

# 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  
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**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

[revrachael@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:revrachael@uusocietyamherst.org) or leave a message with  
Lea Douville, below.

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**Lea Douville**

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## 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 to [jsgray@crocker.com](mailto:jsgray@crocker.com).

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!

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## Schedule of Services

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**Sunday, March 1, 10:30 A.M. – *For All That Is Our Life***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

Our annual Pledge Campaign is a time to reflect on what we value about this congregation and to share our dreams for its future. Please join us for a celebration of our life together and stay for a potluck lunch hosted by the UUSA Board and Stewardship Committee!

**Sunday, March 8, 10:30 A.M. – *Promises to Keep***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

We make promises to one another. This is how we build community. We maintain community by keeping those promises. This whole congregation service will give us opportunities to practice promise-making and promise-keeping.

**Sunday, March 15, 10:30 A.M. – *Title to be Announced***

**Our High School Youth** will lead today's service.

*Today is our Dedicated Offering Sunday.*

**Sunday, March 22, 10:30 A.M. – *The Goal of World Community***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

The sixth principle of Unitarian Universalism is “the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.” What does that actually look like, where can we find these values enacted in our congregation and in larger Unitarian Universalism, and how are we called to live this principle?

*After the service, there will be an opportunity to sign the Membership Book for those who wish to join our UU Society today.*

**Sunday, March 29, 10:30 A.M. – *Letting Go into Not Knowing***

**Chelsea Kline**

Modern adult life is riddled with anxiety and uncertainty, even while we're tasked with always needing to know the answers. What if we all embraced not knowing and remembered who we had aspired to be?

Chelsea Kline (she/her pronouns) is a women's leadership-focused life coach and writer who lives to find the funny in *almost* any situation. A graduate of both Smith College and Harvard Divinity School, Chelsea's career is fueled by an unshakable belief in the strength of women, and utilizes compassion and humor to coach women towards being their most ferocious and fabulous selves. Chelsea credits her early experiences as a Jewish, queer, low-income, single teen mom for forming an ethical basis for her work as an advocate for progressive reproductive rights and social justice. In 2018, she ran a rigorous campaign for Massachusetts State Senate as a progressive Democrat, and she now contributes a monthly column on race, gender, and privilege to the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*. In her rare moments of down time, she seeks out stellar acoustic spaces to hone her supernatural whistling skills.

*Texts of some sermons are available to members and friends of UUSA by request. Send email to [office@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:office@uusocietyamherst.org). Many older sermons and readings are posted on [www.uusocietyamherst.org](http://www.uusocietyamherst.org). Click on the “SERMON ARCHIVE” button on the right side of the home page.*

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## Dedicated Offerings

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One Sunday every month (except for June, July, and August, we schedule a Dedicated Offering to recognize and financially support worthy organizations engaged in projects that reflect our guiding Unitarian-Universalist principles. Organizations are suggested by both individuals and committees of the Society, and the program is managed by the Minister and the Dedicated Offering Committee. No one is required to contribute to our Dedicated Offering – this is a voluntary initiative.

Our **February Dedicated Offering** for the **Homework House** in Holyoke raised \$905.

Our **March Dedicated Offering** will be for the **Gandara Center**. Established in 1977 as a community-based, 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization to provide outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment to Springfield's large, underserved Hispanic community, Gandara has become an agency with a mission to promote the wellbeing of Hispanic, African-American, and other culturally diverse populations through innovative, culturally competent health, prevention, and education services.

Gandara serves people in need both locally and internationally. In January, Gandara Center staff travelled to Puerto Rico to deliver aid to families in remote mountain communities affected by the recent earthquakes on the island.

Please open your hearts and give generously to this most worthy recipient.

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## Minister's Letter

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Dear UUSA,

Wash your hands.

You may be thinking right about now that my role is to give out spiritual/ethical/moral guidance rather than hygiene advice. You're right. It is my responsibility, however, to address the worries I see around me — and some of us are worried about the new coronavirus (COVID-19).

Step 1: *Get informed.* When it feels like there's a lot of noise and hubbub around a topic, I try to get informed as clearly as I can. I like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html> This site will be updated with new information, unlike a news article.

