

THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**Set clocks ahead before bed
on Saturday, March 12!**

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Important Information

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revrachael@uusocietyamherst.org

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Johnny Williams youthandya@uusocietyamherst.org

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

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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 Janis Gray (contact Lea in the office if you need her email address).

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!

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Schedule of Services

Our services continue to be online only. To join any service, 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.

 **Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 A.M. Saturday, March 12!** 

Sunday, March 6, 10:30 A.M. – *Finding Active Hope in Difficult Times*

Anne Goodwin

Our guest speaker, Anne Goodwin, a climate activist and lifelong UU, believes that hope is not about optimism or pessimism; it is the act of envisioning and working for the future we want.

On Saturday, March 19, UUSA is offering a workshop called *The Work That Reconnects*, also led by Anne, that will give individuals an opportunity to further engage with this important theme.

**“Quality not Quantity”
is the theme for Rev. Rachael’s March services**

Sunday, March 13, 10:30 A.M. – *Quality not Quantity*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Sunday, March 20, 10:30 A.M. – *Title to be announced*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Sunday, February 27, 10:30 A.M. – *Title to be announced*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Do you know we have a UUSA YouTube Channel?

Original content from our Sunday services is now uploaded to our website, uusocietyamherst.org, with optional closed captioning! To view them, click [here](#) — and don’t forget to **SUBSCRIBE!**

Dedicated Offerings

Our Unitarian Universalist Society devotes each month to a new Dedicated Offering (DO) recipient whose representative speaks to us on the first Sunday. We 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 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 January, we raised \$1,000 for the **Catholic Charities Agency of Springfield, MA**. We will report in a future newsletter what we raised in February for **80 Acres**.

The **March Dedicated Offerings** will be for the **New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT)**, a multi-cultural anti-racism organization, located in Greenfield with a satellite office in Orange. From a conversation among four women around a kitchen table in 1975, NELCWIT has become the sexual and domestic violence crises center for Franklin County and North Quabbin. With a mission to work within the community to build safety, justice and dignity for all, it offers counseling, advocacy, and resources to individuals whose lives have been impacted by domestic violence or sexual abuse, and assists in prevention and education work to decrease violence in the community. Services are free and available to people of all genders, sexual orientation and abilities. Insurance is not needed and immigration status is irrelevant. A crises line is available 24/7. Bilingual support (Spanish) and interpreters for other languages are available. In 2011 NELCWIT opened Franklin County Children Visitation Program (FCCVP) to provide a safe and neutral place for supervised family visitation.

While NELCWIT work is focused on the individual, they understand that the causes of violence begin in the community and that the eradication of this violence requires understanding and addressing its structural and institutional forms. As an agency, NELCWIT has transformed itself from a social service agency to one involved in, and leading social justice work. Anti-racism work is a key part of this. NELCWIT is founder and leader of a 25-member coalition in Franklin County/North Quabbin that meets monthly with a focus to dismantle racism in that area. Its present focus is law enforcement and welcoming people of color in Franklin County communities.

Update on a past Dedicated Offering recipient: In January 2021, our Dedicated Offering was for Martin Luther King Jr. Community Church in Springfield after a fire, deliberately set December 28, gutted the building, causing more than \$100,000 damage. During the past year, it received many other donations from many faith groups and individuals. It recently received a \$10,000 donation from the Council of Churches, which will help in rebuilding efforts. Prior to the fire, the church's services had been (and continue to be) virtual because of the pandemic. This February, a 44 year old man who'd traveled to Springfield from Houlton, Maine, was arrested for this and other nearby fires. He has been indicted on federal hate crimes and arson charges.

Pledge Drive

As a new member of the UUSA Board of Trustees, I've been privileged to observe the loving care your Board puts into the development of our annual budget.

It was obvious, at my very first meeting about finances, that the members of the Board are deeply concerned about both the work of the congregation and the financial strain an annual pledge creates among members. We all know about the increasing cost of everything these days. And it is easy to fall into the trap of thinking of our annual pledge as just another cost that keeps going up.

