

THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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Important Information

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NEWSLETTER

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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.

Printed on recycled paper



Schedule of Services

Since March 15, 2020, we have been holding our Services online to help protect the health of our community, and we will continue to do so at least until May 10.

On Sundays, please join us a few minutes before 10:30 A.M. at:

<https://bit.ly/3aQWIYf> Meeting ID: 935 4201 5019; Password: 942416
or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter the Meeting ID: 935 4201 5019 when prompted.

Sunday, May 3, 10:30 A.M. – *Change Will Guide Us*

UUSA Youth, The Rev. Rachael Hayes, Kate Rice and Rebecca Fricke

We can control some of the changes in our lives, but more often than not, changes happen and we react to them. Currently, we are all in the process of dealing with a major change in the way we go about living, but at the same time we are all facing other kinds of changes in our lives — small and large. Come and explore change with four of the UUSA Youth, Rev. Rachael, Kate Rice and Rebecca Fricke.

Sunday, May 10, 10:30 A.M. – *Mothers and Other Wisdom-Keepers*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

150 years ago, Julia Ward Howe wrote the Mother's Day Proclamation, calling for peace and denouncing war as incompatible with motherhood. The wisdom of mothers through the generations continues to inspire us.

Sunday, May 17, 10:30 A.M. – *Blessing of the Animals*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

In gratitude for the blessings they share with us, we will take some time to bless our companion animals. Many pets have already attended our Zoom services, but all furry, feathered, scaled, chitinous, or other-textured friends are particularly invited to this one! (Pictures of animals and animal toys also welcome.)

Today is our Dedicated Offering Sunday.

Sunday, May 24, 10:30 A.M. – *Reflections: Then and Now*

Stan Rosenberg

Stan Rosenberg, UMass '77, has been an Amherst resident for most of the last 53 years. After seven years each working at UMass and in various political staff jobs, he was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, where he served for nearly five years. He was elected to the State Senate to replace John Olver when John went to Congress. Stan served in a number of Senate leadership positions, culminating in three years as President of the Senate. He was the first Western Massachusetts Senator to do so in 50 years. Stan was elected Senate President 100 years to the day after Northampton resident Calvin Coolidge held the post.

Sunday, May 31, 10:30 A.M. – *Coming of Age*

UUSA Coming of Age Cohort

This year's Coming of Age class, along with their families, mentors, Director of Religious Education Rebecca Fricke, co-teacher Jenn Chylack, and Rev. Rachael, welcome you to this important rite of passage. We honor the transition from childhood to youth and invite the ascendant youth to tell us what they believe.

If you would like help getting to know how to get online for Sunday services or meetings, or if you would like help setting up a Zoom meeting for your congregational event, committee meeting, or small group, please reach out to Lea in the office: office@uusocietyamherst.org

Texts of some sermons are available to members and friends of UUSA by request. Send email to office@uusocietyamherst.org. Many older sermons and readings are posted on www.uusocietyamherst.org. Click on the "SERMON ARCHIVE" button on the right side of the home page.

Dedicated Offerings

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. No one is required to contribute to our Dedicated Offering – this is a voluntary initiative.

Results for April's Dedicated Offering for the **Western Massachusetts Sunrise Coalition** will be shared in June.

Our **May Dedicated Offering** will be for the **Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County**. This offering was originally scheduled for January but had to be postponed.

Ninety percent child sexual abuse victims are abused by someone they know, love and trust. One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before turning 18. One in five children is sexually solicited online. These alarming statistics demonstrate the clear and present danger child sexual abuse is to our children. Since 2006, the Children's Advocacy Center for Hampshire County has served over a thousand children and their families, offering a child-friendly, safe setting in which children and their non-offending family members receive free support and crisis intervention.

Minister's Letter

Dear UUSA,

I miss you. I see many of you weekly, or even more frequently, in our Zoom Sunday Services and meetings throughout the week. I acknowledge that it's not exactly the same to come together over internet and phone, but our principles call us to take care of each other in this way right now.

