

the chalice

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
*A Welcoming Congregation
of the Unitarian
Universalist Association*
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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

5PM

Submit articles to
newsletter@uusharon.org

MARCH SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

10am Family Service and
10:30am Adult Service (while children are in RE classes)

March 6: Understanding Mental Illness and Responding with Compassion

Everyone is touched by mental illness, either themselves or with a loved one. This service will give an overview of the field, and then a sharing of personal stories. Let's learn to talk about mental illness in safe and loving ways.

March 13: Lighting the Way: Hope, Community, Service



(Daylight Savings Time begins. Don't forget to set your clocks ahead 1 hour Saturday Night before you go to bed.)

We will celebrate how the Unitarian Church of Sharon lights the way by being a community of hope and service. We will explore what hope, community, and service are made of and how we can bring the light of our spiritual community out into the world.

March 20: Foundational Stories

There are certain key moments in Unitarian and Universalist history which has shaped what we are today. We will retell some of those foundational stories and connect them to our present day faith.

March 27: Easter Service

For centuries Unitarians have embraced Jesus as a human being (not a divine savior). For us, the Easter story is not about salvation but about the courage of Jesus and how the values of love and justice are deeper than human cruelty and death. Whether we believe in after life or not, the Easter story can be an inspiration to us.

Annual Pledge Campaign

March 13th is the formal start date for making your financial commitment toward next year's operating budget. Our goal is \$270K and includes salary increases for professional staff, travel expenses for the Senior Youth service project, and a professional audit of church treasury operations.

Pledge information packets are being sent to all members and friends on March 10th. Deadline for returning your pledge to the church is Sunday March 27th. There will be a celebratory luncheon for all after the worship service that same day to honor everyone's generosity.

Your Stewardship Committee:

Rory McGregor - Chair

Fred Bramhall

Pat McDougal

Jessica Plumridge - Parish Board Liaison

Peter Raskin

David Schoenfeld

David Slater

Lisa Yeransian

Lighting the Way: Hope, Community, Service



In a world where the public discourse is becoming more cynical, we offer hope. Hope grounded in our cherished values of love, freedom, compassion, justice, and generosity of spirit.

In a world where people are feeling disconnected and more isolated, we offer community. On Sundays and all week long, all ages gather to enjoy one another and care for one another.

In a world where greed and self interest seem to be driving the agenda, we offer an ethic of service to others. We serve in so many ways: teaching our children, creating worship, caring for members in need, and participating in social justice work.

And when our life is grounded in hope, community, and service then deep love and gratitude come to us. Not the gratitude of winning, but the grateful joy of being fully human in a beloved community. Not the love of self importance or ego, but a humble strong love which embraces life as deeply sacred. Such love and gratitude is more precious than all the gold in the world.

The Unitarian Church of Sharon is a light of hope, community, and service. We can be that light because of you. Your gifts of caring, time, skills, and money make our light shine. Thank you!

Once a year, in March, we have a pledge drive. Each member and friend is asked to make a financial pledge for the next church year (July 2016-June 2017). From these pledges a balanced budget is approved. No pledge is too small or too large. Every contribution counts. Let's continue to light the way.

Jim Robinson, Minister

Presidential Ponderings

I hate to say it but I'm drawing a blank on what to write about this month. I had some day surgery yesterday and I'm not back to 100% yet from the anesthesia. Maybe if I just ramble on for a while. . .

There have been a number of activities with the Five Point Cluster lately. By the time this is printed we will have hosted a pot luck dinner for the cluster with singing afterwards. We are also participating in a program where, on holiday weekend, we attend services at other four churches in the cluster. I visited the church in Stoughton on Veteran's Day weekend missing what I've heard was an amazing talk about coming here from China by Lily Zhou. The other churches will visit us for a summer service since we would be unable to seat an extra 20 people many weeks. It's easy, as a member of congregation in a relatively small religion, to think that we are on our own out here. It is very enlightening to see that we aren't alone and as we get more familiar with each other we can start sharing ideas on subjects that worked for any of us.

