

THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



November 2022

**Turn back your clocks
before bed on Saturday,
November 5!**

**Rev. Rachael wants to know
your questions related
to Christianity (Page 2)**

**How can UUSA be closer to
carbon neutral? (Page 6)**

**Focus on our members
(Page 9)**

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 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Andrew Coate dre@uusocietyamherst.org

Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.,

Sunday 10:00—Noon, evenings as requested

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT COORDINATOR:

Cauli Williams youthandya@uusocietyamherst.org

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

Brenda Miller music@uusocietyamherst.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

board@uusocietyamherst.org

[link to board minutes](#)

Co-Presidents:

John Gerber and Anne Moore

Clerk:

Louise Grosslein

Treasurer:

Eric Murphy

Members At Large:

Carolyn Cave

Sue Kelly

Deeya Pavelle

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.

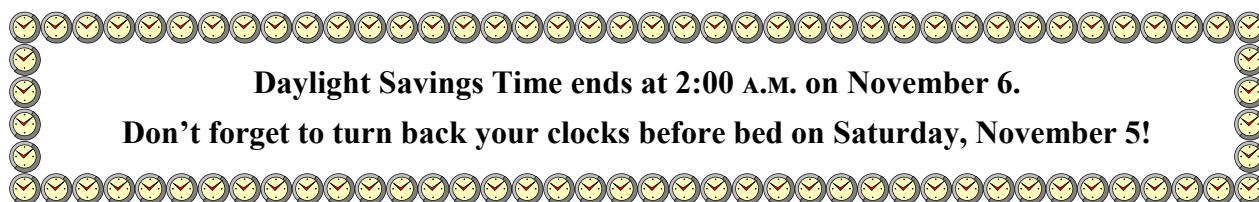
Thank you!

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Schedule of Services

We encourage you to join us in person, but you can still attend our services online. Click <https://bit.ly/3eGKxFj>
Meeting ID: 998 3789 9241 PW: 432607 Or call in +1 646 876 9923 and enter Meeting ID: 998 3789 9241



Sunday, November 6 10:30 A.M. – *Reproductive Justice*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

We will be joined at this service by a member of the Abortion Rights Fund of Western Massachusetts, the recipient of this month's Dedicated Offerings.

Sunday, November 13, 10:30 A.M. – *Questioning Christianity*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Send Rev. Rachael your questions related to Christianity: <https://forms.gle/EYg9AfZEZv75PUBBy7>

Sunday, November 20, 10:30 A.M. *Telling the Truth*

The Rev. Rachael Hayes

Sunday, November 27, 10:30 A.M. – *Service title to be determined*

The UUSA Worship Collaborative

Do you know we have a UUSA YouTube Channel?

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

Dedicated Offerings

From September through June, our Unitarian Universalist Society devotes each month to a new Dedicated Offering (DO) recipient and splits every Sunday's offering plate 50/50 with the recipient organization.

We will report in a future newsletter the totals from our September and October offerings (for **Letcher County** in eastern Kentucky and **Hospice of the Fisher Home**).

The November Dedicated Offerings will benefit the **Abortion Rights Fund of Western Massachusetts**.

"We—your four Massachusetts abortion funds—stand united in our solidarity, blistering fury, and fierce love and protection for our communities. While we have been preparing ourselves for this day, we are no less enraged that our Supreme Court has launched an unconscionable and unprecedented attack on the fundamental right to bodily autonomy, self-determination, and essential health care."

This is the opening statement from the Abortion Rights Fund of Western Massachusetts in response to the Supreme Court Dobbs decision. The Dedicated Offering Committee of the UUSA has chosen this organization to receive our collective Dedicated Offerings for the month of November this year. This is our response to the Dobbs decision!

Known as ARFWM, our local fund works with the other Massachusetts Funds as well as the National Network of Abortion Funds (NNAF). They note, *"Abortion is still legal in Massachusetts, and all of your*

Massachusetts abortion funds will continue doing what we do best—paying for abortions and working to remove any barriers to care for people living in or coming to Massachusetts for abortion services. We know how to do this work and we are prepared for whatever will come.” The Fund is about 20 years old and has been helping people with abortions all those years.

We will be joined at our November 6 Sunday Service by a member of ARFWM, who will tell us more about the Fund’s response to the Dobbs decision and give us suggestions of how we can help beyond giving money.