We're going to need to stay at a distance for a while, it seems. Like many of you, I was relieved when Gov. Baker extended the state of emergency again and when he declared that students would not physically return to school this year. Staying apart is slowing down infections, which gives scientists and medical professionals time to work. It's also a bummer not to be together, to cancel celebrations or reimagine them at a distance.

It's taken me a while to come to terms with how long of a haul this seems to be. At first, it was hard to imagine longer than a month, and then a season, and I'm starting to understand that this will take as long as it takes. We're likely to get incredibly frustrated if we're not already there. So what I'm asking of you is to stay patient and keep it up.

Continue practicing excellent hand hygiene. (I can sing the song again if that helps.) Wear a mask when you must go into public, and only go out for essentials when necessary, not more than once a week. Get your exercise in places where you can keep a safe distance from those not in your household.

If we do this as well as we should, it will be tedious. Flattening the curve *does* draw it out longer. I know that this is hard for people who miss their friends and loved ones, people who have lost work, people who have had to reimagine how they do their work, people who are parenting, homeschooling, and working all at the same time, people who had been looking forward to events that have been canceled.

UUSA's services will continue to be over Zoom through at least the end of our program year (end of June). We are in conversation around what the summer will look like, and we'll follow the guidance of scientists for the safest ways to come back together, when it is safe to do so. It seems likely that large gatherings (by which I mean Sunday morning services, not just Red Sox games) will be the last sort of activity to return to our lives. I can't say how long that will be.

What I can promise is that we will make these decisions in a way that honors the worth and dignity of all people, especially those at high risk, that we are connected to each other, and that we respect the leadership of scientists as we seek to live with integrity in this challenging time. We will not ask you to choose between your health and your participation in the community in rushing to open before it is safe to do so by the best guidance we have.

I also promise that we will continue to find meaningful ways to connect. We will have beautiful worship, joyful social hours, significant conversations, and grounding spiritual practices. We will learn new things, consider new ideas, and find new ways to make a difference in the world.

We will find new ways to do what is essential--to care for each other, to celebrate life together, to search for meaning together--because this is who we are. Circumstance, even a large circumstance like a global pandemic, will not prevent us from sharing the love we have for each other and for life itself, and it could never separate us from the larger Love that holds us all.

In faith, Rev. Rachael Hayes

WE NEED YOUR ATTENTION

With so much going on, it may be easy to forget that UUSA is in the midst of our annual pledge drive.

We have a goal of \$184,000.

We are close, but we're not quite there yet.

Our sincere thanks to those who have already pledged!

If you have not already signed your pledge for the next year, please do so now.

Remember, an angel will match all pledge increases and new pledges.

Our UUSA community needs every good friend and member to help us reach our goal.

THANKS TO EVERY PERSON WHO HAS PLEDGED AND WILL PLEDGE.

Your Stewardship Committee

The FY2021 Pledge Form is available online: www.uusocietyamherst.org/connection/donate -- or simply email the office with your pledge amount.

NEW !!! May 14, an exciting effort is afoot here at UUSA. Eligible voters of color are being purged from voter rolls. A **UUSA the Vote Project** is planning to partner with the **Reclaim Our Vote Campaign**, a black-led organization, to re-register purged voters in North Carolina, Texas, Arizona, Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia. You and your friends can send postcards or phonebank from home. We need at least 30-40 volunteers to start with a postcard activity in May. Although we are staying at home; we are not standing still.

What we know now: **Reclaim Our Vote Campaign** is a non-partisan post-carding, phone-banking and text-banking campaign created by the Center for Common Ground. It focuses on contacting voters of color in voter-suppression states to help them register and vote. Once you volunteer, a brief YouTube training video can show how easy this is. Some UUSA members are already learning how to do this ahead of you, ordering supplies and planning safe distribution of supplies. They will be available to answer your questions. **Learn more on Thursday, May 14 at 2:00 P.M. for a ZOOM kickoff** of this exciting project.

These actions resonate strongly with our UU Principles as explained here <https://www.uua.org/justice/vote2020/grounded-uu-values>.

Click here to join the Zoom meeting: Description: <https://bit.ly/3fc6SWH> or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter the Meeting ID: 468 844 7180 when prompted.

