

THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Inside:

Check out the new
All Ages Advent Calendar! (Page 3)

December 7: Celebrate his book
launch with Ed Tick! (Page 6)

December 12: Join our
Candlelit Carol Sing! (Page 2)

Important Information

STREET ADDRESS:

121 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, MA 01002

MAILING ADDRESS:

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

*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

revrachael@uusocietyamherst.org

CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR:

Lea Douville office@uusocietyamherst.org

Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 10 - 3

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Rebecca Fricke dre@uusocietyamherst.org

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT COORDINATOR:

Johnny Williams youthandya@uusocietyamherst.org

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

Brenda Miller music@uusocietyamherst.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

board@uusocietyamherst.org

[link to board minutes](#)

Co-Presidents:

Anne Moore and Susan Rice

Clerk:

Louise Grosslein

Treasurer:

Peter Lacey

Members At Large:

Carolyn Cave
Sue Alexander
John Gerber

NEWSLETTER

Copy Editor:

Janis Gray

Calendar Creator:

John Foster

Deadline for submissions: 20th of each month.

Email them to 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



Schedule of Services

Our intention is for all services this month to be “multi-platform” (simultaneously online and with a small number of attendees in the sanctuary).

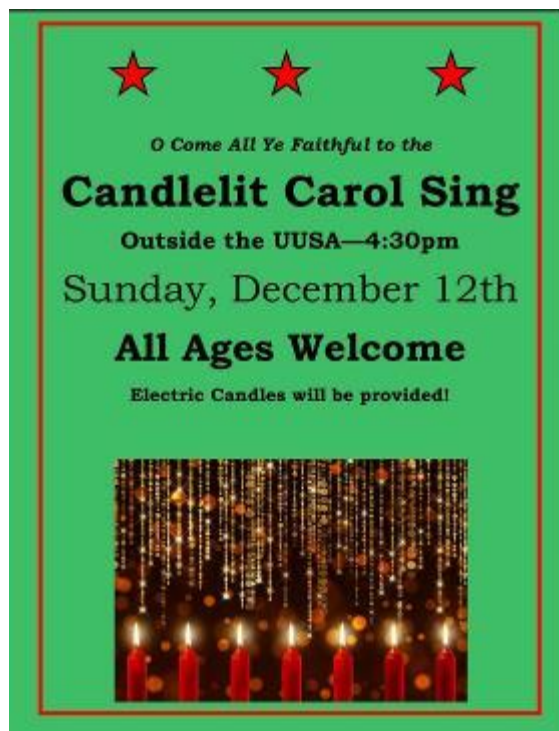
Check your weekly announcements for information on how you can reserve your seat in the sanctuary on a given Sunday! To join any service online, click <https://bit.ly/3bDuwv3> Meeting ID: 988 1332 2308 Passcode: 866951 Or call in +1 646 876 9923 and enter Meeting ID: 988 1332 2308.

**“Opening the Gates” is the theme
for our December services**

Sunday, December 5, 10:30 A.M. – *Hanukkah: Finding Fuel*
The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Sunday, November 12, 10:30 A.M. – *Opening the Gates*
The Rev. Rachael Hayes

... and then join us at 4:30 P.M.!



Sunday, November 19, 10:30 A.M. – *Practicing Gratitude*
The Rev. Rachael Hayes with UUA President Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray

Friday, December 24 – *Christmas Eve* (Service time(s) to be announced)
The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Sunday, December 26, 10:30 A.M. – *A Christmas Truce and Other Stories of Peace*
Kate Dahlstedt, Carolyn Holstein and Ed Tick

Do you know we have a UUSA YouTube Channel?

Original content from some services from this worship year have already been uploaded, and others are on the way. To view them, click [here](#) — and don't forget to **SUBSCRIBE!**

Dedicated Offerings

This year, 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 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 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.

In October, we raised \$575 for **Doctors without Borders**. We will report our November offerings for **The Poor People's Campaign** in a future newsletter.

The Literacy Project will be our **Dedicated Offering recipient for December**. *Director: Judith Roberts* Imagine a world where you cannot read a bus schedule or do simple calculations required in grocery shopping. In the workplace, most jobs that you know you can do are closed to you because you did not graduate high school. It is a pretty bleak scenario. Adults without a high school diploma are unemployed at twice the rate of adults with a high school degree. A single woman without a high school diploma in Hampshire County can only expect to earn on average about \$11,000 per year, not enough to move out of a shelter.

