

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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10:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.. Day off Friday, Other times by
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!

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Schedule of Services

Sunday, May 7, 10:30 A.M. – *Wise and Necessary Risk*

The Reverend Adam Robersmith preaching

Today's guest minister is from the Second Unitarian Church in Chicago, IL. His sermon this morning is an exploration of faith in the midst of our UU theological arc.

Sunday, May 14, 10:30 A.M. – *Unearthing Miss Emerson*

The Reverend Nancy Haverington preaching

Our guest speaker this morning will give a sermon about Mary Moody Emerson, Ralph Waldo's eccentric and influential aunt. Her story reveals how fragile our rights are, particularly for women and marginalized members of society, and how vulnerable and yet transforming nature is. Miss Emerson's story is our story.

Nancy Haverington is a New England screenwriter, playwright, and essayist. Her screenplay, *The Silent Seed*, has been nominated for best unproduced script by the 2017 International Film Festival in Nice; her play, *Michael*, won the Harvard Arts Award; her plays have been produced in New York City, Boston, Cambridge, and Newburyport, Massachusetts; her most recent essay, *The Healing*, is published in the Eastern Iowa Review, 2016.

An ordained minister, she was recognized by the United Church of Christ for establishing one of the first environmental churches in the Massachusetts Conference. She created an eco-ministry called Stewards of Earth & Spirit, the New Eden Collaborative community gardens and Our Secret Garden nature-based preschool. She resigned in 2013 to resume her professional writing career.

Nancy studied Ralph Waldo Emerson as a doctoral candidate at Harvard where she came across his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, in his letters, and was smitten. She is on a mission to unearth this unknown genius, right the wrong of her obscurity, and tell her story in a screenplay: *Mary Moody Emerson: Angel of Death*.

Nancy's Kickstarter campaign is raising funds to allow travel for research, cover living expenses while she writes, and cover supplies and costs associated with marketing the script: submitting it to festivals which carry entry fees, and travel expenses to festivals and other professional events to pitch to producers. For more information, go to <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1668006781/mary-moody-emerson-angel-of-death>

Polly Peterson, Lay Leader

Sunday, May 21, 10:30 A.M. – *Coming of Age*

Our Coming of Age (middle school) youth will share their credos, or personal faith statements, in a service that includes a special ceremony of recognition with their parents.

Today is our Dedicated Offering Sunday

Sunday, May 28, 10:30 A.M. – *Memorial Day Reflection: Our Legacy and Responsibility*

The Rev. Cynthia A. Frado preaching

Join us for a morning of remembering all that has been sacrificed to preserve our democracy and what it asks of us. Readings, beautiful music, thoughtful reflections to take us beyond the parades and charcoal grills.

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

A Tsunami of Blossoms and Blessings

All of a sudden, spring is upon us in a big way! It seems like everything is coming alive and life, itself, feels like it is moving at warp speed. After the long, cold, barren winter, the world around us is changing and the extra demands on our attention and time are coming at us fast and furious. What I am discovering is that even when most of this change is welcome and inviting, it can also be exhausting!

There is much abuzz in the meetinghouse these days, and I hope you will take the time to stay engaged. While all the usual springtime events are shaping up, there is also the active search for a Search Committee. The con-

gregation is seeking a group of committed members who can undertake this very important task. If you have the time and passion to dedicate to this undertaking, by all means, please throw your hat into the ring! The final vote will take place at the Annual Meeting on June 4.

Another exciting event will be the congregational vote on the morning of June 4 to confer the title of Minister Emerita on **The Rev. Alison Wohler**. Once approved, we will have a brief ceremony during the worship service (after our Bridging ceremony for seniors) to officially designate Alison as Minister Emerita of UUSA. This is a very affirming moment for Alison (who is moving to Ohio on June 6), as well as a wonderful recognition of her ministry's importance in the life of the congregation.

The Annual Canvass is upon us as well as the Auction. There is lots to celebrate; lots to support; lots for which to be grateful! As my ministry at UUSA turns the corner on the first interim year, we are healthy and vibrant and engaged in the work of the Society both within and without. It is a tsunami of blossoms and blessings, indeed!