Words of inspiration from our neighboring UU Society of Northampton and Florence who are also doing UU the Vote activities. We can't say it better: *We don't know what voting will look like in the fall of 2020! Yet – our human condition seems to be to do the best we can when we can, and then adjust to new reality. Regardless of what voting will look like, re-registering purged voters is a good thing to do. These actions resonate strongly with our UU Principles. Simply put, we're called to grab hold of history's pendulum and swing it back – away from the hyper-independence we've wandered into and towards our true human nature – interdependence with the web of all existence.*

Let's allow this crisis to inspire us.

This is jointly sponsored by the UUSA's Dismantling Systemic White Supremacy Ministry and the Social

Wednesdays, 6:00 P.M. – *Midweek Joys and Sorrows* – Led by The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Everyone is welcome to come together for a midweek service of Joys and Sorrows, to share and to witness. <https://bit.ly/2KPEuf7> or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter the Meeting ID 760 290 601 when prompted.

Message from the President

The flexibility and faith our congregation has practiced during this time of virtual gatherings is inspiring. As Rev. Rachael leads us in worship, she is seeking the essence of faith that binds us and the elements of practice that express our reverence and joy, no matter where we are or how we are able to connect. That is powerful.

In April, the Board conducted one of three yearly evaluations of our minister. Moving forward, the Board will facilitate evaluations in the fall, mid-winter and early spring to help Rev. Rachael set goals and to discuss together how her ministry is embodying those goals and others as they emerge. The evaluative process, like all ministries, is organic, cooperative, responsive, compassionate, and embracing of past, present, and future.

Because Rev. Rachael is in [preliminary fellowship](#), in the process of becoming a minister in full fellowship, the Board—along with the Committee of Shared Ministries and Rev. Rachael—is responsible for reporting annually on how Rev. Rachael is meeting the competencies required of a UU Minister. This is a process that will take at least three years.

To begin our church year, the Safer Congregation Committee joined the Board to hear Rev. Rachael read aloud the [ethics statement](#) for [UU Ministers](#). This was a powerful reminder of how our boundaries help define expectations. And Rev. Rachael pointed the Board to [Fulfilling the Call](#), a UUA handbook to help us further understand the core competencies of UU ministry. The Board is currently putting together our initial comments on Rev. Rachael's realizations of these core competencies for her November evaluation by the UUA.

As the Board moves forward, our task is always to think about the past, present, and future of our congregation and our faith. Having Rev. Rachael with us, guiding us, thinking about how to best help all of us realize our deepest and most meaningful exploration of our faith and community, feels very positive. In a time of disruption, uncertainty, and fear, she has provided routine, space for contemplation, and solace. The future looks bright.

Yours in faith, Karen

PS: Please note that this year our Annual Meeting will take place virtually. More information to come on this important yearly gathering to review the budget and elect members of the Board and the Leadership Development Committee.

Religious Education Ministry



I know that by the time you are reading this our situation will have changed, but still a deadline is a deadline and no matter what changes we will face, we will be facing them together. You have congregational support and I hope you will ask for help if you need it. As I do research for my weekly RE supplements, I am constantly telling myself to “keep it simple,” sometimes known as “KIS.” The first time I saw this in a text I had to ask what it meant, although my first guess for “K” was “kick” which just goes to show you the mood I was in. Keeping it simple is a good goal because if you are receiving as many texts, emails, video links and news updates as I am, it is hard to lose track of what is important!

I know that when I send out my Zoom links and weekly suggestions, not every family is going to open the email, let alone read it and open the links, but that's OK! Some families like to have the suggested activities, but others are just so busy trying to get work done, childcare shared and food stocked that opening my email is the last thing they need. Please know that you should not be feeling guilty about this lack of attention. Check in on Zoom if you can fit it into your life, but if you can't, know that when this is all over, our doors will be open and **Jacy, Casey, Tess** and I are going to be there for you and your children and youth.

In May we move into seed planting, gardening, sunburn and t-shirt weather. I hope that all of you have a chance to get outside and enjoy nature one way or another. My walks consistently make me feel better, and I suspect fresh air and exercise are key ingredients to my stress reduction. If for some reason you can't get outside, open the window and take some very deep breaths and listen to the flowers blooming and the birds singing.

