

THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

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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

Contact for an appointment.

CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR:

Lea Douville

413-253-2848 (office) or office@uusocietyamherst.org

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 10:A.M.-2:00 P.M.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Rebecca Fricke 413-687-8722 or rebfricke@gmail.com

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Brenda Miller

413-253-7855 or bmmiller.music@gmail.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

President: Karen Fisk

karenmargaretfisk@gmail.com

413-210-0960

Vice President: *To be chosen*

Clerk: Lynne Latham

508-308-5877

latham.lynne.m@gmail.com

Treasurer: Peter Lacey

413-665-3198

placey1@comcast.net

NEWSLETTER

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.

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 consistent style. Thank you!

Printed on recycled paper



Schedule of Services

April 7, 10:30 A.M. – *Radical Hope*

The Rev. Fred Small

Any contemplation of global climate change, its frightening consequences, and the tardiness and timidity of nations in response is necessarily a meditation on hope. When the earth and its peoples are in such distress, where do we find hope?

A Unitarian Universalist pastor, singer-songwriter, and former environmental lawyer, Rev. Fred Small is Minister for Climate Justice at Arlington Street Church, Boston. Cited by Bill McKibben as “one of the key figures in the religious environmental surge,” Fred left parish ministry in 2015 to devote his energies to climate advocacy.

April 14, 10:30 A.M. – *Render Unto Caesar*

The Rev. Cook

In some circles, “Tax” is a dirty word, akin to thievery. Not so; taxes are simply what we owe to one another in order to maintain a civilized and decent society.

April 21, 10:30 A.M. – *The Spring-Inspired Word*

The Rev. Cook

“We need a celebration that speaks the spring-inspired word about life and death about us as we live and die.”

Today is our Dedicated Offering Sunday.

April 28, 10:30 A.M. – *First Candidating Sunday*

We hope to welcome our candidate for settled minister into our pulpit this morning. Stay tuned!

Texts of sermons are available to members and friends of UUSA by request. Send email to office@uussocietyamherst.org

Many sermons and readings are posted on our website, www.uussocietyamherst.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.

Texts of other sermons are available to members and friends of UUSA by request. Send email to office@uussocietyamherst.org

Along the Way

New England springs are wondrous fickle. There are days, even a week or so, that almost make the winter worthwhile, only to turn surly and March-like the next. We are ready for the sweet, true warmth of June well before it arrives, ready to put away the boots and heavy clothing. “Won’t it be nice,” we think, “when we can just get up and walk out the door without a thought in whatever we happen to be wearing?” Yes, it will be so!

Winter in our region is a heavy season. It has its blessings; many relish the short, chill days that invite us to activities we can do in no other season—skiing, sledding, skating—while the slowing and darkening of the season can be conducive to gathering in, to thoughtfulness. As one who reads and writes much, I appreciate those blessings. However, even for me it is well that winter does not last too long. The inwardness can too easily cloy, the thoughtfulness become self-absorption. I am ready, then, to let go and turn outward, releasing what I no longer need, opening myself to the new.

I like these thoughts on such a letting go by the contemporary American poet Wendell Berry.

A Purification

At start of spring I open a trench
in the ground. I put into it
the winter’s accumulation of paper,
pages I do not want to read
again, useless word, fragments,
errors. And I put into it
the contents of the outhouse:

light of the sun, growth of the ground,
finished with one of their journeys.
To the sky, to the wind, then,
and to the faithful trees, I confess
my sins: that I have not been happy
enough, considering my good luck;
have listened to too much noise;
have been inattentive to wonders;
have lusted after praise.
And then upon the gathered refuse
of mind and body, I close the trench,
folding shut against the dark,
the deathless earth. Beneath that seal
the old escapes in the new.

Wendell Berry

However it may be for you that you greet the spring, may it be welcome; may it bring the blessings you need.
Rev. Steve

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.

Figures for the March Dedicated Offering for DIAL/SELF will be published in the May newsletter.