In joy and gratitude,
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.

In April, we collected \$1281.60 for **The Connecticut River Conservancy** (formerly the Connecticut River Watershed Council).

Our May Dedicated Offering on May 21 is for **Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture** or CISA. CISA strengthens farms and engages the community to build the local food economy.

CISA is a non-profit organization. Its work began more than 20 years ago, and thousands of people in our region have contributed to its success and impact. More than 250 farms participate in CISA's programs, and the number of residents who are committed to supporting local agriculture grows every day. Its Be a Local Hero, Buy Locally Grown® program, the longest-running agricultural buy-local campaign in the country, connects farmers and the community, improving farm business viability and enhancing the quality of life for residents across the region.

Additional programs include Senior FarmShare, technical assistance for farms and food businesses, and research and support for local food and farm businesses of all kinds, including processors, distributors, and producers of value-added products like jams, cheeses, and pickles. Recent initiatives include CISA's Emergency Farm Fund, significant expansion of work in Hampden County, and support for the creation of the PVGrows Community Investment Fund, a project of the collaborative PVGrows Network.

UUSA TALENTS & TREASURES AUCTION SATURDAY, MAY 6

Come have a blast with us! Socialize over delectable hors d'oeuvres, desserts and drinks, and bid on everything from cookies to chain saw services to parallel parking lessons to a weekend getaway. This is an important fundraiser for the UUSA, and for building and deepening our community — we hope you'll come!

5:30 - 7:00 P.M. — Silent auction and delicious food and drink

7:00 P.M. — Live auction begins!

Continued on next page



George Lewis returns as our live auctioneer!

BID: We'll have big ticket items and small gems. Get a head start - bid on silent auction items after the April 30 service.

COME SAT. EVE MAY 6: Bring your friends and neighbors!

VOLUNTEER: There will be a job for everyone on May 6.

CASH OR CHECKS: We can accept cash or checks (sorry, no credit card or phone charge systems).

FOR MORE INFO: Contact Carol Johnson, Carolyn Cave, Susan Rice, Mary Herman, Louise Grosslein, Fran Plumber, Richard Roznoy or Rachel Peterson.



From our 2015 Silent Auction

Dear Members and Friends,

We received a suggestion that is worth sharing with our UUSA Community. Many of you had a special relationship with **Alison Wohler**. As our minister for 11 years, Alison was able to shepherd our Community through many challenges and brought stability after a period of uncertainty. Needless to say, she made a difference to our UUSA community and some people have suggested that we honor her. Specifically, we have to option of conferring the title of "Minister Emerita" upon her. This title would allow Alison to assume the honorary title of "Minister Emerita" of the UUSA and she will be a voting member at the Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly. As per the UUA, "The honorary title implies no financial relationship between a former minister and the congregation." This is simply a small token of our appreciation and in recognition of her significant contributions.

The conferral of this title requires a Congregational Vote. The Board of Trustees has decided to add a warrant specifically for this purpose. A short meeting will be held before Services at 10:00 A.M. on June 4, 2017. The regular Annual Congregational meeting will be held just after Services.

We sincerely hope that you can join us in this celebration of Alison's work for our Society. If you cannot attend this meeting please ask a Board Member about getting an absentee ballot so that you can still participate.

On behalf of your Board of Trustees,

Joe Flueckiger

President of the Board of Trustees
Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst

Membership

New to Unitarian Universalism or the UU Society of Amherst? We invite you to join us after the service on Sunday, May 7 for a two-hour Exploring Unitarian Universalism class from noon to approximately 2 p.m. It includes a light soup lunch. It is designed to help you understand a little about our history, shared principles, and traditions. Whether you are new to UU, or just new to our UU Society, we want you to feel at home here. There is no pressure or expectation regarding joining. This is just a way to get to know you, and help you get to know us. We'll share information and stories, answer questions, and have a lot of fun. Child care is available upon request and there is no cost. Sign up by calling **Janis Gray** at 413-259-1584 so that we can plan for the food and child care.