What I learned from this website is that the prevention protocol for COVID-19 is the same procedure we already use for preventing other respiratory illnesses like flus and colds. Stay home when you're sick. Get your flu shot every year. (A flu shot won't prevent colds, COVID-19, or other respiratory illnesses, but it is part of the overall prevention protocol.) Cough and sneeze into your elbow. Wash your hands.

Step 2: *Wash your hands.* Yes, really. Each of us washes our hands many times per day (or at least I hope so) as opposed to getting a flu shot once per year. Wash your hands to protect yourself and the people you meet. But also, any time you do a repetitive action in good faith, you have the opportunity to use it as a centering moment. Instead of singing "Happy Birthday" as a timer, why not sing "Spirit of Life"? Or use the handwashing time to be aware of your hands, mindful of each of your fingers and the surfaces of your hands?

Step 3: *Share space and touch respectfully.* Stay home when you're sick, really, unless you're going out for medical help. We'll miss you, but we understand and want you to heal rather than infect more people. If you have a fever, stay home until 24 hours after the fever is gone *and* you've been off fever-reducing drugs for 24 hours. Dayquil may make you feel better, but it doesn't keep you from getting other people sick. If you need someone to drop off soup, we can hook you up. If you must go out, cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow and avoid touching people or things other people touch. We trust you when you tell us it's not a good day to hold hands or hug.

As of current news, we don't have reasons to be more worried about COVID-19 than about the current strains of flu. I'll continue to greet you with handshakes, hugs, and smiles as you prefer.

In faith,

Rev. Rachael

**Lunch with the Minister on Tuesday, March 24, 1:00 P.M.**

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## Message from the President

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Hello friends,

At the end of this month we will be asking all member and friends of the UUSA to make a monetary commitment to this congregation. For those who are recent arrivals to church—the pledge drive is an annual event that collects monetary pledges from the congregation in order to plan our budget for the next fiscal year.

This talk of money and budgets might sound not so spiritual. And yet, it is one of the many ways we each make a step with faith toward a more equitable and just future—a future that depends on a present fueled by hope. The financial stewardship of our congregation helps us realize our mission of our collective search for truth and meaning.

There will be much more information shared about the pledge drive by **Joe Flueckiger**, who is leading our campaign this year, along with a team of congregants who are ready to ask each of us to help sustain our future. (As we all know, asking for money is not easy. Please help this team by listening and responding with generosity.)

Pledging to the church is not necessarily a once-a-year thought process. Stewardship, as this caring generosity is often called, is yearlong—lifelong, really. **Jeanne Ballantine** and another team of congregants are working to establish a Stewardship Ministry that considers monetary support of the church in a holistic sense in the context of spiritual practice. Please look for more information from Jeanne and her ministry. Your pledge and

donations are used to pay for the operation of the UUSA—staffing, committee and ministry work, building maintenance, religious education, outreach to the local community, our annual pledge to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations. Ultimately, though, your pledge helps sustain a force that makes sense in a world that often runs counter to our highest ideals.

Your pledge helps sustain a sacred space that nurtures and sustains each and all of us to step back into the world with conviction, strength, and most important HOPE.

Yours in faith, Karen

## **CONNECT & BE INSPIRED AT A SPECIAL BRUNCH TO KICK OFF THE 2020 CANVASS**

Sunday, March 1 from 11:45 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. in the Willie Eaton Social Hall

You're invited to connect with your fellow UUs at a special pledge potluck meal hosted by your UUSA Board and Stewardship Committee.

Come to nourish – and be nourished – by sharing food, connection and inspiration. Join this unique opportunity to deepen and renew connections to the people, values and mission that knit us together.

We hope to see everyone! Each individual's presence will reinforce why we make this investment in each other -- and our beloved community.

*Just bring yourself: Meal provided by the UUSA Board & Stewardship Committee*

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### **Membership**

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**February brought us six new members!** Please welcome **Mary McKenna**, of South Deerfield; **Brenda Bushouse** and **Charlie Schweik**, of Amherst; **Betsy Wheeler** and **Meghan Dewar**, also of Amherst; and **Cheryl Baulding**, of Belchertown. We are also pleased to see **Nan Wieggersma**, who was a member here for many years, among us once again after moving to Amherst.

