

# THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



## Important Information

### **STREET ADDRESS:**

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### **MAILING ADDRESS:**

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*The following staff can be reached by email or by calling the office and leaving a message: 413-253-2848*

### **MINISTER: The Reverend Rachael Hayes**

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### **CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR: Lea Douville**

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**Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10 - 3**

### **DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**

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## NEWSLETTER

Copy Editor:

Janis Gray

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Deadline for submissions: 20th 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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*For fuller descriptions of our upcoming services, including links for those that are online, please check our weekly announcements, our [website](#) or our [Facebook page](#) closer to the date! Thank you.*

**Sunday, September 5, 10:30 A.M. – *You Shall Release [The Land]***

**Rabbi David Seidenberg**

Rabbi Seidenberg, our guest speaker this morning, will talk about The Abundance Farm in Northampton. The site of Abundance Farm was once the site of Northampton's "Alms House," which, from 1800 to the 1950s, served as a refuge for local residents in need of shelter, food and other services. The Northampton Alms House included a 15 acre farm which the Alms House residents operated. This rich history adds so much additional meaning as The Abundance Farm reclaimed this land as a farm to, once again, serve our community's local residents in need.

*Today is the first Dedicated Offering collection for September.*

**Sunday, September 12, 10:30 A.M. – *Service theme to be announced***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

**Sunday, September 19, 10:30 A.M. – *Service theme to be announced***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

**Sunday, September 26, 10:30 A.M. – *Service theme to be announced***

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

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## Dedicated Offerings

Beginning in September, each month will be devoted to a new Dedicated Offering (DO) recipient, whose representative will speak on the first Sunday. We will no longer hold a separate offering for the DO recipient but will split every Sunday's offering plate 50/50 with the recipient organization. This move symbolizes the solidarity we feel with the organizations we choose to support, and it also gives us all more opportunities to contribute. As always, please specify whether the funds you send to the office or by PayPal are for the Plate, your Pledge, or some other purpose.

The site of **Abundance Farm**, our September DO recipient, was once the site of Northampton's "Alms House," which, from 1800 to the 1950s served as a refuge for local residents in need of shelter, food and other services. The Northampton Alms House included a 15 acre farm which the Alms House residents operated. This rich history adds so much additional meaning as The Abundance Farm reclaimed this land as a farm to, once again, serve our community's local residents in need. The farm has joined in partnership with Lander-Grinspoon Academy and the Northampton Survival Center. Since 2014, Abundance Farm has been a project which builds upon this land's rich history of being an important place for community building and contributing to greater food security for local people in need.

Donations can be made to the UUSA and sent by check to P.O. Box 502, Amherst, MA 01004-0502 or on our website: <https://www.uusocietyamherst.org/connection/donate>. Thank you so much for sharing what you can.

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## Beloved Conversations

As this newsletter went to press, we learned the registration deadline for Fall 2021 Beloved Conversations: Virtual has been extended to September 14! Visit [www.meadville.edu/beloved](http://www.meadville.edu/beloved) to register. Scholarships are available from the Beloved Conversations program and our congregation. Email **Lea** in the office to request funds from UUSA.

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## Small Group Ministry

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We are pleased that the Small Groups Ministry is growing and flourishing. Last year we reached out to the congregation through an open house in February, and had 31 participants attend, many of whom opted to join in small groups for the remainder of the year. Thus, we grew from three covenant groups to seven. Small groups played a vital role during the pandemic. Many people new to our Society found joining a small group an excellent way to get to know our community and to build close relationships during this time of social distancing.

We have a wonderful group of facilitators ready to start up new groups in October. [Please fill out the online sign-up form](#) by **Sunday, September 12**, checking off all of the schedule options that could work for you.

In community,

*Anne Louise White, Chair, Covenant Groups Ministry*

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## Religious Education Ministry

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### **Introducing Johnny Williams — Youth and Young Adult Coordinator**

Johnny (they/them) is a multi-instrumentalist with a passion for self-directed learning, solidarity economies, comparative religion, and warm beverages. After a secular upbringing in the North Shore suburbs of Chicago, Johnny was introduced to Unitarian Universalism by their mother and attended services at the Unitarian Church of Evanston (IL) throughout high school. Johnny continued to explore spirituality and religion as a student at Hampshire College, taking a variety of courses on comparative religion in addition to participating in the campus meditation group and in a local Friends (Quaker) meeting.

Upon graduating from Hampshire in 2018, Johnny worked as a camp counselor for Farm & Wilderness, which led them to the realization that they wanted to pursue youth work as a vocational calling. Since then, Johnny has worked with youth in a variety of settings, and currently works as a music instructor at North Star: Self-Directed Learning for Teens in addition to this role. Johnny is thrilled to be the first youth and young adult coordinator to get to *work with youth at both the Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence and the Unitarian Society of Amherst*. Having lived in both of the communities that these congregations represent, they are very excited to see the kind of chemistry and cross-valley connections that form between both groups of youth over the course of the year.



