

# THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



## Important Information

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## NEWSLETTER

Copy Editor: Janis Gray

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Deadline for submissions: 15th of each month.

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

Please understand we cannot cut and paste PDF files into the newsletter, so submissions should either be Word documents, rich text files or written in the body of the email. 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



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## Schedule of Services

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**Since March 15, 2020, we have been holding our Sunday Services online to help protect the health of our community, and we will continue to do so through June 2021, or until a vaccine or reliable treatment is found for COVID-19.**

**Sunday, September 6, 10:30 A.M. – *The Dignity of Labor***

**Charlie Atwood**

An appreciation of workers that keep us all going.

Join us a few minutes before 10:30 A.M. by clicking on <https://bit.ly/2Wy1aHg> Or call in: 646-558-8656. Meeting ID: 965 1965 7002 Password: 811005

*September 6 is the last Summer Service before our regular Worship Season resumes!*



**Sunday, September 13, 10:30 A.M. – *Ingathering: The Water Cycle***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

We will celebrate our annual water ceremony from our many separate places. Please bring a cup of drinkable water for each person attending in your location, plus an empty bowl for everyone to use. If you have collected water throughout the year, please bring that as well.

Join us a few minutes before 10:30 A.M. by clicking on the bit.ly link that you will receive in your weekly emailed announcements. Password: 811005 or call in at +1 646-558-8656 and enter the Meeting ID 965 1965 7002 when prompted.

**Sunday, September 20, 10:30 A.M. – *Autumnal Equinox: Seeking Balance***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

Unitarian Universalism is a living tradition. We look to many sources for inspiration, seeking balance as we grow and change. This service will also contain a Blessing of the Masks, so please bring a mask to wear or hold.

Join us a few minutes before 10:30 A.M. by clicking on the bit.ly link that you will receive in your weekly emailed announcements. Password: 811005 or call in at +1 646-558-8656 and enter the Meeting ID 965 1965 7002 when prompted.

**Sunday, September 27, 10:30 A.M. – *Oh, Jonah!***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

Before Yom Kippur begins, we stop to listen to the story of Jonah, who went to places where he never wanted to go and learned some important lessons about doing the right thing and forgiveness.

Join us a few minutes before 10:30 A.M. by clicking on the bit.ly link that you will receive in your weekly emailed announcements. Password: 811005 or call in at +1 646-558-8656 and enter the Meeting ID 965 1965 7002 when prompted.

*Texts of some sermons are available to members and friends of UUSA by request. Send email to [office@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:office@uusocietyamherst.org) Some of our sermons are also 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

One Sunday every month (except for June, July, and August), we have traditionally scheduled a Dedicated Offering to recognize and financially support worthy organizations engaged in projects that reflect our guiding Unitarian-Universalist principles.

This fall, the Dedicated Offering (DO) Committee has decided to have just one major offering. Given the significantly lower plate offerings which have happened since we suspended in-person services and began Zoom services, the DO committee agreed that it would be more productive to feature one local social service entity every three or four months in FY21, rather than currently collecting very little each month. To this end, we've chosen Craig's Doors, the homeless shelter, to fund this fall, with the offering to be collected in November. Craig's Doors is open during the winter months only. Many of the guests are attendees at our Wednesday community breakfasts (now served outside). The COVID virus miraculously has not hit the homeless in the Amherst area yet, but the possibilities are real that this group may be hit hard this fall and winter. The DO Committee would like to offer the UUSA the opportunity to be as generous as possible to our homeless friends. Thank you!

Our UUSA congregation was generous during FY20, even after the arrival of the pandemic. We collected a total of \$5917.28 during DOs for the following organizations: Tapestry Health, UU/UNO, Goodwin Memorial Church, A Positive Place, Homework House, Gandara Center, Sunrise Movement, and Children's Advocacy Center.

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## Message from the President

Before I get excited about the beginning of our "church" year, I want to reflect on the wonderful summer services we have enjoyed.

Years ago a friend said to me, "All of us have at least one good sermon in us." After attending our summer services, I believe this to be true.

The variety of topics has been rich; the speakers (most coming from our congregation) have shared their wisdom, experience and personal stories.

Being somewhat of a "UU" junkie, I have attended other "virtual" services in other UU communities this summer. Many are pre-recorded and flawless, the content timely and relevant. But something about our LIVE and imperfect Zoom services just makes my heart burst open. Moments like when **Janis Gray** couldn't get the beeswax candle to light, and when speakers had to begin again because they forgot to "unmute," and particularly when we sang our closing circle song, and I saw many of us humbly placing our hands over our hearts....these moments are meaningful.

These services have been recorded and can be accessed through our website, if you want to visit them.

Besides the summer Sunday services, I want to give a "shout out" to **Jacy Armenti**, who has provided weekly Zoom sessions for as many as seven pre-schoolers. That's amazing, and a phenomenal attendance for summer Sundays! It speaks to the importance of providing our very youngest members with an opportunity to be engaged in this spiritual community.