I have a different view. For me, a pledge to the UUSA is not a cost but an investment. While I pay attention to my own budget at home like everyone else, I feel grateful that I have an opportunity to invest in something of lasting value – something good and perhaps in the long run, revolutionary. My pledge is an investment in a better world – the world the way I want it to be. So yes, I intend to increase my financial commitment to the UUSA this year.

This is my way of saying quietly to a world seemingly lost in selfishness, pain, and strife, that I believe in the work of the UUSA, and I am willing to place my bet on our future – together.

John Gerber



*These puppy mill rescue Scotties, Woozie (L) and Lucy (R), belong to **Jeanne and Hardy Ballentine.***

Music Notes

Greetings to all! After some time off in February, I am looking forward to planning and presenting music for the services for the rest of the spring!

My concert [at Boston Conservatory at Berklee] was very time- and energy-consuming and it was thrilling to do, especially for a small live audience. If you missed the livestream, please feel free to ask me for the link to the recording. Please use only in your listening enjoyment.

February's music was fun and educational for me to present to you. We used a little rap (!), and lots of music from the African-American tradition. I am so delighted to be able to learn and share some of this important and underserved music with you all.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss any of the music you have heard or would like

to hear. Keep singing in the shower, and along with us on Zoom ... I know it may feel weird, but please do it anyway!!! You know the old expression, “sing as though no one is listening”... well, guess what? They're not! So sing out!! It's good for the soul.

Brenda Miller, Director of Music UUSA

An Invitation to The Work that Reconnects, March 19

We live in an extraordinary moment on Earth. As we witness unprecedented destruction of ecological, biological, and social systems, including the COVID-19 pandemic, we can feel overwhelmed by grief, anger, fear or despair. How can we remain resilient, creative, and empowered to act to heal our beautiful, irreplaceable world?

The Green Sanctuary Committee is offering a one-day retreat to explore answers to that important question and to help us find our own paths to resilience and healing. The Zoom retreat will be held on **Saturday, March 19 from 10 – 4:30** with a half-hour lunch break. You will not simply be sitting and looking at a Zoom screen for the whole day. The retreat will include guided meditations, creative rituals, conversation in pairs, small groups, poetry and song led by Anne Goodwin, an experienced and certified facilitator.

Anne has worked with Joanna Macy and completed a year-long facilitator training through the *Work That Reconnects Network*. She has offered WTR programs to Unitarian Universalist congregations, Friends Meetings, and activists in Extinction Rebellion and the Sunrise Movement. She has also offered programs at Rowe Conference Center and other community settings over the past four years. In the past two years, she has adapted the practices to Zoom. She is a lifelong UU, [a folk musician](#) and a [climate activist with Mothers Out Front](#).



The work is organized in a spiral form with four parts, leading participants from feeling their **gratitude** for life, to recognizing and honoring their **pain for the world**, to seeing the situation with **fresh eyes**, to **going forth** with an intention to take action. Head, heart, spirit, and body are all employed to envision a life-sustaining society together.

WHAT to expect from the retreat

- practices in resilience and gratitude
- acknowledgement and expression of our pain for the world
- sources of hope and insight
- commitment to change, healing and action
- tools to take into your life.

If you would like to participate, please [fill out this form](#). We ask \$25 for the full day retreat but anyone is welcome, regardless of ability to pay. On Feb 28, we will open up registration for the retreat to other congregations in the area.

NOTE: We ask you to commit to attending for the whole day. We are giving our UUSA members and friends first dibs on the retreat. Maximum attendance is 24 people so we can all see each other on one Zoom screen. It's best for each person attending to use their own computer but not essential. We hope to see you at the retreat!

If you have questions, contact **Polly Peterson** or **Louise Grosslein**.
(Reach out to **Lea** in the office for their contact information if you do not have access to the UUSA directory).

Social Events

The Women's Circle is a supportive and social group of UUSA women and open to all. Our next meeting will be online on Thursday, March 10 at noon. Please contact **Naomi Yanis** for more information, or to get on the email distribution list. If you do not have access to our UUSA directory (with Naomi's contact information), please contact **Lea** in the office.