The Dedicated Offering on April 21 will be for Amherst ABC House. Our Society is joining other Interfaith Opportunity Network members in sponsoring ABC's 50th Anniversary Gala this June. ABC, which relies entirely on private donations, provides exceptionally bright minority youth from poor school districts the opportunity to live in Amherst and attend Amherst Regional High School. Ninety-five percent of its 125 graduates have attended college. The money raised will go towards repairing and updating their 150-year-old Prospect St. house. Please help the ABC students keep the roof over their heads. Thank you.

Message from the President

Hello friends,

We are part of a big movement, a life-celebrating, earth-sustaining, caring-for-humanity, justice-making, faith-exploring movement. As part of the family of Unitarian Universalist faith communities throughout the region, nation, and world, we have opportunities to meet and learn from UUs in a variety of ways. The New England Region Unitarian Universalist Association and the national Unitarian Universalist Association offer learning and governance opportunities that can help shape our own faith communities and the larger faith movement for the good.

If you are not already signed up to receive the New England Region UUA newsletter, please sign up. The Board and Staff and many Committees have taken workshops and courses offered by this organization that have truly helped us better understand and strive for good things (Spiritual Leadership, Interim Ministry Training, Retaining Members). You can sign up here: <https://www.uua.org/new-england>

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) is the central organization for the Unitarian Universalist religious movement in the United States. The UUA's 1000+ member congregations are committed to Seven Principles that include the worth of each person, the need for justice and compassion, and the right to choose one's own beliefs. Our faith communities promote these principles through regular worship, learning and personal growth, shared connection and care, social justice action and service, celebration of life's transitions, and much more.

One opportunity we have to be directly involved in the UUA is to participate in the General Assembly (GA). In addition to every UU being invited to attend, we are allowed to send up to three voting delegates who we choose from the membership of our congregation. Last year Susan and Steve Rice attended GA as our delegates. One of the results of their attendance is the outstanding workshop series they are hosting on challenging notions of white supremacy in complement to the UUA's charge to Dismantle White Supremacy.

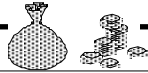
The General Assembly this year is in Spokane, Washington, June 19-23. Its theme is The Power of We. If you are interested in attending as a delegate, please contact Karen Fisk at KarenMargaretFisk@gmail.com. The Board is determining policy on how to choose delegates at our Board meeting this month because we are very interested in promoting our congregation's participation in these larger faith gatherings. (Early bird registration for delegates and anyone who wants to attend end April 30 and the rates go up May 1.)

Please note, the Board has a new bulletin board outside of the office downstairs. On this you can find upcoming Board Meeting dates, topics, and contact information if you have a request for the Board. You will also find a financial dashboard and our current budget.

Yours in faith,
Karen

PS: We are in need of a librarian to organize the wonderful collection of books we have. If you are interested, please contact me.

Fundraising



Mark Your Calendars!!! May 18th...Talents and Treasures Service Auction

We are hoping *everyone and all of us* will be a part of this **fun and purposeful event.**

A focus of this year's auction is to provide offerings that appeal to **families with young children.** And to honor that focus, there will be a children's party downstairs with some very special activities during the auction.

Because this is our most important fundraiser, it's important that we all participate by offering a service, a talent or a treasure. If you are struggling with figuring out what you will offer, please talk with one of the members of this year's Auction Task Force. Stop by the Auction Table in the social hall during coffee hour, or give one of us a call.

Donation forms are due April 7. You can pick up blank ones and turn in the filled-out forms in the lobby of the meetinghouse.

Mary Herman, Lisa Cyr, Carolyn Cave, Fran Plumer, Susan Rice, Rachel Peterson and Polly Peterson

Religious Education Ministry



Preschool - With **Jacy's** help the preschoolers will continue to investigate the UU principles through hands-on activities and discussions.

Elementary - This spring we will begin a unit about the sources of our faith, religious symbolism, and we will learn about important faith leaders who are often cited in UU worship and work.

Sanctuary Keepers - The middle school youth will continue to serve as Keepers once a month. During our second Sunday monthly sessions we will continue our discussion about elements of worship.

High School - At this point we have one youth involved in Green Sanctuary, one on the Board of Trustees and two in the Preschool with **Jacy.** I am hoping to find specific ways our youth can be integrated into our community. If you have ideas of how youth could help in your committee work, please let me know. In April we have two youth and a chaperone attending the UU UN Spring Symposium.