The Literacy Project has made strides to address these issues, and since 1984 has provided adults access to education and opportunities for a better future. The project supports students to attain their High School Equivalency Diploma and take the next steps in their life, whether it be college, job training or employment. The Literacy Project offers free adult literacy and high school equivalency classes in five locations in western Massachusetts: Amherst, Northampton, Greenfield, Orange and Ware, now teaching both in-person and online classes. They serve more than 200 adult students each year, helping them to build reading, writing, math and computer skills in an environment that encourages and nurtures critical thinking, dialogue and confidence. Students learn at their own pace in small, comfortable classes taught by professional instructors and supported by dedicated community volunteers. The Literacy Project will use the funds received from UUSA to purchase much-needed books and laptops for student use. For more information, go to literacyproject.org

Religious Education Ministry



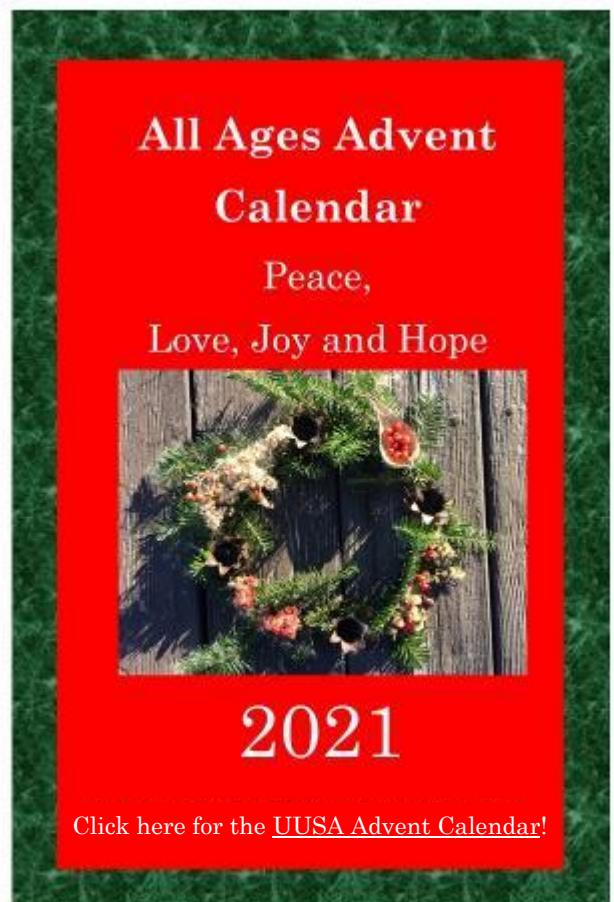
Really big news: RE is moving inside the UUSA starting December 5. Start 9:30 A.M. and end at 10:30 A.M. Child-care will be offered from 10:30-11:30 A.M. so parents can attend service. When children are double vaccinated, we will begin to have Time for All Ages at the beginning of the service. Please continue to dress warmly (and mask up) because the windows will be open.

Our UUSA RE Advent Calendar is available! (Link is at the bottom of the image at right.) Take what you want from the suggested daily activities. The themes are hope, peace, love, and joy. Most of the suggested activities do not require special preparation and supplies, but some do, so take a look at the booklet ahead of time. **Advent began on November 28.**

NEW K-2 OWL dates! We needed to change the dates slightly to accommodate our facilitators' schedules. Regular RE will be happening for kids not attending OWL.

K-2 OWL: **December 5** (*getting-to-know-you games with parents and adults*), then **December 12, 19, January 9, 16, 23, 30.**

4-6 OWL (*no date changes*): **December 19, January 9, 23, 30, February 9, 13, 27 and March 6.**



Youth Group Youth Group continued to meet outside each Sunday from 2:00 - 4:00 P.M. throughout October and November. We spent the afternoon of Halloween Sunday gleaning for [Rachel's Table](#) and [Not Bread Alone](#) at one of Brookfield Farm's fields in Amherst. A group of youth from the Coming of Age program at Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence (USNF) joined us in the fields to harvest excess kale and rutabaga to deliver to [Not Bread Alone](#).



Youth Group members met on Halloween Sunday to glean rutabaga and kale for [Rachel's Table](#) and [Not Bread Alone](#) at one of Brookfield Farm's fields. Look closely - you might recognize some of these faces (including a 3-toed sloth).

On November 5 the Youth Group had our annual bridging-in ceremony as part of a bonfire in a youth's backyard in Amherst. We ate food, roasted s'mores, and formally welcomed new youth and adults into the Youth Group program. Going forward, as the weather continues to get colder, we will be meeting in the Parlor Room at USNF and occasionally at the UU Society of Amherst as well. You can view the YG calendar [here](#) for more info on upcoming events.

Johnny Williams, Youth and Young Adult Coordinator

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.

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

Social Events

Weekly Men's Breakfast The Wednesday morning Men's Breakfast held at Kelly's is *postponed until future notice* due to the prevalence of the highly contagious COVID-19 Delta variant in Amherst.

The Women's Circle is a supportive and social group of UUSA women and open to all. It now meets online on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Please contact **Sophie Rogers** for more information, or 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.

