

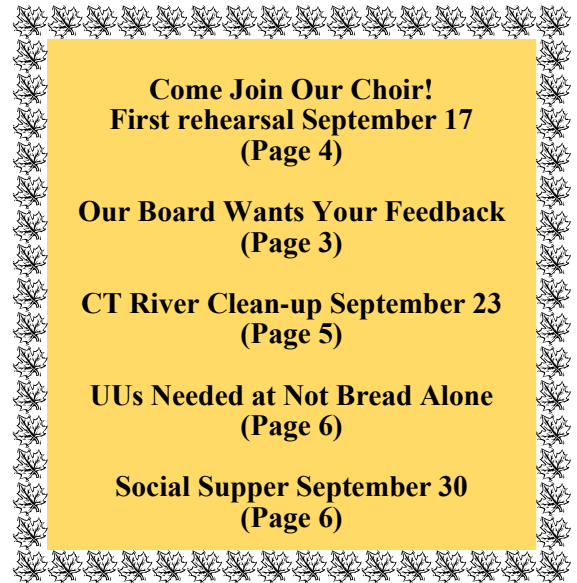
# THE AMHERST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NEWSLETTER

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



**September 2023**



## 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](mailto:revrachael@uusocietyamherst.org)

**CONGREGATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR:**

Lea Douville [office@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:office@uusocietyamherst.org)

**Office Hours: Tuesday - Friday 11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.**

**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**

Andrew Coate [dre@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto: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:**

**To be announced**

**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:**

Brenda Moore Miller [music@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:music@uusocietyamherst.org)

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:**

[board@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:board@uusocietyamherst.org)

[link to board minutes](#)

**Co-Presidents:**

Jeff Clark and John Gerber

**Clerk:**

Ashley Carter

**Treasurer:**

Eric Murphy

**Members At Large:**

Linda Callahan

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. 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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### ***Welcome to a new program year!***

*We encourage you to attend our “mask optional” services in person (details below).*

*To attend 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

The UUSA Board of Trustees has voted unanimously to change the COVID-19 Building Use Policy to “mask optional” in most of the sanctuary when the risk level is low. A “mask required” area will be maintained on the balcony, next to the windows. Masks are always welcome. We look forward to seeing you! *To attend 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*

Our new policy will depend on weekly tracking of wastewater using BioBot Analytics COVID-19 website. If wastewater tests remain below 1000 copies/mL in Hampshire County, the UUSA will remain in Low or Green risk level and continue as “mask optional.” If the risk level increases above that level, we will move to “mask required” or more stringent limits, if necessary. For details, please see the revised policy here: [https://www.uusocietyamherst.org/covid\\_policy/](https://www.uusocietyamherst.org/covid_policy/)

**Sunday, September 3, 10:00 A.M. – Pancake Breakfast in the Social Hall**

**Sunday, September 10, 10:30 A.M. – Water Ritual**

**The Rev. Rachael Hayes**

Bring a small amount of water from your life to pour into our water ritual.

**Sunday, September 17, 10:30 A.M. – Title to be announced**

**Sunday, September 24, 10:30 A.M. – Title to be announced**



### **Check out the UUSA YouTube Channel!**

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

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## Dedicated Offerings

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From September to June, our Society donates each month to a dedicated offering recipient and splits 50/50 every Sunday's offering plate with the recipient organization. The September Dedicated Offering will go to the **UUA Disaster Relief Fund**, known as the DRF. This fund supports UU organizations that have experienced disasters. This is our best way to support the Montpelier VT congregation, which as you know, suffered a great loss when the Connecticut river flooded their building this summer. The DRF is helping with a grant for their cleanup efforts and may give additional help as the need unfolds.

Donations to the DRF will not be earmarked specifically for Montpelier. The Fund is currently at a historic low due in part to the increasing number of climate disasters caused by climate change, so our funds will help with all such disasters.

More can be learned by going to <https://giving.uua.org/disaster-relief>

The Dedicated Offering Committee plans to donate funds to Maui, Hawaii, in October. What a terrible summer this has been.