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
Director of Religious Education

Social Events



April 13th at the UUSA

RE Pizza Party

5-6 PM

Come eat pizza and play games.

Donations towards the pizza gladly accepted.

UUSA Contra Dance

6-8 PM

Fun for all ages— Bring family and friends!

No Experience Necessary

\$5/adult and kids are free

Music by the Grosslein Family

Calling by Anne Louise White

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 April 11 will be at a location to be determined on March 28 – watch your weekly announcements for updates. 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 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 msussma@music.umass.edu for details.



Music Notes

Concert of Music by Women Composers

When: Thursday, April 25, 2019, 7:30 P.M.

Where: **Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst (UUSA)**

Who:

Brenda Moore Miller, Music Director at the UUSA

Suzanne Bona, flautist and host of Public Radio's "Sunday Baroque" classical music radio show

Nancy Babb, pianist

Justina Golden, Mezzo-soprano

Peter Shea, Baritone, and

Cantabile vocal ensemble.

Music for piano, flute, and voices, spanning many centuries and continents.

Reception to follow.

Suggested Donation: \$10

A Benefit Concert for NELCWIT (New England Learning Center for Women in Transition) and the George Sulzner Music Fund at the UUSA.

April 13 Meetinghouse Clean Up

Everyone in the congregation is invited to help make our meetinghouse sparkling clean again. Please put April 13 (not April 6, as was reported in the March newsletter) on your calendar now. We will work from 10:00 A.M. to approximately 2:00 P.M. We will dust and wash and vacuum and have lots of fun doing it together.

Anne Perkins

Meetinghouse Committee Chair

Ministerial Search Committee

By the time you read this, we will have finished our three pre-candidating weekends. On one memorable snowy Sunday, we planned to meet at 7:30 A.M. in the CVS parking lot. Charlie had borrowed a Valley Transporter van, so we knew we had a professional driver to navigate the slippery roads as we headed north. Some of us are challenged by early mornings in the best of circumstances. That Sunday was the first day of Daylight Savings Time, which hardly qualifies as a good day to have a deadline that's earlier than usual. There were various issues with failed alarms, including one frantic moment when Louise grabbed a remote and tried to answer it instead of picking up the nearby phone that was ringing. (Daylight Savings Time – remember? It was dark!) Our committee has had some fun times together during the search, along with a certain amount of stress and strain. But we are still a solid group, moving along through the process. And Louise may find a new place for the remote that usually lives right next to her phone!

Thanks to **Polly Peterson** who preached at a neutral pulpit for us. We had set it up to give ourselves some flexibility, but didn't end up using it. Polly reported that the weather was terrible that Sunday, too, with icy roads on the way to the service. Everything worked out well for her and we are very grateful for her help!

In late March we sent our ranked list of ministers to the UUA. We certainly hope one of them will end up being our official candidate. If so, that minister will spend a week with the whole congregation in April.

SAVE THE DATES! April 28 through May 5: Assuming we are fortunate enough to find a match for our

congregation, we will invite them to come here for **Candidating Week**. During that week, **Rev. Steve** would be away, and the candidate would serve as our minister.

April 28: The candidate for minister would lead our **Sunday service**. We would have a lunch for the minister and the congregation after the service.

April 29 – May 4: Committees, staff and congregants would meet with the minister/candidate

May 5: The candidate minister would lead a second Sunday service. We would have a **congregational meeting after the service when members would vote** on whether they think the minister would be a good fit for our congregation. If so, we would “call” the minister to serve our congregation.

As of April, we will be able to tell you whether or not we have a candidate. If not, we’ll stay in confidentiality mode as we continue to try and find a minister. If we do have a candidate, we will join you in looking forward to candidating week. Thank you for trusting us to do this work for all of us.

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



WELCOMING CONGREGATION RENEWAL

Join the UUSA in marching at the Northampton Pride Parade

May 4, 2019 @10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.

(more exact times will become available as plans are set)

The UUSA is marching to show our Pride and love!