Thank you in advance for giving generously to this organization. To learn more go to <https://arfwm.org/>

A Message from the Co-Presidents

Your UUSA Board of Trustees, Congregational Administrator **Lea Douville**, and **Reverend Rachael Hayes** thank those chairpersons and other leaders who joined us for the first-ever UUSA Departments Meeting (online, of course) last month. Following the COVID disruption of the traditional ways in which our many committees, ministries, and related activities interact with each other, we are trying to reimagine and remake our congregational support and communication network. In the past, we had the Council of Chairs to facilitate communication and collaboration across the many activities of our congregation. This year we are experimenting with a new organizational structure by inviting our committees, ministries, and some of our long-standing action projects, to cluster into four departments.

The four departments each have a member of the Board of Trustees serving as liaison and meeting facilitator. The departments are clusters of: 1) the “Outward-focused groups” (such as the Dedicated Offering Committee), facilitated by **Deeya Pavelle**, 2) the “Inward-focused groups” (such as the Pastoral Care Team, facilitated by **Carolyn Cave**, 3) the “Organizational groups” (such as the Finance Committee), facilitated by **Anne** While the make-up of the departments is a work in progress, we hope this experiment will help us improve communication and enhance collaboration within the congregation, as well as re-energize and re-populate some of the groups which experienced attrition during the pandemic.

As our congregation emerges from two years of isolation, our committees, ministries, and projects find themselves at different places. Some are more visible and active than ever, such as the Ministry on Welcome and Membership, who greet us each Sunday in the sanctuary or online. Some have been quietly working to help us thrive in a new world, such as the Green Sanctuaries Committee, which is moving us toward becoming a carbon-neutral congregation. Others have opted to discontinue their work or have experienced so much attrition that they can no longer function. And a few, still reeling from the restrictions of pandemic life, are just beginning to meet again and are doing the hard work of re-imagining what they might offer our congregation in a new and revitalized way.

At our first departments meeting of the year (we are planning two more), we practiced Appreciative Inquiry to remind ourselves of what we are doing well. And we shared our dreams for the future, imagining what we might yet do together. Each committee, ministry, or related activity has a beautiful story to tell about their work. The new organizational structure is designed to celebrate those individual stories, but also to see them in the larger context of the rich and vibrant story that is the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst.

As we reimagine some of our groups and repopulate others in order to accomplish the necessary work of the congregation, let us heed the words of theologian Howard Thurman, who wrote, *“don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive.”*

We know that some of our members and friends may view this organizational experiment with a bit of suspicion. We know that change is hard. And we also know that the UUSA is resilient. Emily Dickinson wrote, *“Not knowing when the dawn will come, I open every door.”* We at the UUSA will open new doors because that is what resilient people and organizations do. We foresee more experiments over the next year and beyond... some of which will fail... and then we will try again. What we know for sure is that the future is likely to produce yet more surprises.... some perhaps delightful... and others, more challenging. You are invited to walk with us in this adventure by joining a committee, ministry, or one of our many action projects — so that we may all *“come alive”* once again — together.

Your co-presidents,

John, on behalf of Anne and John



*Are we a people of holding on or of letting go?
... Holding on to certainty of how things should be
or letting go and living with the uncertainty of new
ways of being in the world; holding on to what
makes us comfortable or letting go so we may grow
which can be uncomfortable; holding on to what
makes us safe or letting go to make room to help
others feel safe? ... Holding on too long and too
tightly is never good for the soul.*

— Jay Wolin

For the October 23 service, Director of Religious Education Andrew Coate asked our children to deliver paper leaves and markers to everyone in the sanctuary. We were invited to note on our leaves something that we hoped would “fall away” from us. People watching online could put their hopes in the chat to be transcribed onto leaves as well. The children then pinned the collected leaves to a bare “tree” in the sanctuary.

Youth Group The Youth Group has been busy the past couple of months! Two meetings ago, we visited Mt. Pollux in Amherst, where we discussed an outline for what the rest of the year would look like before playing several rounds of Mafia. Last meeting, we looked at last year’s Youth Group covenant as reference for planning this year’s, but we have yet to write up and sign ours. Youth chose their roles in the Youth-Adult Committee, with only one conflict that was quickly settled with a bout of Rock-Paper-Scissors.

We have also been preparing for the **Youth Group lock-in on Friday, November 5**. On Sunday, October 30, we planned to glean with Rachel’s Table at a farm in Amherst before dropping the food off at a local shelter.

Young Adults Since September, the Young Adult Group has resumed our monthly meetings at the Unitarian Society of Northampton & Florence. We have talked about ballot initiatives, artificial intelligence, books, and more. We’ve even visited a tag sale and tried to wrap our minds around what floppy disks are.