### ***More about the Dedicated Offering Committee***

The Dedicated Offering Committee (DOC) selects non-profit organizations that our Society will support with donations from our Sunday collections September - June. We split our collections 50/50 with them. In turn,

our UU Society is enriched by learning about organizations we did not know about that are helping enrich our world. The DOC solicits members for names of specific organizations and asks they complete a specific DO form, which is available in the office or on-line at <https://forms.gle/hypyMGzMJHgeAVf26>. A representative from a chosen organization is asked to speak about it on the first Sunday of its month.

We welcome new members. If you are interested in learning more about or joining the DOC, please contact **Anne Perkins, Linda Honan, Carolyn Holstein, Mary Beth Seminario, Brenda Bushouse, or Linda Callahan.**

## **Feedback to the Board of Trustees**

The UUSA Board of Trustees would like to hear from you about your thoughts on the leadership, management, and general governance of the UUSA. Governance is a shared responsibility of the Minister, the Board of Trustees, and the many committees, ministries, groups, circles, and teams of the congregation. Please share your thoughts and suggestions using this “[digital suggestion box](#)” (an email).

Our Congregational Administrator will forward your feedback to the Minister, Board of Trustees, and/or committee leader, as appropriate. Members of the Board will also be available during the social hour after the services beginning in September to hear your thoughts. In addition, you are invited to speak directly to the Board at our next meeting. To be included on the board meeting agenda, please contact either of the co-presidents. We'd like to hear from you!

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## **Co-President's Letter**

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*“Do not ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go and do that. Because what the world needs is more people who have come alive.”*

[Harold Thurman](#), Author, philosopher, theologian, mystic, educator, and civil rights leader

As I look at the [UUSA calendar](#), our members are coming alive in their work, both within our congregation and beyond.

Part of coming alive is simply having some fun.

We kicked off August with a wonderful social picnic, and more is in store this fall, including a Family Social Supper on September 30 at **Libby Walton-Stanforth's** home in Amherst. All are welcome. Stay tuned for details in the Weekly Announcements.

On Saturday, October 28, we'll have a family contra dance from 4-7:00 P.M. in the Sanctuary. On a personal note, my first introduction to the UUSA was coming to contra dances in the 80s, driving all the way from the NH seacoast. Then in November, we'll have a concert with the [Hungrytown](#) folk due on the night of the 18. Their sound is an artistic hybrid crafted from “Celtic and Americana, ballads and psychedelia, sunshine and darkness, joy and despair.” This promises to be the first of a series, so be on the lookout.

Admittedly, there is more to life than having fun. There are many opportunities to examine and practice social justice on our calendar this fall.

On Sunday, October 1st, our **Social Justice Jubilee** promises to be a joyful celebration of the social justice initiatives we have all been doing both within and outside of UUSA. Everyone is welcome, whether you are organizing a social justice activity, know of a great cause, want to participate, or just want to be informed. This will be a foundation for creatively imagining what we might undertake together in a future that needs our energy.

Later in October, we will be digging into a common reading of ***Repentance & Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World***. This new book invites us to explore practices for accountability that can bring us into wholeness and make a difference in our personal, community, and national relationships. This will provide us with a foundation for discussions of reparations and our commitment to the Eighth Principle – as well as be a relevant follow-up to our reading of *An Indigenous People's History of the U.S.*

As with the common readings, it is enriching to discuss spiritual and philosophical topics in a small group. Our

**Small Group Ministry** is a great way to make deep connections with other members and share your thoughts and reflections in a safe place. To sign up or learn more, [click here](#).

If coming alive means getting outside and helping to keep our environment clean, the annual **Connecticut River Clean-up** is our contribution to our great river and watershed. This year, we'll be joining the Fort River group on Saturday September 23. Members of the Green Sanctuary Committee will be group leaders to help guide our efforts. Click [here to register](#) or see the related article in this newsletter.

**Music** brings our sanctuary alive. **Brenda** is excited to begin a new year and is encouraging new members to join the choir. Also, anyone with a particular musical talent can come forward to help make music during services. Brenda and the choir will be exploring many genres of music, including classical, folk, rock, world pop, jazz, reggae, and more. See related article in this issue for more info.