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 Omicron variant in Amherst.

Special Congregational Meeting

Sunday, March 13, 2022
11:30 A.M., in the UUSA online Sunday Service room

Warrant:

1. Vote to approve the appointment of **John Gerber to the Board of Trustees** for the rest of FY 2021-2022.
2. Vote to approve the appointment of a **Leadership Development Committee (LDC)** tasked with developing a slate for the FY 2022 – 2023 Board and Leadership Development Committee.

Charlie Atwood
Mary Herman
Amy Kalman

3. **Conversation on reopening** led by **Rev. Rachael Hayes**

We need a **quorum** of Active members present at the meeting. If you want to vote, but cannot attend, you can name a proxy by notifying the Clerk at least 3 days before the meeting. The proxy must be present at the meeting. They can vote on your behalf, but proxy votes do not count towards our quorum. Please attend!

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Grosslein, Clerk *(Reach out to **Lea** in the office for Louise's contact information if you do not have access to the UUSA directory.)*

Official language from the UUSA by-laws:

Active Members may vote in any congregational meeting of the Society provided that they have been a member of a Unitarian Universalist church, society, or fellowship for a total of 60 consecutive days immediately preceding the meeting including at least 30 days of membership in the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst.

Proxy Ballots: Members unable to attend any congregational meeting may vote by proxy. Members who wish to do so must notify the Clerk, in writing or by e-mail, of their intention to vote by proxy, naming the individual who will hold their proxy vote and requesting the proxy assignment form for the meeting. Such notice must be given at least three days prior to the date of the meeting. The individual named as proxy must be a member of the UUSA and must be present at the meeting. The proxy-holder should notify the Clerk of his or her intent to act as a proxy by submitting the signed proxy assignment form to the clerk prior to the start of the meeting. Proxy votes do not count toward a quorum.

Quorum: Twenty five percent of the Active Membership constitutes a quorum for conducting business at a meeting of the Society unless specified otherwise elsewhere in these Bylaws.

Religious Education Ministry



Youth Group This year, the Amherst and Northampton & Florence Youth Groups have merged into a super-group. We've been working on planning the upcoming service on March 27. Currently, we've discussed what themes we want to cover and what music to play. We also played quite a bit of Skribbl.io — for those of you who aren't familiar with it, it's essentially a website where you play Pictionary online.

The Young Adults have been meeting on 2nd Sundays from 5:00-6:30 P.M. online. We have played games, discussed how we are practicing self-care during the pandemic, and have talked about books and podcasts we have been learning from. Our next monthly meeting will be on March 13 from 5:00-6:30 P.M.

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/>

In Memoriam
Wilhelmina M Eaton ~ 1929-2022

Willie Eaton, as she preferred to be called, succumbed to declining health and dementia earlier this year. Born in Boston, Willie spent much of her childhood in Wellesley, Massachusetts, where she was a member of its high school's Class of 1945. Her quick and intelligent mind, coupled with an indomitable spirit and flashes of feistiness, was nurtured at Bennington College, from which she graduated in December 1949 with an art major (sculpture).



While she didn't feel suited to the paths of artist or art instructor, as a pragmatic young woman she understood the importance of workplace skills. To that end, Willie attended the Hickox Secretarial School in Boston, beginning her career path as a secretary. A few years of clerical experience and a stint as a ballroom dancing instructor prefaced her move to New York City. There, she worked as a secretary at several banks and financial institutions on "The Street." Willie's father had established in Boston one of the first investment firms to offer mutual funds, five years before she was born. It wasn't, however, until she worked in the securities departments of NYC investment banks that her interest in pursuing a career in securities blossomed. Those experiences prompted her to take courses at the New York Institute of Finance, which prepared her to work as an investment advisor. Further self-directed studies enabled her to pass the exams required to become a registered representative, which allowed her to buy and sell securities for clients. Willie worked as an investment counselor at several establishments until she founded her own firm in 1970.