Johnny grew up in a musical family, and is the oldest of three siblings. They started out on violin/fiddle at an early age and later picked up bass, guitar, piano, and ukulele. Music has been a big part of their spirituality and identity over the course of their life and they hope to share this passion with youth in both congregations. Johnny currently resides in Florence with four humans, four chickens, two turtles, two tortoises, a cat, and a dog.

### **UUSA RE Summer In-Person Funtimes! Last summer gathering: Sunday, September 5**

9:00-10:00 A.M. at Wildwood Elementary School Playground, 71 Strong Street, Amherst.

Parents and children, come and play with your UUSA friends. For our new families, this will be a great way for you to meet UU families and have some informal UU time outside rain or shine, but not thunder. **All ages welcome!** run and organized by **Jacy Armenti**, Rebecca Fricke and the UUSA RE Ministry. Jacy will be on site. A parent (or assigned adult friend) must stay at the playground at all times.

Wear a mask. Bring a water bottle. And remember, no bathrooms are available the site. Questions? Concerns? Let me know! Rebecca Fricke, DRE; email: [dre'a'uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:dre'a'uusocietyamherst.org)

Check out **Rebecca Fricke's** Director of Religious Education Blog for past descriptions of Sunday activities. Rebecca's blog includes written descriptions, website links and photos. Any questions? Ask! Want to get involved? Email Rebecca at [dre@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:dre@uusocietyamherst.org).

<https://u2canuu.wordpress.com/>

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## Green Sanctuary

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

Saturday, September 25, 9:30 A.M. to Noon at various locations.

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/>.



*Scenes from the 2020 river cleanup by UUSA!*



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

- Please use an effective face mask.
- Bring your own work gloves and hand sanitizer.
- We'll maintain a minimum of 6 feet between people.
- Bring your own snacks and water.

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

**Please sign up by September 19 by emailing Ron Grosslein** (if you do not have access to our directory with Ron's contact information, please contact **Lea** in the office.) We'll email you about the location(s), weather issues, etc. as the date approaches.

See you at the river!

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## Social Events

**Weekly Men's Breakfast** UUSA men meet at Kelly's Restaurant on College Street (Route 9), Amherst at 7 A.M. weekly on Wednesday mornings. Newcomers welcome! Contact **Pete Rogers** for more information, but no RSVP needed. If you do not have access to our UUSA directory (with Pete's contact information), please contact **Lea** in the office.

**The Women's Circle** is a supportive and social group of UUSA women and open to all. It meets at noon on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. The group is now meeting both in person *and* on Zoom! Please contact **Sophie Rogers** if you have any questions or comments, or want to get on the email distribution list. If you do not have access to our UUSA directory (with Sophie's contact information), please contact **Lea** in the office.

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## Finance Committee

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The Finance Committee will meet on Monday, September 13, at 7:15 P.M. on Zoom.

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## Our Caring Ministries

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*“What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes part of us.”*  
—Helen Keller

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 Cave, Lauren Croce, Kate Dahlstedt, Gabriela Horvay, Sophie Herman, Mary Latham, Karen Mack, Lynn Sussman, and Gordon Wyse**.

**Our Pastoral Care Team Coordinators are Fran Plumer and Charlie Atwood**. Other members are the **Elizabeth Alcaide, 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.

As always we send love and support to all of you who are struggling with illness, bereavement, or difficulties of any kind in your lives or the lives of your loved ones. We remember those who have suffered in so many ways from the ongoing corona virus pandemic, from the situation in Afghanistan, and from all the injustices in the world.

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## Here We Have Gathered

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*Here we have gathered, gathered side by side,  
circle of kinship, come and step inside!*  
(Hymn #360, Singing the Living Tradition)

A look back at UUSA based on September newsletters from 25, 15 and 5 years ago:

### September 1996:

**Sacred Drumming** Circle Facilitator: [The Rev.] Bonnie Devlin. Three Sundays in October, November and December (dates and times to be announced in future newsletters). As we witnessed in the brilliant Opening Ceremony at the Centennial Olympics, “global drumming” has become a major form of expression for millions of people around the world. Our own Bonnie Devlin — who is herself a Master Drummer and teacher in the Haitian Sacred Drum tradition — will conduct a series of workshops on “Sacred Drumming” for our Society members and friends. These workshops will culminate in the drum circle’s presentation at our January 5 Kwanzaa service. If you feel so inclined, come explore this!

