in awe.

Let us in quiet, by the candle glow,

be one with the Universe

beyond space and time—

Be disciples of Love's eternal Light.

Rev. John Q. Parkhurst

(adapted EHA)