Meetinghouse Committee



Thanks to UUSA Members (L-R) **Tom Fricke**, **Charlie Atwood** and **Elizabeth Alcaide** for their help with the Fall Clean-up on November 13. Charlie hauled away an entire trailer full of bagged oak leaves, and Tom and Elizabeth reflected on how you don't have to rake up after evergreens so much. Contact Tom Fricke if you'd like any more details on the Meetinghouse Committee and our projects.

Ministry of Membership and Welcome

As the members of this newly formed ministry, **Karen Mack** (L) and **Libby Walton-Stanforth** (R) have been busy figuring out procedures for creating a sense of welcome on Sunday mornings in this new hybrid service reality. You've probably seen them in person or on line!

They are looking for volunteer greeters for both formats, so contact them if you are interested.

Libby and Karen also have as part of their mission connection and reconnection with visitors, friends, and members. Going forward, they will be thinking about what welcome and belonging mean for our congregation.

If you have any thoughts about welcome and belonging you would like to share, please email Karen and Libby at

uusa-welcome@googlegroups.com.



Social Action



At **Not Bread Alone** on Saturday, October 30, our UU was represented by three people. **Mary Beth Seminario** helped package produce donated by Whole Foods for distribution to the guests. Every week, different vegetables/fruits are delivered. That week all guests got either a bag of lemons or limes. If we'd had a juicer, we could have made gallons of lemonade!!

Both **Gabriela Horvay** and a newcomer, **Craig Machato**, helped prepare a delicious lunch.

Our help will be needed again on Saturday January 29. Mark your calendar now and stay tuned!

Our Caring Ministries



I would say that there exists a thousand unbreakable links between each of us and everything else, and that our dignity and our chances are one. The farthest star and the mud at our feet are family; and there is no decency or sense in honoring one thing or a few things, and then closing the list. The pine tree, the leopard, the Platte River, and ourselves—we are at risk together, or we are on our way to sustainable world together, we are each other's destiny.

Mary Oliver

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

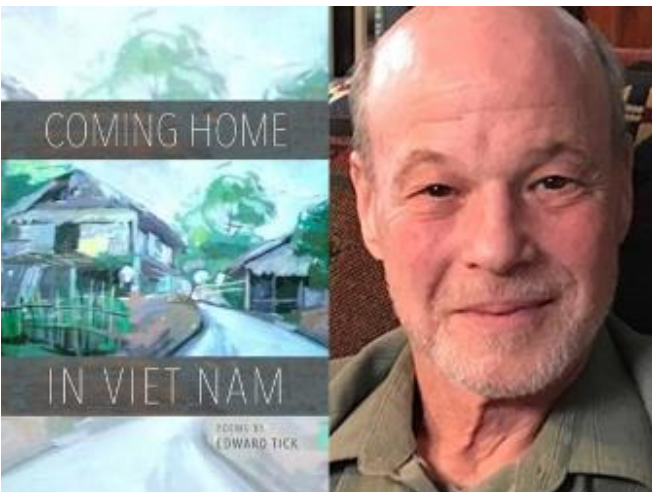
Our Caring Circle coordinator is **Catharine Porter**. Please contact her or your own Caring Person for rides, food, and simple needs. Other Caring Circle members are **Linda Callahan, Carolyn Cave, Lauren Croce, Kate Dahlstedt, Gabriela Horvay, Sophie Herman, Mary Latham, Karen Mack, Lynn Sussman, and Gordon Wyse**.

Our Pastoral Care Team Coordinators are **Fran Plumer and Charlie Atwood**. Other members are **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.

To any of you facing illness or loss or suffering from loneliness; to those affected in any way by the pandemic, which seems never-ending; and to all who are grappling with the uncertain future of a world divided by politics and race and climate change: We hold you in our thoughts and prayers. May this beloved community sustain you through the holiday season.

Join us December 7, 7:00 p.m. for a book launch, signing and war-healing talk!

First, please register here: <https://forms.gle/9WpaEiDBg6xwvQWu5> Then, gather at our Meetinghouse in the Social Hall or log in online at <https://bit.ly/3kmnz6b> for the premiere presentation of a new book, *Coming Home In Viet Nam*. (Masks required for in-person attendees) This 20-year collection of poetry documents the healing and reconciliation journeys back to Viet Nam by two members of our UU Society, **Ed Tick** and **Kate Dahlstedt**.



Seeking the most powerful healing practices to address the invisible wounds of war, Ed has led journeys to Viet Nam for American veterans and their family members or survivors, activists, and pilgrims for the past twenty years. This revelatory poetry collection documents the people, places, and experiences on these journeys. Co-founder of Soldier's Heart, Inc. and subject matter expert on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Moral Injury for the U.S. Military, he is author of four nonfiction books including the groundbreaking *War and the Soul* as well as previous books of poetry. Nationally and internationally, Ed guides war survivors to achieve healing, meaning, reconciliation and friendship.