We have our next meeting at the Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst on **Saturday, November 12** from 3:00-4:30 P.M. We were also invited to join the Youth Group to glean with Rachel’s Table at a farm in Amherst on October 30.

Cauli Williams (she/they) - [why share pronouns?](#)
Youth and Young Adult Coordinator

Finance Committee

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

Shared Ministries

Our Proposed Congregational Covenant

Last June at the Annual Meeting the Congregation voted on a Proposed Congregational Covenant for this year to see how well it works for us and how well we use it. At next year’s Annual Meeting (June 2023) we’ll evaluate the covenant and decide whether to keep it the same or alter it to better reflect our collective journey together.

Our covenant is never set in stone. It is a group of words for us to gather around in reflection. And It is just one of many tools we can use to help us continue to get to know each other as we grow individually and collectively.

Here's the text of the proposed Covenant:

Love is the spirit of this community,

And service its practice.

This is our great covenant:

To dwell together in peace,

To seek truth and justice in love,

And to work toward the time and place where everyone's worth and dignity is honored by all in our world's Beloved Community.

-Adapted from covenant #473 in our hymnal "Singing the Living Tradition" by James Vila Blake

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Throughout this year the Committee on Shared Ministries will be hosting a number of Covenant Chats during which we'll use Appreciative Inquiry to reflect on the proposed covenant together. These chats will be held on December 4, January 8, February 5, March 5, April 2, and May 7 alternating between in person and online. We hope you can join us!

Sincerely,

Jessica Murphy

Bo Mack

Mary Ann Gundersen

Rev. Rachael Hayes

Social Events

The Women's Circle is a supportive and social group of UUSA women and open to all. We are currently meeting at noon on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, sometimes in person, sometimes online. Please contact **Sophie Rogers** for more information, or to get on her email distribution list. If you do not have access to our UUSA directory (with **Sophie's** contact information), please contact **Lea** in the office.

The Men's Breakfast is a no-agenda group that meets each Wednesday at 7:00 A.M. at Kelly's Restaurant on Route 9 in Amherst. Please contact **Pete Rogers** for more information. If you do not have access to our UUSA directory (with **Pete's** contact information), please contact **Lea** in the office.

Report from the Informational Congregational Meeting Sunday, October 22, 2022, 11:30 A.M., in the sanctuary and online

For a video of the meeting's highlights, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aep4oHnINB8> Bellow is a written summary by **Louise Grosslein**, Clerk of our Board of Trustees. Thank you, Louise!

Line of credit for siding replacement

Helen Blatz described the payment plan on the line of credit used to pay for the siding improvements (loan = \$173,942).

We got a construction loan from Florence Savings Bank for 80% of the expected cost. We paid 20% out of reserves. We are paying interest only for 6 months until Feb 2023. Starting in March we will begin paying interest and also principle. It will cost about \$1100 - \$1200/month for 20 years. The loan has a variable rate. For 5 years the interest rate will be 5.4%. After that it will be adjusted depending on current interest rates. There is no prepayment penalty. Our closing costs were \$4000, which is lower than usual, thanks to the generosity of Florence Savings bank. That amount includes the \$1500 attorney fee. Right now we are paying interest only on that \$4000. The payments are not in this year's budget because we didn't have enough information last spring to include them.

HVAC improvements

Ron Grosslein introduced the recommendations of the Meetinghouse Committee for improvements in the HVAC system and outside grounds (estimate = \$50,000 for HVAC work).

Susanne Personnette is our liaison with the builder and architect. Ron relayed a report that she sent to him on October 13. Most of the siding has been installed at this point except for the tower. The color match to the newer part of the building is very good. The bushes out front were not damaged. Thermal imaging showed that the building insulation is pretty good. There was a second layer of shingles from 1893 that had to be removed which cost \$11,000 out of our \$22,000 contingency.

The oak benches outside of the Meetinghouse have been removed because the wood was rotting badly. The sign in front of the building, "Unitarian Meetinghouse," is also rotting. Another member reported that it was built by our minister in the 1970's and thus has some historical significance. The Wayside Pulpit has been damaged and removed. All these things are being included in a "Landscaping Project." We will need to decide what wording we want on the signs that will be replaced. The Meetinghouse Committee will be looking for others to help figure those things out.

Another member asked that we make sure our Black Lives Matter and Rainbow flags be replaced with screws attaching them to the building.