On March 22, there will be a special opportunity to sign the Membership Book for those who wish to join our UU Society. But you may become an official member on any Sunday – just let one of the co-chairs of the Membership Committee, **Anne Cohen** or **Janis Gray**, know, so they can retrieve the Membership Book from the safe and recruit two members of our Board of Trustees to witness your signature. We know **Rev. Rachael** would love to be there for the happy occasion as well!

### **Get Ready.....Get Set.....to have some intergenerational FUN**

Friday, March 27, 5:30 to 8:00 P.M.

At the UUSA

This year, the “KICK-OFF” to our annual Silent Auction will be a very special GAME NIGHT. This game night will be like no other!! Here are the details:

Enjoy a finger food appetizer dinner, complete with a wine bar and an ice cream bar. A selection of games will be offered with game leaders at the ready. Special “Kid” games will be led by our fearless teens.

Silent Auction offerings will be displayed and ready for sign ups and bidding. Offerings include 3 categories: services, events and “help wanted.”

Need help with your computer? We got that! Need your leaves raked? We got that! Want kayaks? We can loan them out! Want someone else to host a pool party for your kids? We'll have that, too! Attend a House concert, a wine and cheese tasting or an evening at the symphony...and more. And don't forget to contribute your requests for the “help wanted” category.

The offerings and bidding sheets will be posted for the first time on this special fun night. They will remain up through the month of April. The not-to-be-missed finale to our Silent Auction will be Sunday, May 3.

## February Backpack Collection A Great Success

On February 9 we had a special “breakout” service organized by the UUSA Religious Education (RE) Ministry. In the past, RE asked people at breakout services to choose between music, conversation, art and action, and they heard people say, “It is so hard to choose!” This year RE Ministry set up the breakout groups in a way so that they didn’t have to choose, because each group had a little bit of conversation, did a small amount of art, some action and some music.

Four weeks before the service, we began collecting items for a backpack project supported and run by [A Project of St John’s Episcopal Church in Ashfield & the Franklin and the County Transition from Jail to Community Task Force \(TJC\)](#). Here’s the great news: The UUSA collected and packed 16 backpacks and an additional five or six boxes of items that could be used by the group to pack more packs!

Below is a photo of **Brenda Miller** leading the congregation in singing [How Could Anyone](#). After we sang together, we blessed the packs with backpack charms we had made for our own Back Pack service in the fall.

Again, thanks to all who helped make this worship service a success.

Rebecca Fricke



## Religious Education Ministry



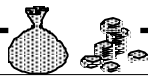
I want to take a moment to say thank you to the UUSA members and friends for helping make our parents, children and youth feel welcome in the sanctuary, whether RE is leading the service, or participating in the beginning of the regular services. It is so important for all our generations to see each other and share in the worship experience together. Let us take a moment to be thankful for..

... **Jacy’s** strong **preschool program**. We are seeing some very happy little ones joining on a regular basis. ...our **elementary program’s** enthusiastic and consistent crowd. We will continue to do activities that mirror the upstairs theme and have periodic (about once per month) whole-congregation services. ...our **Coming of Agers** (grades 7-9), who have made it into the second half of their yearlong program. The youth are talking about some big questions like: What is the difference between social justice and community service? What happens after we die? Why do people do bad things? Questions we should all take some time to think about. This month **High School Youth Group** is leading a service on March 15. Please come and support their dedication to our congregation.

Want to share a talent and or your time? Think about volunteering for the RE Program!

YoUUrS,

Rebecca Fricke, DRE



### Be A Part of Our Silent Auction Fundraiser

It's time to think about how YOU will contribute to this year's Silent Auction, a major community builder and fundraiser. The auction provides us with opportunities to deepen our relationships while bringing much needed funds to our coffers. It's an opportunity to fill your social calendar with memorable events and services. Because this is our most important fundraiser, it's important that **we all** participate.

Whether it's cleaning someone's gutters or offering a gala event in your home, the hope is that *everyone* will be a part of this **fun and purposeful event**.

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 social hour, or give one of us a call.

Auction forms will be sent to you in the form of a Google doc; or you can pick up forms in the lobby of the meetinghouse. Fill out as many as you like. Remember that there are "Help Wanted" items as well as events and services. So think about what needs you may have that could be provided by someone in our UUSA community.