Well I did manage to write about something this month although there were a tremendous amount of typing mistakes to correct. For example, I accidentally wrote "cook" instead of "cool" in the closing. It was strangely appropriate for some recent days but it wasn't what I wanted to say.

Keep warm (or cool depending on the day this winter),

Jim Mullin, President

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

From The Director of Religious Education

Searching Together

I'm deeply grateful to Chris Scheller for his four years of ministry with the youth of this congregation. He's organized many a meaningful retreat, supported youth as they planned pancake breakfasts, worship services for themselves or for the entire congregation, and even a trip to Nicaragua (that he didn't even get to go on). He's trained and coordinated adult volunteers, sent out regular updates to youth and their parents about upcoming programs. He's been at the center of a lot of serious fun and has helped deepen the sense of community that is a hallmark of this congregation. He'll continue to serve this congregation through June. I will miss his sense of humor and gentle presence here – and am glad that he'll continue to be a colleague as DRE for the Sudbury UU congregation.

Now what? Laurie Wallace will be working with me and the RE Committee to find this congregation's next Youth Coordinator. We've posted the position with the New England Region of the UUA. In addition, we've posted it in the career services offices of a number of local theological schools, colleges, and universities. You can support our search for the creative, organized, and fun person who will continue to grow our ministries with middle-school and high school youth – by spreading the word within your social network. You may know someone who knows someone who would be the perfect person for this position. The job description can be found online at: <http://tinyurl.com/zygaq4a> For a more visually compelling social media posting, please feel free to share the graphic design which you can find either on my facebook wall (Louise Marcoux DRE) or at <http://tinyurl.com/zfwqgzo>.

We're confident that with broad sharing of this job opportunity, some great candidates will come forward. Our application deadline is April 2, with interviews starting in April. Thank you in advance for being a part of this search process.

Blessings,

Louise

Coming of Age

Coming of Age in March

Tuesdays, 7:30 to 9 pm

Youth meeting: March 1

Youth and Mentors: March 15

Field Trips: March 6

Grades 7-8 will visit Temple Sinai on Sunday, March 6. Permission slips are required. Meet in the vestry at 10 am.

Grades 3-4 and their families will visit the Ilse Marks Food Pantry on Sunday, March 6, after coffee hour. Permission slips are required.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS, Continued

What is RE Sunday?

There are some kinds of learning that happen best in a classroom. But some things are best learned by doing – and learning how to lead worship definitely falls in that category.

Religious Education Sunday is the day when children lead a worship service for the entire congregation. The children are asked to share something they have learned this year. On that day, everyone in church is a religious educator: the children (who offer their ideas) and the entire congregation (who offer their attention and openness to these worship-leaders-in-training).

RE Sunday is more than a month away. RE classes in from mid –March onward will focus on deciding together what to share and how to share it, deciding who will do what, building props (if necessary) and practicing. It'll be challenging AND fun.

RE Sunday is April 10.

RE SUNDAY

March in Religious Education

Feelings is the primary theme for the **Preschool-Kindergarten** group this month. They will be talking about being scared and being angry in sessions that aim to help build awareness and acceptance of these feelings, and develop their abilities to share and talk about them in appropriate ways. The class will also talk about wishes and how wishing is connected with doing. An Easter themed lesson at month's end will explore sharing memories of loved ones who have died.

The **Grade 1-2** group has two more OWL sessions; one covers the birth of a baby and the other explores celebrations at all stages of life. The second half of March will see the class making "Love Glasses" and preparing a song for RE Sunday. The children will join together with another group for an Easter themed session on the 27th.

The **Grade 3-4** students will spend the first few weeks of March focused on the food pantry which they will visit after class on March 6th. They will spend time thinking about how they can spread the message about the food pantry with the rest of Sharon. They will also prepare a song for RE Sunday and participate in a joint session with Grade 1-2 for Easter.