Anyone who is interested in helping think about signage, benches, etc., please contact **Ellen Kosmer**.

Ventilation: We had a study done by Tighe and Bond to tell us what our HVAC equipment could do if upgraded. The cost would be about \$50,000. We need to integrate those upgrades with potential sustainability upgrades proposed by the Green Sanctuary Committee. The committee proposes to hire an outside consultant with expertise in sustainable buildings and also in effective HVAC to help us figure out how to proceed.

Getting UUSA to Near Carbon-Neutrality

- ▶ In the spring of 2021, the Green Sanctuary Committee invited members of the congregation to join us for a Zoom social hour, in which we asked for input on how we can address the climate crisis. One suggestion focused on reducing our own fossil fuel usage. In other words, "How can we bring our meetinghouse as close to carbon neutral as possible?"
- ▶ What have we done to date?
 - ▶ Added cellulose insulation to the walls and attic above the sanctuary
 - ▶ Sealed up leaky holes in the buildings
 - ▶ Installed a solar photovoltaic (PV) system
- ▶ What can we do next?
 - ▶ Replace our gas furnaces with electric powered heat pumps
 - ▶ Add more solar PV capacity to cover additional electric demand
 - ▶ Ensure that added ventilation doesn't exceed heating & cooling capacity
- ▶ Why only "Near Carbon-Neutral"?
 - ▶ It is very difficult to replace our commercial gas water heater with electric or heat-pump water heater at this time.

Sustainability – reducing use of fossil fuels at the Meetinghouse

Jeff Clark introduced the recommendations of the Green Sanctuary Committee (GSC) to replace the furnaces and add photovoltaics to the meetinghouse (estimate = \$102,250)

We would like to make our building as carbon neutral as possible. We have already done some insulation work in the old and new parts of the building, sealed leaky holes, and put up solar panels. The next step would be to replace furnaces with heat pumps and add more solar panels to pay for the electricity needed to run the heat pumps. Our water heater would not be replaced as it's very difficult right now to do that, accord-

ing to Sam Pomeroy, who works on our HVAC. Sam suggested that we could get heat pumps to add to the existing furnaces. We would use the heat pumps unless the weather was very cold and then the existing furnaces would serve as backup heat. We could also replace the existing furnaces completely and use resistance heat as a backup for the coldest days. Because of rebates available now, it makes the most sense to replace the furnaces completely, at a cost of about \$36,750. That would increase our electrical demand. Solar panels on the Sanctuary and the entrance roof – 64 of them – would cost \$94,000. There is currently a 30% rebate so our actual cost would be \$65,800. The PV companies think the panels would pay for the heat, but of course they can't be sure.

Air-source Heat Pump Options

Climates by Pomeroy Quotes	#1: Supplement Furnaces	#2: Replace Furnaces
	Add heat pump to each furnace to reduce gas usage, but keep furnace as back up	Totally replace furnaces with heat pumps with electric resistance heat back up
5 Heat Pump Packages	\$ 59,125.00	\$ 93,000.00
Rebates Total (as of April 2022) *	\$ 26,562.50	\$ 56,250.00
Net Cost	\$ 32,562.50	\$ 36,750.00
Major Components	Cooper CQDA18V-1860 Heatpump Outdoor Inverter Ecoer GNC4860CPT Coil Cased Multi-Position	Cooper CQDA18V-1860 Heatpump Outdoor Inverter Ecoer GNC4860CPT Coil Cased Multi-Position Ecoer ERH108 Heatpump Electric Heat Kit 10KW Ecoer EAHATN-60 Air Handler Multi-Position

* Need to get updates on heat pump incentives due to new legislation: MA Clean Energy & Climate Act and US Inflation Reduction Act.

RECOMMENDATION: UUSA should hire a mechanical engineer to determine if additional ventilation requirements add to our heating and cooling demand.

- Also, option #2 appears to be best option due to rebates and ability for PV to power the heat pumps. See next slide.

Phippen Adams solar is a local company that will finance PV projects for non-profits, but we don't know yet whether they will have time and resources for our project. They would get the rebates and own the panels for 6 years, after which they would return ownership to us.

The GSC thinks we can pay for the HVAC/heat pump study with the Green Fund.

(Additional images from the GSC presentation can be found on page 7.)