This Fall, our congregation has the opportunity to participate in an intensive learning and workshop series called "**Beloved Conversations.**" The series addresses the hard work of recognizing patterns of white privilege, institutional racism and other oppressions within ourselves, our congregation and beyond. More information about this workshop can be found elsewhere in this newsletter

Also in this newsletter, look for information on how to participate in our annual **Connecticut River Clean-up.** The Green Sanctuary Committee will be providing guidelines on how to participate in a safe way, offering our spiritual community an opportunity to demonstrate our support of our 7th Principle.

And, September brings the return of our vibrant minister!! **Rev. Rachael's** presence will infuse all of our committees and "communities" with fresh energy. Please welcome her home.

In community,  
Susan Rice

UU congregations across the country are voting on accepting the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle as part of their covenant. Below are the words to the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle. Read it with care. Determine what it means to include it as one of our Principles. And finally, pause and ponder how it might change the way we practice our faith. More to come on this in the near future.

"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by building a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

# The Big BIG FUNdraiser for UUSA

our MAJOR fundraising event for the year

Let's raise money for our congregation and let's have some fun doing it!

We are in a whacky and oft-times dispiriting world right now. What can we count on to nourish and sustain us? Family, friends... the UUSA! ... the amazing **Rev. Rachael**, the oh-so-competent **Lea**, our wonderful **Rebecca** and **Jacy** keeping RE ticking, **Brenda's** lovely music, and **David** keeping the meetinghouse in shape. These people need to be sustained so they can feed our spirits. Our meetinghouse needs to be cared for so we can return to it in the fullness of time.

We recently agreed to a budget that included fundraising for this year. It isn't realistic to hold a bazaar or tag sale or even an events auction. So we invite you to donate what you might have spent at these events. You don't have to figure out what to give to an auction or roll up your sleeves to help with setup or cleanup. How about giving more than usual since you do not have to bake cookies or clean the house and buy the food for a party? We know not everyone can make a donation in these times, but this will be our major fundraiser for the year, so please **write a generous check**, if you are able.

## **How about doing it right now!**

You can **pay on-line with [PayPal](#)** (this costs the UUSA 2% of your donation), or simply **write a check payable to UUSA** (write **FUNdraiser** in the memo line), and **send it to:**

UUSA  
P. O. Box 502  
Amherst, MA 01004-0502

Done! Now, don't you feel better that this piece of the UUSA budget will be taken care of at the start of the year?

To celebrate checking off this piece of the budget and our lucky escape from the toil of typical fundraisers, plan to **join in a virtual Variety Show on October 17**. Would you like to be part of the show? Keep an eye out for more information. In the meantime, please get that check in the mail. We will celebrate together on October 17.

Please **send your check soon, or at least before October 10**

so we can tell you how much we raised for our beloved UUSA when we have our Zoom Variety Show.

Thank you!

## **Last Summer RE Childcare with Jacy -- September 6 via Zoom from 9:45-10:10 A.M.**

Jacy sings songs, plays games and does activities suitable for children of all ages. At the beginning of the morning session she will ask the parents to help their children find some basic materials for the morning's activity.

Please email DRE Rebecca Fricke for the Zoom link at [dre@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:dre@uusocietyamherst.org).

## **Religious Education Ministry**



Happy September everyone! I am writing to you from the middle of August and it is hard for me to acknowledge summer's nearing the end. By the time you are reading this, you will know how schools are going to operate and perhaps how your work and volunteer duties will be organized, but I am guessing that like with everything these days, we will need to be flexible and expect situations to change.

You can be sure of at least one thing – all of the UUSA congregational programming will be virtual. RE classes will be offered for all age groups via Zoom and there will be whole-congregation services at least once per month. More details will be announced via email and the UUSA weekly announcements.

If you have any questions or concerns or you would just like to talk, please contact me at 413-687-8722 or email me at [dre@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:dre@uusocietyamherst.org).

Thank you,

Rebecca Fricke, Director of Religious Education



## Help Keep the Connecticut River Clean at Annual Source to Sea Clean Up

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 9:30 TO NOON at various locations. (Sign up by September 19)

The UUSA has participated in the *Source to Sea Clean Up* for many years – and it is making a difference. The Source to Sea Clean Up, sponsored by the Connecticut River Conservancy, is a great way to be outside, near the water, and with friends doing good work. For a look at the larger effort, follow this link: <https://www.ctriver.org/our-work/source-to-sea-cleanup/>.

Of course, our first priority is to avoid spreading disease, so we'll take some serious precautions:

Effective face masks are required,

Please bring your own work gloves and hand sanitizer.

We'll keep volunteers a minimum of six feet between people, and we won't share food.

Families will work as a group, and other groups will have no more than four people.

We will keep an eye on signups and make sure there are enough work sites available that we can spread out appropriately. Please join us.

**In order to organize these small groups, please sign up by September 19 by emailing Ron Grosslein [grosslei@umass.edu](mailto:grosslei@umass.edu)**

We'll email you about the location(s), weather issues, etc., as the date approaches.