To Order: <https://tia-chuchas.myshopify.com/products/coming-home-in-vietnam?pos=1&sid=d72dee8fe&ss=r&variant=39399942815805>

Finance Committee

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

ION Corner

The Interfaith Opportunities Network, of which our UU Society is a member, is co-sponsoring with the Franklin County Interfaith Council and the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding an interactive, online workshop. Registration is now live for this event on Sunday January 30, 2022!



An interactive workshop that will change the way you think about the land you call home.

Roots of Injustice, Seeds of Change

TOWARD RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH NATIVE PEOPLES

LEARN
the real history of this country through the voices of Native Americans, Euro-American colonists, and historians

EXPERIENCE
this history as you never have before

UNDERSTAND
why this history matters to all Americans today

INTERACT
with Native and non-Native people to build relationships based on truth, respect, and justice

Online Workshop
Sunday, Jan 30, 3-5 pm ET
Sponsors:
Interfaith Opportunities Network
Interfaith Council of Franklin CO
Karuna Center for Peacebuilding
Register at:
karunacenter.org/Jan30

****This 2-hour participatory workshop is appropriate for high school students and adults.**

FRIENDS PEACE TEAMS  Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples

Learn more at www.friendspeaceteams.org/trr
Contact paulaRpalmer@gmail.com

Denominational Affairs

Registration is now open for Unirondack, a Unitarian Universalist Camp and Conference Center in the Adirondacks.

Visit <https://www.unirondack.org/> for information about its 2022 programs:



Spring Paddling Week, QSA Retreat, Youth Summer Camps, Young Adult Weekend, Women's Weekend, Writer's Retreat, and more!



Here We Have Gathered

*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 October newsletters from 25 and 15 years ago:

December 1996:

Paraministry “Phone Rings” The Paraministry program operates to assist the minister with pastoral care. The Paraministers are concerned about those members and friends who live alone. If you live alone, would you like to have a “phone pal” to call, or have one call you? It is possible that we could establish “phone rings” (caring circles) in which people could call each other. Anyone interested in participating, please call **Marilyn Gonter** or **Luba Reep**.

Meetinghouse Jim Hayes recently restored our large wooden “Unitarian Meetinghouse” sign, Pieces of new wood had to be fitted in place to replace some old wood in an advanced stage of jungle rot. Re-lettering with gold paint required considerable care. It was a big job — and very well done.

Howard Reep and Paul Rothery, Co-Chairmen

December 2006:

Committee Fair You can tell a lot about a congregation by what happens between Sundays... On November 5, Social Hour looked and sounded very different. Not because the snack table was in a different position, but because 14 UUSA committees set up information tables around the room. With poster boards balanced, pamphlets stacked and photos on display, committee members helped their fellow congregants learn what their committees do between Sundays. One thing was clear - all of the committees work very hard between services! Visitors and members new and old circulated around the room discussing projects and issues, discovering the entertaining clubs our members run and best of all *many of the committees recruited new people.* . . .

- **UU Book Table** - **Audrey Ritter** sold several books.
- **Social Hour** - **Pat McGarry** filled in 10 Sundays.
- **Green Sanctuary** - **Eve Posada** recruited two new people for the committee.
- **Stained Glass** - **Carolyn Cave** and **Janis Gray** discovered two experts who offered to help the committee with their education goals. Pamphlets were set out advertising the November lecture.
- **Emily Dickinson** - **Janis Gray**'s laptop presented a slide show of the '06 Emily Dickinson Weekend.
- **Meeting House** - **Paul Rothery** and **Anne Perkins** formed a committee which had previously consisted of Paul! Ten people have offered to help Paul with the meeting house upkeep. Was it the free apron offer that brought them in droves?
- **Cinema Club** - **Carol Rothery** had four new people express interest in joining the club.
- **Choir** - **Nym Cooke** has six new names of interested people and found transport for one who can not drive.
- **Small Group Ministry** - **Courtney Gordon**, **Jan Stevens** and **Ted Alcaide** collected four names of interested people.
- **Social Justice** - **Mary Beth Seminario** collected signatures on a petition requesting Kerry and Kennedy to act on Darfur.
- **Sunday Services** - **John Barbaro** had one person ask to join the group and answered many questions.
- **Religious Education** - **Maria Racca** represented the program and answered questions.
- **Welcoming Congregation** - Five people expressed interest in the committee.
- **Library and Archives** - **Bob Scheier** and **Mary Wyse** had a few definite maybes from people willing to help.
- **New Member Committee** - **Helene Lambert** tried her best, but this is the only committee which still exists without members.

Rebecca Fricke