Funding for these projects

Peter Lacey discussed our thoughts on how we intend to pay for these necessary capital improvements. We still have some reserves, even after paying our 20% down payment for the loan. Some donors have stepped forward and we think the interest and principal payments through the rest of this fiscal year will be covered by the reserves and those donors. More donors would be welcome. Please speak to Peter if you are interested in making a donation now.

The plan is to contact the membership to gauge the interest in supporting a capital campaign. To pay for the previous renovation, we asked for 3-yr pledges and raised enough money to finance the whole renovation. Peter Lacey, Helen Blatz, and Elliot Kelly are currently members of a committee that will organize the capital campaign. If anyone is interested in joining them, please let them know.

Additional Solar Photovoltaic Capacity

Company	Northeast Solar	PV Squared
Panels	53 - 405W Solar Edge Panels to create 21.47kW DC of power	64 - 400W Q Cells panels to create 25.5 Kw DC of power
Total Cost	\$86,300.00	\$94,000.00
Net Cost after (30%) Fed Rebate	\$60,410.00	\$65,800.00
Net Cost per KW	\$2.63/kW	\$2.64kW
PV Production		
Est annual kW solar production (NEW)	23,000	24,907
Annual kW solar production (Current)	14,963	14,963
Total (kWh)	37,963	39,870
Electric Demand		
Current Annual Demand (Based on 2019)	19,000	19,000
Electricity to replace gas furnaces (KWH)	16,015	16,015
Total Power Demand	35,015	35,015
Net Production	2,948	4,855

- The 30% rebated is due to the US Inflation Reduction Act. We need to check additional incentives from MA legislation.
- We may have opportunity to leverage financing from [PhippenAdams Solar](#) (requires that we work with Northeast Solar).

Potential Total Cost Range

	Heat Pump #1 + Northeast	Heat Pump #2 + PV Squared
Heat Pump	\$ 32,562	\$ 36,750
PV	\$ 60,410	\$ 65,800
Mech. Engineer	\$ 10,000	\$10,000
Total	\$102,972	\$112,550

Open Items:

- We strongly recommend hiring a mechanical engineer to assess total ventilation, HVAC & power demands.
- Would PhippenAdams Solar be able to finance our PV system? They financed systems on Amherst Survival Center, Springfield Museum, & other non-profits.
- Are there incentives for ventilation improvements?
- What are the latest PV and heat pump incentives, which may be better than our current knowledge?



Our Caring Ministries



“Help us to be always hopeful gardeners of the spirit
who know that without darkness
nothing comes to birth
as without light nothing flowers.”

May Sarton

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, Sophie Hermann, 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, and Pete Rogers**. Please contact one of them for more complex or personal needs.

We wish you comfort in times of sorrow, strength when the going is rough, and hope for the future. Above all we wish you peace.

ION Corner

The October meeting of ION (Interfaith Opportunities Network) was held at Hope Church (with online option). Hope is a small, inviting church with numerous vibrant wall hangings adorning the sanctuary. ION has resumed its practice of meeting at different houses of worship throughout the year. We enjoy learning about others' faiths through these visits and are very glad to be meeting in person again.

ION will be offering the Stolen Beam series for its members next year. The class focuses on the legacy of African enslavement, what was stolen, what may be owed and historical reparations. It will include looking at it through a faith perspective.

Respectfully submitted, **Mary Beth Seminario**, UUSA ION representative

Focus on Our Members

Louise Grosslein (LG) taught high school computer programming and college Biology labs; **Ron Grosslein** (RG) designs and builds equipment for UMass Radio Astronomy. He played contra-dance fiddle with Swallowtail and continues to play with The Moving Violations. They live in Amherst and were interviewed by **Ellen Pile** (EP).

EP: Was Amherst your first UU experience?

RG: Two very different stories.

LG: I was raised Lutheran; that never worked for me. It wasn't until I was a young adult that I found out that my mother was raised Unitarian. My family has something like seven generations of Unitarian ministers, but Amherst is my first UU church. We moved here in our mid 20s. None of our friends were

having families, so we didn't have a cohort of peers. I really needed a community here; an anchor is a good way to put it. Barbara Whittaker Johns was the minister [1985-1991], and I loved her. She listened to me feeling unhappy and needing an anchor and she said, “Probably be good for you to help other people. Why



Louise and Ron Grosslein

don't you join the Para-ministry Committee?" It was like Pastoral Care and there was a whole course that was meant to help us talk to people about their beliefs.

RG: My parents took my brother and me to a Unitarian fellowship. We went to Sunday school. I remember as a kid watching the services and concluding that Unitarians agreed that coffee and donuts after the service was very important, but everything else was subject to discussion.