The **Grade 5-6** group will explore the topic of economic inequality in a session that will give them a working definition of class but also link to the First UU principle to treat all individuals as valuable and worthy of respect. Another session will introduce them to Charles Dickens and the terms "haves" and "have nots" in order to illustrate that identifying inequality is a necessary step toward battling injustice and can help guide our faithful actions. The class will also begin preparations for RE Sunday and will join with the older RE students for the Easter session.

The **Grade 7-8** class will visit temple Sinai on March 6th to conclude their study of Judaism. They are going to dive into an exploration of Islam in the following weeks, as well as doing some preparations for RE Sunday, and participating in a class with the Grade 5-6 students on Easter.

MARCH PROGRAMS

Children's choir meets each Tuesday at 5:30 in the vestry. New children always welcome.

Book group meets Wednesday, March 2, 7:30pm in the library to discuss "My Beloved World" by Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

Gentle, Beginner's Yoga – Yoga teacher Sylvia Mignon, Ph.D, RYT, offers her popular class for six weeks, Thursday evenings at 7:30-8:45, March 3 through April 7. Come to one class or come to all. The class is open to all levels, including beginners and those with movement issues, and will include meditation, breath work, and basic yoga poses. Please bring a yoga mat and one blanket. A donation is appreciated but not required.

Potluck Supper – Friday, March 4, 6pm in the vestry. Bring a dish and enjoy the company.

Conversations at the Meetinghouse

Friday, March 4, 7pm



Suffolk University Professor Jeffrey Johnson, whose specialty is applied ethics, will speak on "Applying the Tools of Ethics to Contemporary Social Issues". We are facing a multitude of serious social issues: climate change, racism, income inequality, terrorism - just to name a few. Professor Johnson will share how the field of ethics, from Aristotle to Martin Luther King, has critical tools which can help us face and work through these pressing problems. The evening will include case studies where we can discuss how these tools can be applied effectively.

Covenant Groups – If you would like to join one of our covenant groups contact Jim Robinson at revrobinson@uusharon.org. A covenant group is a small group which meets twice a month to discuss, in a contemplative atmosphere, core spiritual and moral topics.

Meditation Group will meet on Tuesday, March 8 at 7:30 and Tuesday March 22 at 7:30. We meditate for one hour together, both sitting meditation and walking meditation.

Women's Support Group – If you would like to join a women's support group contact Kathleen Guilday at k.guilday@comcast.net.

Men's Support Group – If you would like to join a men's support group contact Jim Robinson at revrobinson@uusharon.org.

Movie Night - Friday, March 11, 7pm we will view and discuss "Suffragette". The popcorn is free!

Let's Laugh Today is on Saturday, March 12, 11am-noon in Program Rooms A/B. See how contagious laughter really is by attending a FREE Laughter Yoga session. Any age and any level of physical ability can participate in this uplifting experience! Led by Certified Laughter Yoga Teachers, Linda and Bill Hamaker. **Special guests are attending this month — Bill and Linda's training weekend group!!** PLEASE BRING AT LEAST ONE CANNED GOOD FOR THE SHARON/STOUGHTON FOOD PANTRY. Please bring your water bottle because laughing is dehydrating. New laughers are always welcomed! See more information at www.letslaughtoday.com

Children's Drama Group – Our children's drama group, led by Alice Springer, will meet each Wednesday in March (beginning March 9) from 4:15-5:15. This popular group enjoys theatre games and creating improvisational skits. New children always welcome.

Couples Enrichment Group will meet Thursday, March 17, 7:30pm in the vestry. This group offers a fun, supportive atmosphere to explore your relationship as a couple. All personal sharing is only done between partners. Facilitated by Jim and Appleseed Robinson.

MARCH PROGRAMS, continued



Family Game Night

Saturday, March 12, 4pm-6pm.

The Membership Committee is hosting its second annual family game night, a free, all ages gathering featuring board games, group games, singing, music, crafts, and pizza. Our gathering will feature an array of special activities, including performances by the children's choir and ukulele chorus, charades, cup cake decorating, creating place mats for residents of the Epoch Center senior facility, with a break for pizza to keep up our strength. We hope to see you there!