Family ties initially brought Willie to Belchertown when she retired. After a few years, she was drawn to Maine, where she had spent time at the "camp" built by her uncle on Meddybemps Lake near the Canadian border. She lived in Scarborough before moving into the home she built in Camden. Once in Maine, her artistic inclinations were rekindled, and she began painting with watercolors while she worked to improve her golf game. A decade or so later, she returned to the Valley and bought a home in Amherst, which marked the beginning of her affiliation with the UUSA.

Always a generous soul with her time and resources, Willie played a significant role in making the UUSA's renovation — which began in 2007 and culminated in 2014 — possible. The Society's social hall is named in her honor, and in recognition of her contributions to the construction project and solar array installation.

Although maintaining Willie's UUSA connections was more challenging when she moved to the Kimball Farms retirement community in Lenox, many of the ties forged with members of the congregation continued. In 2015, she returned to Amherst to be near friends, church, and family by making her home at Applewood.

Willie was pre-deceased by her siblings, Joseph Emerson Eaton, Sarah Webb Eaton, and Charles F. Eaton, III. She is survived by the children of her dear cousin Muriel Eaton Whitlock: Stephen, Susan, Henry, and Gail.

A service to honor and celebrate Willie's life and her contributions to the UUSA is being planned for late spring.

Board News

We are pleased to welcome Craig's Doors back to the **Willie Eaton Social Hall**.

Starting mid-February and running through April, "the Willie Eaton House" is serving as an overflow shelter site capable of housing up to 14 guests. The priority will be for women and their partners.

Special thanks to members of the Meetinghouse Committee and the UUSA Board for working out all of the details, and to **Kevin Noonan** for his tireless efforts in service of the unhoused.



Maintenance Committee

Our beautiful Tiffany window is gorgeous in the afternoon. It is supposed to be gorgeous at night, too, but for many months the interior spotlights have been broken and it has not been illuminated after dark.

The Maintenance Committee has tried to fix the problem. **Ron Grosslein** did some trouble-shooting and suspected a bad timer switch. **Lea** ordered one, Ron put it in — but that didn't solve the problem. The committee decided it was time to call an electrician. As it turned out, Ron called several electricians and ONE of them finally called back. He and the electrician went to look at the lights and the electrician said, "We need to get the light bulbs out of the fixtures. This will require scaffolding." Ron asked for a quote but never heard back from the electrician.

After two weeks, he thought about it some more and started building a tool. He could see the light bulbs, 20 feet off the ground, and knew they had a heat



sink around the outside with a fan-like array of slots. He brought an extension pole and some dowels up to the Meetinghouse and started fiddling around. With a couple of dowels held just the right distance apart, he could slide the dowels up into the heat sink, grab the light bulb in the slots and turn it, releasing it from the light socket. **Here's the tool:** →

There was one more problem. Each can that holds a fixture and light bulb is tilted so the light points toward the window. With a bit of jiggling, he found it was possible to use his tool to tilt the light can down so it faced the floor. After that, it was like pulling teeth. One by one, he extracted each light bulb.



Here are five of the light bulbs. All eight are out, and definitely not functional. The next step is to get new light bulbs. With any luck, they will have the same shape and he will be able to use his tool again to put the new ones in the light cans and tilt them back to point towards the window. If not, he'll try and find a way to build a different tool.

The bulbs are on order. Ron's hoping this project will be finished successfully, pretty soon.

(Continued on next page.)



In the meantime, **the Maintenance Committee could use a few more members.** It is not necessary to be able to build tools, and in fact this is the most complicated thing Ron has tackled. But there are lots of other jobs to be done to keep the building in good shape. Some members are handy, some climb ladders, some do NOT climb ladders, and some are good at calling architects or electricians or plumbers and asking them to come give an estimate for a job.

Photos and text by Louise Grosslein

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee will meet on Monday, March 14, online at 7:15 P.M.

Social Action



Interfaith Cot Shelter Every month from November to April on the first Thursday of each month, UUSA members prepare a meal for 25 homeless people. In February, **Fran Plumer** donated the main meal, tuna casserole, **Mary Wyse** donated the bread and juice, **Maria Lydia Spinelli** provided a vegetable and dessert, and **Charlie Atwood** coordinated with **b** and picked up and delivered it to First Churches in Northampton. It was wonderful how they cooperated and coordinated with each other, just as was done in January. Our next dates are March 3 and April 3. If you would like to donate something you can contact **Maria Lydia** (reach out to **Lea** in the office if you do not have access to our directory and her contact information).