We will get through this.

Take care all and stay in touch, |

Rebecca

Director of Religious Education

Meetings for Children, Youth, and Families

Please contact **Rebecca Fricke** for Zoom links for the meetings below at dre@uusocietyamherst.org

Parent Zoom – Thursdays at 8:30 P.M.

Time for All Ages – during congregational worship. Please click on <https://bit.ly/3aQWIYf> Meeting ID: 935 4201 5019; Password: 942416 or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter the Meeting ID: 935 4201 5019 when prompted.

Children’s Zoom Joys and Concerns – Sundays 12:00 P.M.

Coming of Age – Next Zoom Sunday, May 17, 9:30 A.M. – Draft Credo and Worship Planning

Adult Religious Education

Guided Reflection – Thursdays at 3:00 P.M., led by **Rev. Rachael Hayes**

Let’s reflect together. We may be facing new situations, but we have resources to help us process our emotions and the events of our lives. Bring a notebook and pen or pencil.

Please click <https://bit.ly/3f4CHRm> or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter the Meeting ID 120 832 036 when prompted.

Death and Dying in the Time of Covid-19 – Wednesdays at 10:30 A.M.

Whether we die of Covid-19 or something else, whether we die this year or far into the future, each of us will die someday. It’s natural that in this time of pandemic, our thoughts might turn to death. What do we need to die well?

The topics will be responsive to participants’ needs. Some possible topics include making wishes known to family and healthcare providers, what to do with possessions, memorial services, obituaries, right relationships, life review, writing or recording goodbyes, and visualizing our deaths.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://bit.ly/3e33qNP>

Dial by touch tone phone

Meeting ID: 847 853 127

Social Events

Women’s Circle meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at noon. Please join us for spirited conversation, including the sharing of ways you are coping with “sheltering in place” during this time. What is sustaining you? What is nurturing you? Inspiring you? Entertaining you?

Please join us by clicking on <https://bit.ly/35nW8jB> Meeting ID: 983 8988 5674 Password: 135383 or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter the Meeting ID: 983 8988 5674

Questions? Please contact **Sophie Rogers**.

Virtual Lunch with the Minister Join **Rev. Rachael** on Thursday, May 21 at 12:00 P.M.

Please click on

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/193118329>

or call in at +1 646 876 9923 and enter Meeting ID: 193 118 329.

In Our Larger Community

UUSA part of Virtual Amherst Arts Night Plus Thursday, May 7, 5:00-8:00 P.M. Enjoy artists, interviews, and music! Grab a drink and something to nibble. Amherst Media is broadcasting this virtual art walk on Ch. 15. You may also stream the program here:

<https://tinyurl.com/ybj8flnx> The May Virtual Arts Night features the following artists and venues:

- The Bower Studio presenting Opertura's exhibit "Dream Reflection."
- Gallery A3 presenting artists Laura Holland and Janet Walerstein Winston.
- UMass-UMCA presenting Amherst artist Avital Sagalyn. A discussion with Hugh Davies.
- The Unitarian-Universalist Society presenting "Journey of a Wandering Angel." The story behind the Tiffany stained glass window.

Plus special musical guests:

- The O-Tones
- The Jazz Mesmerizers, and
- Chris Smither.

Membership

This month we are delighted to introduce some of the newer members of our UU Society. Many thanks to **Pat Rector** and **Jeanne Ballantine** of the Outreach, Integration and Retention Task Force for interviewing them remotely in this time of social distancing! We look forward to interviews from other task force members in future newsletters and weekly announcements.

Meet Adam Blandford and Family

Adam and his spouse, Jamie Garner, moved to the Pioneer Valley from the Northern Kentucky area about two years ago. The couple has two children, 12-year-old Yanixza (pronounced zhan-EEK-suh) Cruz and her brother, 10-year-old Jaxzier (pronounced jax-HEER).

Adam signed the membership book in late January and was drawn to UUSA because he likes the discipline of a weekly reminder to live a good and purposeful life. Raised in the Catholic tradition, he appreciates the UU balance between introspective exploration of the spiritual and the vibrant activist approach.