EP: Did you like that?

RG: Well, I enjoyed the people. There was no minister; it was a fellowship, lay-led. There were lots of amazing things that happened. In my last year we had a course in comparative religions. We visited a synagogue and went to Mass at a Catholic church and attended services at a bunch of other places. Then we said, all right we know what the Catholics believe, we know what the Lutherans believe and what Methodists are all about...what about the Unitarians? What do Unitarians believe? Well, that was in the days before the Principles. It became clear it was something you had to work out for yourself pretty much. That was a disappointment. Other religions were cut and dried. There it is, that's the creed. When we got here, I don't think I felt a pressing need to go to church for years. Louise would go and take the kids; I would go sometimes.

LG: You were almost always recovering from a Saturday contradance gig. I wanted my kids to have a solid base to stand on. I wanted them to go somewhere where they could talk to people who would have values we agreed with and where they'd know other adults. But we talked about this. I said, "This can't be just me imposing something on them. I need you to be part of this. Can you bring them, so they know you think this a reasonable thing to do?"

RG: So, I did bring the kids to RE and then they did Coming of Age. And that was just spectacular. Each one of the kids in that class got up in front of the congregation and read a paragraph of their own set of beliefs. What they thought. Our kids and their classmates were so impressive. I came out of that service feeling like, "These are my people."

EP: Now that your kids are gone, what keeps you here?

LG: It's a way of living that keeps changing all time because the Principles are big and we keep changing and learning things and we have new ministers. For me what makes the UU work is being in committees or in small groups and getting to know people. It's not just going to Sunday services. And the Green Sanctuary Committee is what brought Ron into being a member because he loves the outdoors, and he loves cleaning it up. He started coming to GSC and after a while he was hooked, and he finally did sign the [membership] book. He doesn't like signing books.

RG: I was at first frustrated that so much of the work of a committee is getting organized and deciding what to do. You know, lots of paperwork that doesn't involve going out and fixing something with your boots on. But political advocacy is very important. We found that if we show up at social hour with petitions, people will sign them that wouldn't have been out there looking for a petition. So that counts; that's important too.

LG: It's a great committee with a bunch of people who really care deeply about the environment. It's not the kind of committee where there's a person in charge, who decides what to do and then goes home with all the homework. People take on jobs and do them. You asked about what keeps us there, and for me, I still want to be part of a community that lives a set of values that fit with my own set of values. I know everyone has different ideas. We're not all the same at all, but I like questions and I like people who like questions.

EP: I wonder where the best places are for questions.

RG: Small groups.

LG: That's a really great place.

RG: The way to plug into a community is to really get to know some individuals. That's part of what keeps me there. Knowing some people I really like.

LG: The other thing I would say to newcomers is find a few things to try but keep your involvement to where it works for you.

(To Be Continued in December!)

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 September newsletters from 25 and 15 years ago.

November 1997

Thanksgiving Potluck Our annual Thanksgiving Potluck will be held at the home of **Howard** and **Luba Reep** on Thursday, November 27, at 5:30 P.M. This is a special gathering for those of us who do not have family plans for that day and who would like to spend some time with fellow UUs. Please let the Reeps know, by or before Monday, November 27, if you would like to attend this gathering. It will make menu planning easier.

Mitten Tree It's not too early to start knitting warm mittens, hats, and socks for our holiday Mitten Tree. The articles will be collected on the Sunday before Christmas, and on Christmas Eve, and given to the Amherst Survival Center.

November 2007

Congregational Conversation on *Ten Principles for Sustainable Societies* *Ten Principles for Sustainable Societies* will be the first presentation related to our Society's Sustainable Community Initiative. Board member **Nan Wiegersma** is associated with an organization that has done some important work in the area of global sustainability. In a report by the International Forum on Globalization, ten principles for sustainable societies are laid out in detail. The Board has been reading this report and we are finding that some of the principles surprise us, or at least run counter to common practice and assumption. We think you will find this approach to sustainable societies as interesting as we do.

On November 18, from Noon – 2:00 P.M. downstairs in the Meetinghouse, Nan will give a presentation and lead us in discussion on *Ten Principles for Sustainable Societies*. This will be a brown bag event, so please feel free to bring a sandwich and something to drink. If you have questions, please call **Alison Wohler** or **Rebecca Fricke**. Child care can be made available if it is requested.

We will have copies of the *Ten Principles* essay in the office for those who want to read about them in advance of this congregational conversation.