ION Corner

ION (Interfaith Opportunities Network) is a sponsor of 11th Hour for Climate bell tolling in the Amherst area to remind us we are in the 11th hour to prevent catastrophe for all lives on the earth because of human-caused climate change. Bells are rung for 11 minutes at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the month. In February, people gathered at First Church. The location for the March bell ringing will be the Jewish Community Center of Amherst.

Our Caring Ministries



*Image of Martin Luther King, Jr.
by Unseen Histories
on Unsplash*

“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.” — Martin Luther King, Jr.

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, Mary Latham, Karen Mack, Lynn Sussman, and Gordon Wyse.**

Our Pastoral Care Team Coordinators are Fran Plumer and Rob Fuderich. Other members are **Elizabeth Alcaide, Charlie Atwood, 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 encouragement to those of you suffering from illness or loss, to those who are lonely or discouraged or facing hardship of any kind. You are part of our beloved community, and we are here to help. In these difficult times, with the pandemic still a serious threat, let us hold on to gratitude and hope and the knowledge that we do not walk our path alone.

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 March newsletters from 25 and 15 years ago:

March 1997

Religious Education Children and adults of our Society are invited to join the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Holyoke, MA, for a jointly planned intergenerational service in Holyoke on Sunday morning, April 20. The Bethlehem Baptist Church is a strong presence in the Valley's African-American community, and this change to fellowship grew out of conversations between the youth ministry of the two congregations concerned about last summer's wave of church burnings. Parents especially will be contacted in the coming weeks regarding plans and support needs for this special service, the first of a "home-and-home" series.

Jon Rehmus [DRE]

Music Notes We welcome **Anne Louise White** as choir and music director for the months of March and April [when **Fran Plumer** would be away with her husband, **George Sulzner**, during his sabbatical]. An experienced vocal performer and teacher, Anne is presently completing requirements for a degree in Music Education at UMass. She has been active in our choir and is a member of the Music Committee. Many will remember her outstanding performance as "the boy" in *The Reluctant Dragon* by John Rutter. If by chance (horrors!) you missed "the Dragon," stay tuned. Another performance is planned for late Fall.

Fran Plumer

March 2007

A Peace March Presence Our Social Justice Committee honors the nine members and friends of our Society who took part in the Washington Peace March on January 27, calling upon the Bush administration to bring the troops home from Iraq. Quoted or paraphrased here are their written comments on the experience:

Karen Cassidy, speaking for herself and husband Michael, who handed out homemade peace pins, said they felt "overwhelmed by the sad reality of this war and the possibility of new wars. So it was amazing to be surrounded by hundreds of thousands of kindred spirits marching for peace."

Christie Reardon noted that "when our elected officials turn a deaf ear to their constituents, we really have no choice but to keep gathering until they listen."

Mary Ann Gundersen described "thousands of people from all around the country crowded on the Mall to hear speakers and to voice their opposition to the troop escalation in Iraq. We were thrilled to lend our presence and our voices to the collective civic call for an end to the war. It was an exhausting trip but well worth the effort."

Kenton Tharp felt "energized by the speeches and signs and by the diversity and optimism of the people at the March."

Charlie Atwood reported, "In spite of a sleepless night on the bus, being there with a quarter million people from all over the country, children to senior citizens, and many veterans groups, made for a great time!"

Courtney Gordon reported that "the people there were mainstream USA. Representing every walk of life, they want peace and they want it now."

Herschel Shohan said he and **Courtney** stood close to the speakers' platform "with a couple of hundred thousand Americans who shared our outrage about the war. The mood was high. After long debate and discussion with friends I had finally decided to take this action, to become part of a process to bring peace to the Middle East and to the world."

Chad Johnson described the event as "awe-inspiring, a living testament to what is hopefully the true American soul."