Jamie, who is still recovering from a serious job injury, is enrolled in a doctoral program in education at UMass.

As a political science major with a Masters in International Relations, Adam now teaches business skill development at a nonprofit in the region, doing focus groups, interviews and organizational development. He loves the natural beauty of the area and especially enjoys bicycling along paths that allow him to observe the busyness of beavers, which are his favorite animal, and the songs of birds.

Meet Mary McKenna

If you haven't met Mary yet, you will! She's an energetic, open and friendly spirit, recently resettled to the Amherst area from northern California where she lived most of her life. She, her husband John, and their blended family of four children lived in Palo Alto, where John was in the high-tech world in Silicon Valley and Mary was a family therapist. Because their daughter, Megan, lives in Deerfield, they had a house here where they spent several weeks each year. Sadly, Mary's husband of 42 years died recently, and she has moved permanently to our area—we are happy to welcome her to our fold!

Mary received a degree in marketing, and served as a buyer for several department stores in San Francisco and Palo Alto. She and her husband were quite active with the Beyond War Movement, a world-wide effort to reduce the threat of nuclear war.

Mary's family includes four children and eight grandchildren. Her daughter Megan in Deerfield has two children, ages 6 and 9; her son Robert in Silicon Valley has a daughter, Stella, who is 9; Justin in Sacramento has

two teenagers; and Molly lives in Portland, OR with her husband and three teen sons.



Mary and her husband attended UU church in Monterey, CA occasionally, and after his death Mary attended more regularly. Her attraction to UU is the sense of community, more than just a Sunday involvement. Mary comments that our congregation attracted her because it is a “warm, caring group of people, a nurturing gathering. Coming in cold I felt very welcomed. People reached out to include me and others, and welcomed everyone—but never did I feel ‘recruited.’”

Her passions include working with children (she volunteers in her grandson’s class); making connections between widows who are living alone (she has started a group in our area; they do activities together and look after one another); and travel, something she and her husband did extensively. She enjoyed being part of many women’s spiritual groups with sharing and meditation in California, and hopes to create a similar gathering in this area.

Stewardship of the Earth preoccupies her, and she values and wants to be involved in efforts to reduce the threat to the earth and help the planet. Also, she would like to be involved in an expanded and meaningful UUSA “social hour,” especially if UUSA should move to two services. Mary looks forward to meeting many of our members.

“Re-Meet” Joy Southwell

Joy Southwell’s return to Amherst is a testimony to enduring friendships, childhood memories, and the steadfast appeal of UUSA’s congregation. From 1998 to 2003, Joy was an active member (including an exuberant stint in the choir when **Fran Plumer** was director), until she left for a while to spend time with family in Gainesville, Florida.

Although Joy was not initially seeking work there, a neighbor recognized her clinical social work skills and quickly recruited her to a job in a local substance abuse program. “I loved it,” she said of the program.

Joy’s ties to Amherst, however, have brought her back. She was an undergraduate in sociology at UMass, where her grandfather was head of the geology department. During her career, she continued to visit family here. She has enjoyed rekindling the Amherst friendships she made at UUSA and making new ones.

Joy’s current passions include her tabby cat and rat terrier dog. She loves to sing and often does so when walking her dog. When she was in Gainesville, she helped set up a community chorus that has grown to nearly 100 voices. She has re-joined the UUSA choir as an alto. “Choirs and congregations allow me to be part of something larger than myself,” she noted.

While she liked the “huge” Gainesville UU congregation, she prefers the size of UUSA, where almost everyone can know everyone else. “I’m not at all against us growing our membership,” she added, but appreciates a size that allows folks to connect meaningfully.

Green Sanctuary

Climate Lunch n’ Learn: The 100% Climate Solution

Solomon Goldstein-Rose, Author and activist

Sunday, May 17, 2020 @ 12 Noon, 30-minute presentation

After the Sunday services using same Zoom meeting link

Solomon will present “The “100% Solution,” a framework that is outlined in his new book of the same name. He developed the framework as he tried to wrap his own mind around the global picture of climate change. In this talk sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Committee, Solomon will give an overview of the technical side of what must physically be achieved to solve climate change and will excite participants with ideas on effective messaging to build the political consensus we need for bold action that actually adds up. People will go away feeling more grounded in their understanding of what’s needed to solve climate change, and more hopeful that it is possible.