Four more individuals have signed our Membership book! They are **Jeanne and Harden ("Hardy") Balentine, Polly Peterson and Catherine Porter**. All reside in 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, talk to the volunteers at the Welcome Table in the Social Hall!

Social Events

The Women's Lunch Group meets every other Thursday at noon for spirited conversation over local, inexpensive cuisine. Our May 4 luncheon will be at Miss Saigon Vietnamese Restaurant (96 North Pleasant Street, #5, 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 413-772-9814 or sophiesailing@gmail.com.

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

Program Updates:

Pre-K - Jacy Armenti is working with the children to memorize the UU Principle Song and investigate what it means to be kind and to care for people.

Elementary - Children will continue to work with **Lesley Smith** on mindfulness practice, celebrate Mother's Day, observe the Coming of Age (middle school) worship service and wrap up the concept of personal worship spaces.

Coming of Age - The Coming of Agers will be traveling to Boston to discover their UU roots and then they will get busy writing their personal credos and planning their service for May 21.

High School Youth Group - There is talk of a special expedition to somewhere outdoors and there will be a final youth worship (time and place to be determined). Our high school seniors will be part of a Bridging Ceremony during the service on June 4.

Request for Volunteers:

Do you have a Sunday or two to spare? During the summer RE is offered during worship service. Help the UUSA Religious Education program by volunteering from 10:30-11:30 a.m. with Leader **Jacy Armenti**. Participate in the children's hour — crafts, songs and special activities. No preparation necessary. Please talk to Rebecca Fricke (413-687-8722 or frickedre@gmail.com).

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, May 9 and Tuesday, May 23, 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.

Social Action



Wednesday Community Breakfast Please consider volunteering an hour or two between 6:00 -11:00 A.M. Wednesday mornings. Our Wednesday morning breakfast in the Willie Eaton Social Hall 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

Pictured at right: Another fun morning at the community breakfast with volunteers **Sophie Rogers, Fran Plumer, Gabriella Horvay, Rob Fuderich, Sandy Sladen** and (not shown) **Julie Webster**. (Rest assured, the bottle only holds sparkling grape juice!)



Just One Thing On May 14, the second Sunday of the month, there will be a collection for the Survival Center. This month in addition to food, there is a special request for DRY CAT FOOD. The specific food needed will be listed in the Sunday Bulletin the weeks before the collection. THANK YOU for your continued support of community people in need. For information contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, mbsem@comcast.net, 413-253-0894.

Green Sanctuary

Look for the Green Sanctuary Committee's Action Table in the Social Hall on the second Sunday of every month. We will provide information on an environmental issue and a way for members of the congregation to contact legislators or other key people. We want to make it easy for you to take action on critical issues. Please visit us!

The Green Sanctuary Committee will meet on Thursday, May 25, 7:00 P.M., at the home of **Mary and Gordon Wyse** (219 Lincoln Ave., Amherst).

Our Caring Ministries



Our deeply beautiful seder celebration last month brought to mind the following meditation by our own long-time poet-minister, the Reverend Jacob Trapp:

Each of the great religions has a distinctive note,
to be likened to the strings of a harp.

In Hinduism it is the note of spirit: a universe throbbing with divine
energy and meaning.

In Buddhism it is the wisdom of self-discipline:
quenching the fire of desire in the cool waters of meditation.

In Confucianism it is reciprocity:
mutual consideration is the basis of society.

In Taoism it is to conquer by inaction:
be lowly and serviceable, like a brook; become rich by sharing.

In Judaism it is exodus from bondage:
the covenant of responsibility in freedom.

In Islam it is the note of submission:
“Our God and your God is one, to whom we are self-surrendered.”

In Christianity it is that all may become one:
“This is my body broken for you.”

“Inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these, you have done it unto me.”

Each of the great religions has a distinctive note,
to be likened to the strings of a harp.