Plans are in place to meet up with the Northampton UU before the parade for an informal breakfast and there is talk of sharing a table where we can put out our Society’s information and answer public questions.

Will you join us?

Please contact Rebecca Fricke, DRE
413-687-8722

dre@uusocietyamherst.org



Green Sanctuary

Please join us! Earth Day service and workshop on April 7 with Rev. Fred Small, UU minister, singer-songwriter, and climate activist. Please sign up so we can plan for lunch.

Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst

GIVE LIGHT: SPIRITUAL NURTURE FOR CLIMATE ACTIVISM

An interactive, multifaith workshop led by
Rev. Fred Small

APRIL 7, SUNDAY

12:30 - 3:00 PM

SOCIAL HALL

\$10 FEE (\$5 FOR STUDENTS)

LUNCH INCLUDED

The workshop is preceded by a service at 10:30, led
by Rev. Fred Small. All are welcome.

Please register here:

<http://www.uusocietyamherst.org/events/give-light/>

For more information, see the link above.

If you have questions, call the office at 413-253-2848

Social Action



Not Bread Alone On Saturday, March 30, eight UUs are needed to provide a noontime meal. It's a great way to meet new people, provide great food and have fun. No experience is needed as we work under an experienced kitchen leader. We work in shifts: Cooking 9:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.; serving 11:45 A.M. - @ 1 :30 P.M.; cleanup 12 - @ 2:30 P.M. Not Bread Alone is located in the lower rear of First Congregational Church with access off Spring St. If you'd like to help or for information, please contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, 253-0904; mbsem@comcast.net.

Just One Thing On April 14, the second Sunday of the month, a collection for the **Amherst Survival Center** occurs. A basket is placed in the foyer for these items. Suggestions of specific items needed at that time will be listed in the announcements two weeks before. Thanks for your ongoing support of our neighbors in need. For information contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, mbsem@comcast.net or 253-0894.

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. She will send you a weekly email reminder with a link where you can see what positions are available for each week.

Our Caring Ministries



I have been in many labor battles. It has seemed strange to some that, having attained some status and acclaim as an artist, I should devote so much time and energy to the problems and struggles of working men and women.

To me, of course, it is not strange at all. I have simply tried never to forget the soil from which I spring...

I feel closer to my country than ever. There is no longer a feeling of lonesome isolation. Instead—peace. I return without fearing prejudice that once bothered me...for I know that people practice cruel bigotry in their ignorance, not maliciously...

I've learned that my people are not the only ones oppressed...I have sung my songs all over the world and everywhere found that some common bond makes the people of all lands take to Negro songs as their own.

When I sang my American folk melodies in Budapest, Prague, Tiflis, Moscow, Oslo, or the Hebrides or on the Spanish front, the people understood and wept. I found that where forces have been the same, whether people weave, build, pick cotton, or dig in the mine, they understand each other in the common language of work, suffering, and protest.

Paul Robeson

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

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, Gabriela Horvay, Mary Latham, Martha Nelson, Susan Rice, Lynn Sussman, Gordon Wyse** and **Naomi Yanis**.

Our Pastoral Care Team coordinators are **Pete Rogers** and **Mary Wyse**. Other members are **Rev. Elizabeth Alcaide, Charlie Atwood, Rev. Stephen Cook, 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 who are struggling with illness, bereavement, or difficulties of any kind in your lives or the lives of your loved ones.

Denominational Affairs



Greetings from Camp Unirondack If you have youth between the ages of 8 and 17 who are looking to connect with other UU Youth, enjoy limitless fun in the Adirondack Mountains, eat s'mores, create art and music, and play games and sports while learning about the importance of community all shaped by Unitarian Universalist values, welcome to Unirondack.

What truly makes us unique is the energy, caring, and creativity of the people who call Unirondack home. Inventiveness and youth empowerment abound as our staff aim to provide a space of excellent programs and promote the acceptance and respect of all campers.

At Unirondack we live the values that are inherent in Unitarian Universalist principles — acceptance, compassion, and decision-making through the democratic process while co-existing in an intentional community together.

For more information, visit www.unirondack.org, or ask your DRE or minister for a brochure. We can also be reached at Director@unirondack.org.