[Solomon Goldstein-Rose](https://www.solomongr.com/) has been a climate activist since age 11. His education in engineering and public policy gave him a unique perspective on the intersection of what physically has to happen to solve climate change and what approaches might actually make it happen. He also served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives from 2017 to 2019 representing the 3rd Hampshire district. An overview of the book is available at <https://www.solomongr.com/>.

Six Lessons Coronavirus Can Teach Us About Climate Change

This homily from The UUSA Earth Day service (April 19, 2020) comes from an essay co-written by Margaret Bullitt-Jonas and Leah D. Schade, co-editors of the book Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis. Their essay was published by Earth Day Network on March 25, 2020.

Earth Day 2020 comes at a tumultuous time. COVID-19 has upended our lives. If there was ever a time in which humanity should finally recognize that we belong to one connected family on Earth, this should be it. We share a single planet, drink from the same water and breathe the same air.

So, whether hunkered down at home or hospital, or working on the front lines, we are all doing our part to face a common enemy together. When COVID-19 is finally behind us, instead of returning to normal life, we must hold on to these lessons in the fight against climate change.

Below are six lessons the coronavirus pandemic can teach us about our response to climate change. (*As described by Bullitt-Jonas and Schade*)

1. Science matters

We can save lives by funding, accessing and understanding the best science available. The science on climate change has been clear for decades, but we've failed in communicating the danger to the public, leading to slow action and widespread denial of the facts.

2. How we treat the natural world affects our well-being.

Climate change--and its root causes--may increase the risk of pandemics. Deforestation and other causes of habitat loss lead to transmission of viruses between species. Air pollution increases risk; for example in the 2003 SARS epidemic, the death rate was nearly doubled in areas with high air pollution. Climate change favors the spread of Lyme disease, malaria, dengue fever, and some other infectious diseases. And if we continue to destroy our lands, we also deplete our resources and damage our agricultural systems.

3. The sooner we mobilize for action, the less suffering will take place.

Quick and drastic action can flatten the curve for coronavirus and free up healthcare resources, lowering death rates. Similarly, drastic action on climate change could reduce food and water shortages, natural disasters and sea level rise, protecting countless individuals and communities.

4. We have the ability to make drastic changes very quickly.

When sufficiently motivated, we can suspend business as usual to help each other. All over the world, healthy people are changing their lifestyles to protect the more vulnerable people in their communities. Similar dedication for climate change could transform our energy consumption immediately. All of us can make a difference and play an important role in the solution.

5. All of us are vulnerable to crisis, though unequally.

Those with underlying social, economic or physical vulnerabilities will suffer most. A society burdened with social and economic inequality is more likely to fall apart in a crisis. We must also recognize that industries and people who profit from an unjust status quo will try to interrupt the social transformation that a crisis requires.

6. Holding on to a vision of a just, peaceful and sustainable Earth will give us strength for the future.

Earth Day 2020 will be remembered as a time when humanity was reeling from a pandemic. But we pray that this year will also be remembered as a time when we all were suddenly forced to stop what we were doing, pay attention to one another and take action.

Business as usual — digging up fossil fuels, cutting down forests and sacrificing the planet's health for profit, convenience and consumption — is driving catastrophic climate change. It's time to abandon this destructive system and find sustainable ways to inhabit our planet.

What would it look like if we emerged from this pandemic with a fierce new commitment to take care of each other? What would it look like to absorb the lessons of pandemic and to fight for a world in which everyone can thrive?

On this 50th anniversary of Earth Day, as fear and illness sweep the globe, we listen for voices that speak of wisdom, generosity, courage and hope. And as always, we find solace in the natural world. In the suddenly quiet streets and skies, we can hear birds sing.

DEAR FELLOW UUSA MEMBERS: Introducing the Stewardship Committee!

We are members of the relatively new Stewardship Committee. Our bottom line is that we want to ensure that UUSA survives and thrives into the future and gets the support it needs to do that. This is an achievable task if we all have the same shared goals to work toward. Please let us explain...