For the younger set, **Andrew** is excited to commence his second year of leading our **Religious Education** programming. **Jacy** has been gearing up to welcome our preschoolers. We're also collaborating with the Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence (USNF) on hiring a Youth and Young Adult Coordinator. Great to hear that we have so many hands to foster our young ones. To register your child, please contact **Andrew** at [DRE@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:DRE@uusocietyamherst.org).

If you are interested in talking about ways for our community to "come alive," please feel free to send your thoughts and suggestions to me, Co-President **John Gerber**, or to the full Board of Trustees at [board@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:board@uusocietyamherst.org).

Alive and well,

Jeff Clark, Co-president

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## Music Notes

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Hi, this is Brenda Moore Miller. I use she/her pronouns. I am excited to begin a new year with the UUSA as Music Director. Rev. Rachael and I always enjoy collaborating together for each service, bringing forth music that is moving and relevant to the service of the day.

The UUSA choir will begin rehearsing on September 17. Our meeting time is 8:45 am. We warm up and rehearse before the service. We have been limited by Covid restrictions in order to keep everyone as safe as possible. Toward the end of last season, we began to welcome all choir members, new and old, to join in the singing. We have been masked until now, and there will be more news on that as we get going.

We are open to NEW CHOIR MEMBERS! If you are a parent and have constrictions early on Sunday mornings, please let me know and we will work with finding a way for you to attend. Even if you have spoken to me in the past about MAYBE joining choir, please get in touch with me at my email address below!!

There are also more opportunities to participate musically. Some of our members have a special talent in music, and I encourage all to come forward and volunteer with a musical offering for the congregation!!

We are planning to resume "Choir Sunday," a special Sunday in the spring that highlights the choir in either a large musical work or a number of smaller works.

We like to explore many genres of music, including Classical, Folk, Rock, World Pop, Jazz, and others, even Reggae!

It's always a good time to make music!

Brenda Miller

Director of Music, UUSA

[music@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:music@uusocietyamherst.org)

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## Religious Education Ministry

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As a new program year begins, we want any new families to know there are *no registration fees* for Religious Education classes. Please consider [pledging to the UUSA](#). We invite you to contact **Andrew Coate**, our



Director of Religious Education ([dre@uusocietyamherst.org](mailto:dre@uusocietyamherst.org)) to get connected.

Our Unitarian Universalist religious education program's vision is to promote and inspire:

- Ethical growth – internalizing enduring values like justice, equity, and compassion, and gaining tools to act on them in everyday life.
- Social growth – connecting with peers and people of all ages on a deeper level.
- Spiritual growth – feeling a connection to the sacred within and beyond ourselves.

Our programs incorporate social justice activities, worship opportunities, service trips, fellowship, and fun. Our religious educator and minister lead many of our congregations' lifespan programs, but parents and other members of the congregation often lead them, too. Teaching can be a very fulfilling way to deepen one's own faith. Children's religious education programs are typically offered on Sunday mornings, and high school youth and adult programs are usually offered on afternoons or evenings.

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## Our Caring Ministries



Our Minister **Rachael**, members of the **Caring Circle**, and **Pastoral Care Team** are here for you in Beloved Community.

We are here when you would welcome a phone or in-person visit, a ride, some nourishing soup or a casserole, a listening heart, perhaps a caring fellow parishioner who may ask, "How goes it with your soul?" These are just a few ways we share our lives and our faith with each other in beloved community.

Our **Caring Circle** coordinator is **Catharine Porter**. Please contact her or your own Caring Person for simple needs. Other Caring Circle members are **Jeanne Ballantine, 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**. Please contact anyone on the team for more complex or personal needs. Other members are **Charlie Atwood, Rev. Rachael Hayes, Carol Johnson, and Pete Rogers**.

Bidding you peace and love as we journey toward wholeness.

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## UUSA Members to Participate in CT River Clean-up

September 23, 2023 at Groff Park, 83 Mill Lane, Amherst

The Connecticut River Clean-up is a watershed-wide, source-to-sea initiative to remove trash from the Connecticut River and its tributaries. Each fall, thousands of volunteer groups in NH, VT, MA, and CT join forces and spend a few hours making the water cleaner, the river banks safer, and the wildlife happier.