NOT JUST ANOTHER COFFEE HOUSE

Saturday, March 19 at 7pm

Celtic Harpist Kathleen Guilday will be joined by fiddlers Laurel and Sarah Martin for an outstanding evening of Irish heritage music.

And during intermission enjoy our home made desserts and fair trade beverages.

Museum Visiting Group

Saturday, March 26, 10:00am – 11:30am tour

We are excited to be visiting the ***National Black Doll Museum of History and Culture***, located at 288 North Main Street in Mansfield. We will enjoy a tour from 10am to 11:30am led by museum staff. If you would like to car pool from Sharon, meet at the church parking lot at 9:30am. The cost is \$11 (scholarships available – don't be shy). Children are encouraged to attend as well as adults. From the museums web page: "Dolls are a child's first introduction to self image and their stories are key elements in our personal heritage. African American history is filled with stories of enslaved Africans captured and relocated to a strange land and bravely asserting their own culture. The history of black dolls is about more than just objects of play. Black dolls have played a critical role in building a diverse American society and rich African American culture. Our mission is to nurture self esteem, promote cultural diversity, and to preserve the history of black dolls by educating the public on their significance."

Art from the Heart

Friday, May 25th, 7-9:30pm in the church Vestry

Come and join us for a monthly night of exploring spirituality through art -- no art experience necessary. We will explore a variety of media and possibilities. All adult members and friends are welcome. Please RSVP to RevRobinson@uusharon.org in advance so we can plan for materials. If childcare is needed, please contact Dia Cheney by 5/19/16.

Organizers: Appleseed Robinson, Kate Parker-OToole, Mare Parker-O'Toole, Dia Cheney

WINNERS OF THE WAYSIDE PULPIT CONTEST!

“Be kind whenever possible.
It is always possible” - Dalai Lama

“Truly wonderful,
the mind of a child is” - Yoda

“There is nothing more
tragic in all this world,
than to know right
and not do it” - Martin Luther King

Each of these sayings will be placed on the Wayside Pulpit for a month.

Watch out for further Wayside Pulpit contests!



Our Chalice Family

- We extend our sympathies to Beverly Wilkins and her daughters Leslie and Hillary on the recent passing of Beverly's husband, Marshall. Marshall was a kind, creative, and generous spirit and he shall be missed.
- We extend our sympathies also to Forbesy Russell and Allison Jones who both had their mothers die recently. We are grateful to their moms for giving us all the gifts of Forbesy and Allison!
- Susan Allison traveled to Antarctica! Ask her about her adventure.
- Colleen Tuck visited Lucy Bailey in Hanover NH and shares that Lucy is bright and happy in her new home.

We would like to have a monthly column in the Chalice about members and important events. If you would like to share something in the newsletter about yourself, send it to newsletter@uusharon.com.



Partner Church Internet Pen Pals Launches

Approximately 40 members of UCS are now connected to Unitarians belonging to the John Pounds Memorial Unitarian Church in Portsmouth, England. Please let Jim Robinson know how your connection is going (revrobinson@uusharon.org).

The Art Display on the vestry art wall, for the months of March and April, is by UCS member Natalie Smith.

MMAS Theater Group

Our next show at Mansfield Music and Arts Society is ***Little Women*** on April 23. This musical is Based on Louisa May Alcott's classic 1869 semi-autobiographical novel, focuses on the four March sisters — brassy, aspiring writer Jo, romantic Meg, pretentious Amy, and kind-hearted Beth — and their beloved Marmee, at home in Concord, Massachusetts while the family patriarch is away serving as a Union Army chaplain during the Civil War. Intercut with the vignettes in which their lives unfold are several recreations of the melodramatic short stories Jo writes in her attic studio.

If we have enough people we will make-our-own reception at 7:00 pm and the show starts at 8:00 pm. Tickets are \$26.00 per person. Please email me if interested. We encourage new church members and friends to join us for a fun evening of socializing and entertainment. Please email Pat McDougal if interested.