Perhaps a distinctive note of Unitarian Universalism is the inherent harmony of these harp strings—the oneness and beauty of Truth to which we are attracted, beyond tolerance and curiosity to understanding, appreciation, and divine living!

May your chosen faith inspire, strengthen, challenge, and comfort you according to your need. With love from our Caring Circle, Pastoral Care Team and Small Group Ministry groups.

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

Carolyn Cave and **Clare Bertrand** are coordinators for the Caring Circle. 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, Margaret Manson, Martha Nelson, Susan Rice, Chas Stevenson, Lynn Sussman** and **Gordon Wyse**.

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

We send loving, healing thoughts to the following people and to those who care for them: John Barbaro, Jan

We send loving, healing thoughts to the following people and to those who care for them: **John Barbaro, Jan Cole-Stryker, Vicki Hinson-Smith, Ann Howard, Paul Rothery, Ed Tick, Kate Dahlstadt** and all those who are facing health, loss and other challenges.

Elizabeth Alcaide for the Pastoral Care Team

Denominational Affairs



Report from the UU United Nations Office Intergenerational Spring Seminar With a deep passion for and commitment to international human rights, youth and adults from all over North America gather annually for a three day seminar to dig deeply into issues with global impact.

The intergenerational seminar is an opportunity to collaborate with others while learning how to be a global activist. Through workshops, peer and expert-led panel discussions, community building activities, and worship services, participants undergo a transformative process of learning, reflection, and growth as they explore some of the most challenging issues facing humanity today.

In 2017, our UU Society was represented by **Anna Stanforth, Libby Stanforth** and **Lilah Redonnet**.

Anna shares the following:

On April 5-8, we were in New York City for the annual UU-UNO intergenerational conference. This year the topic was disarmament: reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons, using drones for warfare, and gun control.

During the conference we were overwhelmed with facts about the atrocities caused by the weaponry of powerful nations. The long-lasting effects of dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were made real and personal to us. A former army minister who served in Afghanistan told us about how US drones cause fear in people's daily lives, a form of fear we back here in the US can't even comprehend. A specialist showed us statistics about guns and we learned that while every owner of the top five gun manufacturers in the world is a white male, populations affected most by gun violence are predominantly people of color and women.

The overarching message that kept flashing before us was our first UU principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Though many parts of the conference showed heart-wrenching realities, it managed to awaken a sort of fire inside of all of us, a motivation to fight for justice.

On the last day we met in small intergenerational groups and discussed ways in which we could bring what we had learned back to our communities. We drafted a resolution that will be brought to the United Nations by our own UU NGO (non-governmental organization).

Thank you from UU Mass Action On February 19, Laura Wagner, executive director of UU Mass Action, the MA Unitarian Universalist Activist organization, was our Sunday speaker. UU Mass Action conducts research, education and social justice activism throughout the state, and publishes the online UU Mass Action Newsletter. She recently sent us a letter:

Dear UU Society of Amherst,

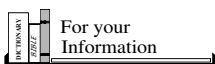
Thank you for inviting me to speak at your church and for the opportunity to share the work of our statewide action network, UU Mass Action. I would also like to thank you for your donation of \$200.00. Your gift strengthens our shared work together by allowing us to focus on justice organizing.

We recognize the intersectionality of all the issues for which we take action. Our guiding vision is to create a world where all people are honored and valued. We live our principles together and move towards a world where all people are honored and valued.

If you'd like to know more about any of our projects, please explore our website www.uumassaction.org or contact me.

Sincerely,

Laura Wagner LICSE, Executive Director



Honoring Amherst's Black Civil War Soldiers, Saturday, May 13, 2:00 P.M. A new monument in West Cemetery that honors the 20 black soldiers from Amherst who fought for the Union during the Civil War will be dedicated on May 13. Several descendants of those soldiers will be present and the public is welcome. This project was funded with money from the town's Community Preservation Act. (West Cemetery is in the center of town, next to Ren's Mobil station and behind Zanna's.) For more information, call **Bob Romer** at 413-253-7748 or rromer@amherst.edu.