This year, we'll be joining the Fort River portion, meeting on September 23 at 9:30 A.M. at Groff Park, 83 Mill Lane in Amherst. Coffee and snacks are served at 9:30 and clean-up begins at 10 A.M. sharp.

Participants will be dispatched to sites that we have scouted depending on safety and access ability. Please bring a trash bucket to cut down on the number of garbage bags we use.

All volunteers, even kids, are required to [register here](#). This step is particularly important this year, as it offers us the information we need to contact all volunteers in case of a change or emergency before or after the event.

Please come help keep our beautiful CT valley clean!



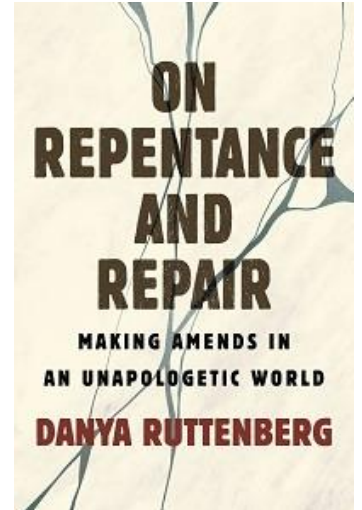
## Please join us for an engaged discussion on this important and challenging book . . .

At a time when Unitarian Universalists are striving to widen our circles, to improve our relationships across the interconnected web of life, and to become better builders of Beloved Community, *On Repentance and Repair* by Rabbi Danya Rutenberg (Beacon Press, 2022) is a powerful choice for our next UU Common Read.

Please plan on joining Reverend Rachael, Jeff Clark, and John Gerber for a discussion of the topics presented in this book on:

Sunday, October 15 from 12:00 noon to 3:00 P.M. in the Meetinghouse (in person). There will be two additional sessions in the evening in November and December on Zoom. For more information and to register for the first session, please see:

<https://www.uusocietyamherst.org/congregation/join-us-for-the-uaa-common-read/>



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### Social Action

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**Not Bread Alone (NBA)** On Saturday, September 30, our help is needed to cook and serve a scrumptious lunch at this local soup kitchen. No special skills are needed. We work under the direction of the kitchen manager. Working in shifts, cooks are needed from 9:30 -12; servers 11:45 - 1:00; and helpers for clean up 12 - @1:45. Meet new people and share your morning feeding our neighbors. NBA is located in the lower rear of First Congregational Church with access off the Spring Street parking lot. If you can help please contact Mary Beth Seminario. THANK YOU.

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### Social Events

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**UUSA Social Supper** Saturday, September 30, 5 - 8:30 P.M. at the home of **Libby Walton-Stanforth**. More details soon! For now, please plan on bringing a dish to share.

**Free Community Breakfast**, every Wednesday, 8 -10 A.M. in our Social Hall. Co-sponsored with Craig's Doors. *Volunteers welcome (Questions? contact Sophie Rogers)*, or just come to eat and chat!

**The Men's Breakfast** With Kelly's Restaurant closed as it transitions to a new owner, our no-agenda Men's Group meets each Wednesday at 7:00 A.M. at The Stables, 326 Russell St. (Route 9) in Hadley.

**The Women's Circle** is a supportive and social group of UUSA women open to all. We meet at noon on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, sometimes on Zoom, sometimes in person. If you are not already on the email notification list, please contact **Lea** in the office to request the link — or to ask her to let **Sophie Rogers** know you want to be added to that list!



### Picnic fun!

Huge thanks to **Karen Mack** for help with picnic planning, set up and clean up — not to mention providing hula hoops! — when we gathered at Groff Park for our congregational picnic on August 5 .

Thanks also to **Maura Whalen** for sharing her musical talents, and to **Charlie Atwood** for taking our compost, recycling and (minimal) trash to where it needed to go.



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### Finance Committee

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The Finance Committee will meet on Monday, September 11, at 7:15 P.M. on Zoom.