See you at the river!

## Sign Up for Workshop Series “Beloved Conversations” by September 20

**Good News!** The UUSA Board has authorized funds to start the “Beloved Conversations” program as a virtual workshop series at our congregation. For detailed information, which is continuously being updated, go to this site [www.meadville.edu/beloved](http://www.meadville.edu/beloved). Here you can watch a video on this racial justice program and see many details about the initial workshop this Fall and what future workshops will look like.

This virtual workshop series will initially focus on the internal work we each need to do to engage in racial justice. The program will “include individual study of videos and readings, accompanied by reflection prompts and suggested conversations with ‘critical friends’ chosen by the participants; bi-weekly small group conversations in a ‘learning pod;’ and larger, monthly, facilitated meaning-making sessions.” We need to register between September 1–20 for the Fall program. There will be other programs continuing in the Spring and following years.

**Sign up Early by contacting Steve Rice!** The cost is \$150 per person and, while the UUSA Board would like people to pay as much as they can afford, the UUSA will pay up to \$150/person with a maximum of \$1500 allocated for this program. There will be discounts for everyone if 10 or more people are able to sign up. If you are interested in participating in this group, please contact **Steve Rice** ([steveatd1@gmail.com](mailto:steveatd1@gmail.com) or 413-253-4485).

## **GREEN SANCTUARY**

### **Ask Our Reps to Sign No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge**

Over 200 political leaders and candidates for office in Massachusetts have signed the [No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge](#), including Senators Warren and Markey, US Reps. Jim McGovern and Joe Kennedy, and Pioneer Valley State Reps. Lindsay Sabadosa and Natalie Blais. The pledge asks our politicians to “... not take contributions over \$200 from oil, gas, and coal industry executives, lobbyists, and PACs and instead prioritize the health of our families, climate, and democracy over fossil fuel industry profits.”

Given our state's slow pace of progress on climate policies to meet our 2030 and 2050 carbon emissions reduction goals, the Green Sanctuary Committee would like to encourage all our representatives to take the pledge and prevent fossil fuel money from dictating policy, as it has in many other states.

We have put together a set of resources [[at this link](#)] for you to write your own *Thank You* letter to a politician who has taken the pledge (e.g., Rep. McGovern) and *Pledge Request* for those who haven't (e.g., Tracy Lovvorn, who's challenging McGovern). FYI, both State Rep. Mindy Domb and Sen. Jo Comerford have yet to sign the pledge, though both have been champions of effective climate policies.

Thank you for advocating for smart climate policies!

## **ION CORNER**

**ION (Interfaith Opportunity Network)** has taken advantage of Zoom bringing us closer and in many cases making it easier to have both meetings and devotionals throughout the summer.

Our most immediate project involves acting for restorative justice for Native People on the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Europeans on Native lands in the Northeast on **Sunday, October 18, 2:00 P.M. (rain date Oct 25), at Unity Park (1st and Unity Streets), Turners Falls, MA (simultaneous broadcast via YouTube)**. Unity Park is near the site of the Great Falls Massacre, where around 200 Native women, children and elders were killed in their sleep. If gathering in person is not safely possible, a virtual gathering will be held via YouTube and Facebook. We will have the opportunity to listen to Native speakers and hear music; reflect and develop relationships of respect and solidarity; and act for restorative justice. **Info and "pay as led" tickets for Oct 18 program:** [www.groupposing.org/events/400Years](http://www.groupposing.org/events/400Years). To "see" this program via the Internet, you must register through this site; a link will then be sent you. Otherwise, donations for support and reparations can be sent to: Interfaith Council of Franklin County (ICFC), PO Box 1171, Greenfield, MA 01302.

Earlier this summer, after the murder of George Floyd, ION sponsored a vigil at the Amherst Town Common which grew to almost 1500 people. Over 120 people participated in a vigil in South Hadley organized by Center Church. Weekly vigils from 10 -10:30 A.M. every Saturday continue to be held near that Town Common on Rte 116. All are welcome.

Last Fall, when an ION member brought to our attention the racist imagery on both our state flag and seal, which show a Native figure standing beneath an arm wielding a sword, we worked towards changing that image. We are the **ONLY** state in this country with racist images on its seal or flag. A bill which will study changing this image recently passed the Senate unanimously and is in now the House Ways and Means Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Beth Seminario, the UUSA representative to ION.

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## **Social Events**

**Women's Circle** meets via Zoom at noon on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month at noon. It's an opportunity to connect with friends and become better acquainted with other women in the congregation whom you may not know as well. Join Zoom meeting by clicking here: <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.

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## **Our Caring Ministries**



"You may not always have a comfortable life and you will not always be able to solve all of the world's problems at once, but don't ever underestimate the importance you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious and hope can take on a life of its own."

Michelle Obama

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, Lynn Sussman, and Gordon Wyse**.

Our Pastoral Care Team coordinators are **Fran Plumer** and **Charlie Atwood**. Other members are the **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 ones.