Donation forms are due March 18. Our "Kick-Off" event is March 27. You can read more about that elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Auction Task Force

Kate Rice...413-548-1026

Sue Kelly...413-559-9934

Mary Herman...301-332-8460

Susan Rice....413-253-4485

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## Social Action



**Just One Thing** On the second Sunday of the month, **March 8**, there will be a collection for the **Survival Center**. The specific items needed will be listed in the weekly announcements closer to that Sunday. Thank you for your continued support of our neighbors in need. For information contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, 413-253-0894.

**Sanctuary** The **week of March 30** our Society is responsible for providing three evening meals for Lucio Perez and his family at First Congregational Church, Amherst. On **Monday, March 30** and **Thursday, April 2**, two different people are needed each night to cook for Lucio and three of his children. On **Tuesday, March 31**, one person is needed to cook for Lucio. Lucio has been in sanctuary living apart from his wife and children for more than three very long years. The meals and companionship provided by many volunteers have helped the Perez family during these difficult times. If you can help this spring, please contact **Mary Beth Seminario**, 413-253-0894. THANK YOU for your continuous support.

### **UUSA Proud Co-Sponsor!**

**Please join us in a conversation *Vital Voices: Women of Color and the 2020 Election***

**Sunday, March 29, 3:00-5:00 P.M.**

**Edwards Church, 297 Main Street, Northampton, MA**

**Event is Free and Open to the Public**

Presented jointly with Pioneer Valley Interfaith Refugee Action Group & Critical Connections, Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst and other local organizations

According to a recent report, *Ahead of the Majority*, women of color represented a 37% increase in voter turnout in the 2018 mid-term elections, and played a significant role in mobilizing their social networks to become politically active and vote. Women of color are again poised to play an increasingly pivotal role in the upcoming presidential election. What can be done to support women of color and their mobilization in the upcoming election, not just as voters, but movement leaders, activists, and candidates? Join us on Sunday, March 29 for an in-depth conversation with political activists Tahirah Amatul-Wadud, Helena Berbano and Kimberly Peeler-Allen (to be confirmed).

**Helena Berbano**, National Political Director, New American Leaders

Helena Berbano is a second generation Filipina American, organizer, activist, and campaign operative. New American Leaders is leading a movement for inclusive democracy by preparing first and second generation Americans to use their power and potential in elected office. It is the only national, nonpartisan organization focused on bringing New Americans into the political process. A primary goal is the training and inspiring immigrant leaders of all racial and ethnic backgrounds to run for office.

### **Tahirah Amatul-Wadud**

Tahirah, an African-American Muslim woman, was a Democratic candidate in 2018 for the Massachusetts 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, challenging 30 year Democratic incumbent Richard E. Neal. She is a lawyer in Western Massachusetts with a focus on domestic relations and civil rights law. Tahirah was the keynote speaker at a previous joint program in October 2018, *Muslim Women in Politics: Shaping Narratives, Shaping Perceptions*.

### **Kimberly Peeler-Allen**

### **To be Confirmed**

Kimberly Peeler-Allen was the co-founder of Higher Heights for America (HHFA), a national organization building the political power and leadership of Black women from the voting booth to elected office. Currently she is the Co-Chair of Higher Heights for America PAC. **Kimberly** has been working at the intersection of race, gender and politics for almost 20 years.

Any questions, contact: Ellen Koteen, [e-l-k@comcast.net](mailto:e-l-k@comcast.net)

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## **Social Events**

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**The Women's Lunch Group** meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at noon for spirited conversation over local, inexpensive cuisine. The luncheon March 12 will be at Crazy Noodles, 36 Main Street, 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, email **Mary McKenna** or call her at 831-401-3636.

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

### **UUSA Winter Open Studio Do you paint? Would you enjoy some company while you paint? Want some helpful feedback on your work? If so, this is for you!**

Come join the UUSA Winter Open Studio for painters of all media and all levels in our beautiful Social Hall this winter. Paint or draw whatever you'd like: bring photo references, finish something you started, bring still life materials to paint, or just make up something. You can come to one or come to all sessions – it's up to you!