Our committee oversees and helps with the UUSA programs that keep the congregation alive and lively, and that pay the bills. That includes fundraisers like the Winter Revelry (remember “cooookies”?), the Silent Auction (normally held in spring), the once-a-year spring pledge drive, and any ideas for new ways to keep the congregation thriving. We assist by helping to find volunteers for one-time or on-going fundraising activities, as well as brainstorming and implementing new ideas to strengthen our congregation. For example, we are in the process of setting up a Legacy Giving program that will see us into the future—but details on that another day. Also, we are enjoying brainstorming on other ways to strengthen UUSA and ensure a sound future—any ideas welcome!

The UUSA pledging budget for this coming year (this supports staff, building, programming, and much more) is \$184,750. With cancellation of some fund raising projects, we have to rely primarily on the pledge drive—difficult this year for obvious reasons. Although the pledge drive has raised \$147,862 from 72 pledges (of 100 pledge units—about 80% of our total goal) as of the end of April, this is still over \$36,000 short of the goal to sustain our UU way of life at this time. We are helping the Pledge Drive Committee to get the word out to fill this gap.

In addition, if you have any ideas to help address the current gap or future needs, that would be terrific. You may just have the winning idea! Thanks, and please talk to us—we’re a kind of fun group!

Catharine Porter, Mary McKenna, Elliott Kelly, Jeff Clark, Jeanne Ballantine

Social Action



Land is Sacred: Stand with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, the very tribe that welcomed the Pilgrims in the 1600s is at risk of losing what is left of their homelands due to a determination made by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. <https://sign.moveon.org/petitions/stand-with-the-mashpee>
Here are some folks you can contact:

Call Sen. Joe Hoeven of North Dakota, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, at 202-224-2551 and urge him to support the forward movement of two bills:

- H.R. 312 / S 2628, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Reservation Reaffirmation Act, which effectively reverses the Secretary of the Interior’s termination action.
- H.R. 375 / S. 2808, an amendment/update to the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, which effectively protects other native nations from similar actions.

Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to speak to Sen. Edward Markey and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, and urge them to support the above two bills.

Call the Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt at 202-208-3100 x3, and ask him to stop his efforts to disestablish the Mashpee Wampanoag reservation.

You are invited to join the #UnitedApartChallenge to help our community! Take a selfie with three things that you are thankful for during this pandemic – things that bring you joy or make social distancing easier. While reflecting on what you are thankful for, it is important to remember that many people in our community are not as fortunate. And, please donate to the Western Mass United Way’s COVID-19 Fund at www.uwpy.org/covid19-donate to help those in your community. You will be putting meals on the table for those struggling to feed their families and providing a bed to those suffering from homelessness.

We can’t physically join hands, so let’s join them virtually. Copy and paste this message and tag three friends to spread the #UnitedApartChallenge and support those in our community who need us the most! We can’t do it alone!

ION Corner

At its April Zoom meeting, ION (Interfaith Opportunities Network) decided to have a program in October about the Native Peoples. This year marks the 400th anniversary of the Plymouth landing by the Pilgrims. After an initial harmonious relationship between the Indigenous People and the Pilgrims, Indigenous People were murdered by the introduction of small pox into their community and dispossessed of their ancestral home. Their spiritually-based and tribal culture came under full assault by the European-dominated and US power structure through the following centuries, continuing even today, robbing Native Peoples of their lands. This ION program is in conjunction with events being planned by the New England Peace Pagoda to highlight important places and events in this history, most of which Americans were never taught, and to learn more about the Native Peoples' cultures. Respectfully, Mary Beth Seminario, UUSA representative to ION.

Our Caring Ministries



You who have an eye for miracles
regard the bud now appearing on
the bare branch of the fragile young
tree.

It's a mere dot, a nothing.

But already it's a flower, already a
fruit, already its own death and
resurrection.

Diego Valeri

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, Kate Dahlstedt, Gabriela Horvay, Mary Latham, Karen Mack, Martha Nelson, Richard Roznoy, Lynn Sussman, and Gordon Wyse**.

Our Pastoral Care Team coordinators are **Fran Plumer** and **Charlie Atwood**. 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.