**Artist-in-Residence Program** Guest Artists-in-Residence for the year: “Shades of Women.” Coordinator: Bonnie Devlin. This year we will initiate our first Artist-in-Residence Program for our UU Society! We are pleased to invite the group *Shades of Women* to be with us this year. *Shades of Women* is a group of diverse women who are committed to inspiring multicultural awareness and racial harmony through their folkloric and contemporary music and dance. Throughout the coming year, *Shades of Women* will host workshops on African dance and music for our children/youth and adult members; be with us for a Sunday worship service; and will join us in the Spring as we host a fundraising/celebration concert for our members and the larger Amherst community.

### September 2006:

**Progress report from the Green Sanctuary Committee** The electricians came at the end of July and installed new compact fluorescent light fixtures in the building. This will dramatically reduce our energy costs and improve the lighting overall. We have had a good year and have fulfilled most of the requirements set by the UU Ministry for Earth for accreditation as a certified Green Sanctuary Congregation. Our next

major task is to call for a congregational vote to seek Green Sanctuary certification before we can actually apply for accreditation. The Board will set the meeting time for the next Congregational Meeting, probably some time in the fall.

**Our Tenth Biennial Emily Dickinson's World B&B weekend is coming this fall** — and we invite you to join the FUN of our most important fundraiser! The brainchild of **Helene Lambert**, this popular program of readings, lectures, music and tours draws guests from around the country, who come to enjoy Dickinson's legacy when the colors of autumn are at their best.

We hope to welcome 45 guests this year. Many will be UUs, who often envision Amherst's most famous poet as one of our own. (In fact, Dickinson exchanged letters with a number of Unitarians and Universalists, who encouraged the poet in her calling.)

Please find a way, large or small, to help our Society enhance our guests' enjoyment—while having a grand time yourself! This month, we need to identify:

**More Bed & Breakfast Hosts**—Do you have a spare bed or beds you can offer individuals or couples on Friday and Saturday night (October 13 and 14)? Can you serve them a simple breakfast Saturday and Sunday (October 14 and 15)? Our handout, "Helpful Hints for Hospitable Hosts," should ease any qualms. And you may end up making lifetime friends! Call **Mary Wyse** or **Anne Perkins** if interested.

**Luncheon Organizers**—Will you help serve a catered lunch Saturday afternoon (October 14) at the Meeting-house? (You can eat, too!) Contact **Janis Gray** if interested.

**Canape Makers**—We will be offering a Victorian tea to our guests during a poetry discussion late Saturday afternoon at The Jones Library. We need a few people to make tiny cucumber sandwiches, watercress sandwiches, and the like. We would love to have someone step forward to organize this effort, as well! Contact **Janis Gray** and see your name in this spot next month!!

**Bakers**—Love baking? Prepare Dickinson's own Black Cake. Contact **Helene Lambert**.

**Servers**—We need help serving that Black Cake at a performance by D'arcy Dersham, daughter of **Carol Rothery**, in her role as *The Belle of Amherst* on Saturday evening (October 14). Dickinson songs set to music – including music composed just for us! – will also be performed.

**Ticket Seller**—Since the Saturday evening performances will be open to the public, we will also need someone to sell tickets at the door. Contact **Janis Gray**.

*Thank you!*

## September 2016

**Photo directory!** Among the many exciting things our revitalized Membership Committee is working on is an updated UUSA directory. It has been years since we have had a directory with members' pictures, so we are taking this on this year. Having pictures helps us put names to faces and more easily connect with each other.

**Sandy Sladen** has offered to staff an informal "photo booth" in the Social Hall on Sundays during Social Hour. She will begin on Sunday, September 4 and continue through Sunday, October 16. It might be challenging, but please try to have all your family members present on the same Sunday so everyone can be included in a family photo – kids and teens too!

**Amherst Block Party – September 15, 5:00 P.M.** Our UU Society is going to participate in the Amherst Block Party scheduled for September 15 beginning at 5:00 P.M. This is the day the town closes off N. Pleasant Street between Main Street and Triangle Street and organizations throw a big party with live music, food, booths, and fun activities for people of all ages.

Since we are in the heart of town, and therefore the party, we are going to take advantage of the opportunity to share with the broader community who we are and what we are about. We will have tables out front with coloring activities using our Angel of the Lilies as the basis. **Jay Stryker** will be inside playing the organ and piping the sound outside to attract folks to come in, learn more about the organ and to view the stained glass window. We will also have literature available about our Society, the RE program, and how to get involved.

If you would like to help with this, please contact **Sandy Sladen**. We will need one person to help set up at 4:00 P.M. and one person to help clean up around 7:00 P.M. In addition, it would be great to have volunteers help Sandy staff the table throughout the time period. Our new interim minister, **Cindy Frado**, has already volunteered, so it will be a great opportunity to get to know her better as well. This will be a very casual event, so any amount of time you can stop by and help would be great. THANKS!