We paint 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M., then share a bag lunch and friendly critique from **12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M. on the first and third Fridays of each month**: Mar. 6 and 20, Apr. 3 and maybe 17. Here's what you need to do:

1. **Let us know you are coming** by copying this link and pasting in your browser: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/123DPsJI6SkODszWUcyz\\_jhRXto7es8ux\\_IahiJb5w0I/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/123DPsJI6SkODszWUcyz_jhRXto7es8ux_IahiJb5w0I/edit?usp=sharing)
2. **Bring \$5 to \$10 cash** to help cover the cost of heat and lights.
3. Bring a **shower curtain or drop cloth** to protect your table and the floor under you.
4. Bring your **stuff**: paints, brushes, canvases, portable easel, etc.
5. Bring your **lunch and beverage**.

Questions? Contact Susanne Personnette.

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## **Green Sanctuary**

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**Green Sanctuary March Action Table** President Trump has already dismantled important environmental protections. Now he wants to do something even worse: to **weaken the National Environmental Protection Act**. Public comments are invited now, ending on **March 10**. You can submit your comments at <https://www.regulations.gov> using the **docket number CEQ-2019-0003**. Click on "comment now" and write your

comment. There is helpful background information at the [2020Action](http://2020Action.org) website: 2020action.org

Some suggested comments:

Keep the National Environmental Protection Act strong. Do not follow Trump's recommended modifications.

Maintain the current laws about when Environmental Impact Statements are required.

Do not limit the time or number of pages allowed for an Environmental Impact Statement.

Keep the current requirement to consider indirect or cumulative effects, which include the impact of greenhouse gas emissions on climate change.

Do not prevent litigation against a project by a particular group unless they already participated in comments during the initial public comment period.

We need more environmental protections, not fewer.

This will also be the focus of our March 8 Green Sanctuary Action Table, and we'll allow people to submit on-site.

**Extinction Rebellion** On Tuesday, March 17 at 7:00 p.m. in the Social Hall, the Green Sanctuary Committee is hosting a talk by the activist group Extinction Rebellion called "Heading for Extinction and What To Do About It." There will be time for reflection and discussion about the climate emergency and introduce Extinction Rebellion's response and call to action.

### **Pricing Carbon Talk coming April 5**

#### **Carbon Dividends: Keeping Carbon in the Ground & Spurring Innovation**

Climate change presents an urgent call to action. Personal actions are important, but only one third of all emissions are under our direct control. Policies that put a price on carbon have the power to change the economics to keep carbon in the ground, spur renewable energy innovation, and stimulate the economy. When combined with a dividend that is reimbursed to citizens, it also provides a just solution for low- and middle-income families.

Several presidential candidates are supportive of carbon pricing and dividends, and our state legislature is also considering a carbon pricing bill, which has been co-sponsored by 93 reps (60% of the MA House).

The presenters are Lora Sandhusen, chair of the Pioneer Valley Chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL), and **Jeff Clark**, who is a UUSA member, CCL volunteer and long-time climate activist. The Citizens Climate Lobby is committed to getting bi-partisan support for market-driven solutions to climate change.

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## **Our Caring Ministries**



*What I know for sure is this: we come from mystery and return to mystery. I know this, too: standing closer to the reality of death awakens my wonder at the many gifts of life.*

*Parker Palmer*

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

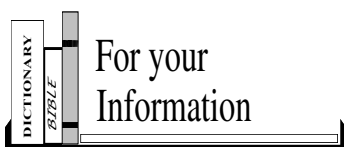
Our Caring Circle coordinator is **Catharine Porter**. Please contact her or your own Caring Person for rides, food, and simple needs. Other Caring Circle members are **Linda Callahan, Carolyn Holstein, Gabriela Horvay, Mary Latham, Karen Mack, Martha Nelson, Lynn Sussman, Gordon Wyse** and **Naomi Yanis**.

Our Pastoral Care Team coordinators are **Charlie Atwood** and **Fran Plumer**. Other members are **Rob Fuderich, Gene Herman, Rev. Rachael Hayes, Carol Johnson, Pete Rogers, and Mary Wyse**. 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 one.



Save the date!  
Congregational Conversation  
Sunday, March 22,  
Noon - 1:30 P.M.



**House hunting, or know a friend who is?** A member of UUSA is selling a three-bedroom split level ranch with large yard, 9/10 of a mile south of town center at 20 Jeffrey Lane, Amherst. Please contact owner at 413-302-4606 and speak your phone number *slowly* when leaving a message. (Owner's email address is not given here because it will be changing soon.)