Mark your calendars for the last show of the season....***The World Goes Round a Kander & Ebb musical - June 11***

SOCIAL JUSTICE UPDATES - MARCH 2016

The Social Justice Committee has chosen a dynamic neighboring organization, **Community Connections of Brockton** (www.ccbrockton.org), for the March 'brown envelope' offering. Community Connections works to empower Brockton residents and increase neighborhood-based networks of support. One of its missions is to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect, through its Family Center. Their programs (all free and open) include parent education, ESOL classes, children's and family activities, finance and life skills workshops, citizenship preparation, support groups, and a community garden. They collaborate with area colleges in the Clemente program of adult college education. Working in multiple languages as needed, they help advocate for people and connect them to needed services.

We have particularly committed to support their 6th annual South Shore Leadership Conference on April 30th at Stonehill College. Anyone is welcome to register for this grassroots conference of workshops, advocacy and resource-sharing, free of charge including food and child care. We hope that this will be the start of an ongoing connection.

“Brown Envelope” Collections from July 1st through January 31st donated \$7,819 to support nonprofit organizations locally, nationally and internationally. These donations are helping address homelessness, youth and family services, racial justice, immigration rights, the refugee crisis, and climate change. In January, \$1,188 was donated to the Equal Justice Initiative from the brown envelope offerings. Thank you for your abundant generosity!

“We the People Act” H.3127 – Please contact your state representatives and senators and voice your opinion on the impact of “big money” on our democratic election process. H.3127 must move out of committee for a vote by the entire legislature by March 16th or there will be a two year delay until the bill is reintroduced. For more information, please contact Alan Post at post.alan8@gmail.com

Governor Baker Postcard Campaign - Please sign a postcard to Governor Baker expressing your opposition to an additional tax on your utility bill to pay for Spectra Energy's new \$3 billion gas pipeline project in Massachusetts. Postcards will be available after the service from Kathy Farrell, who is part of the No Sharon Gas Pipeline team. Other team members from this congregation include Bri McAlevy, Ellen and Chuck Bordman, Kerstin Gallant, Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, Liz Moore and Mia Joiner-Moore.

The pipeline would be harmful in many ways:

- It would add additional fossil fuel infrastructure rather than sustainable energy infrastructure.
 - The gas carried in the pipeline would come from fracking fields of Pennsylvania and contain methane, which is far more destructive to climate stability than carbon dioxide. Pipelines inevitably leak. A recent Harvard study suggests that leaks from the gas infrastructure in the region is 2-3 times higher than government estimates.
 - They're dangerous – pipelines carry toxic chemicals and have a history of leaking and exploding. The large 30" high-pressure pipe would abut many homes, wetland areas, conservation land and businesses.
- They're expensive to consumers – Governor Baker and the pipeline owner, Spectra Energy, propose to pay the \$3 billion for this pipeline expansion by adding a tariff to your utility bill, so YOU pay for it but Spectra shareholders get the profits.

THE PIPELINE IS NOT NEEDED for our energy consumption, as stated in Mass. Attorney General Maura Healy's report released last fall. Senator Markey recently warned that it appears the real purpose of the pipeline is not to aid New Englanders with their gas supply but to carry the gas to Canadian ports for export to more lucrative overseas markets.

Interested in learning more? Talk to one of the team members, come to Monday evening team meetings at Moose Hill (2nd and 4th Mondays, 7 pm), and/or go to www.NoSharonGasPipeline.org

UU Advocacy Day – UU Mass Action will host its annual gathering at the State House on April 12th, from 9:30 AM -3:30 PM. For more information and to register, see www.uumassaction.org

Syrian Refugee Relief – We raised nearly \$1,500 earlier this church year for Syrian refugee relief through our UU Service Committee. In addition, we recently sent a check for \$75 to the Syrian relief efforts sponsored by the First Congregational Church of Sharon, and \$100 to the Islamic Center of New England for their sponsoring of a Syrian child.

Upcoming Social Justice Activities: Tuesday, March 8th, 7:00 PM – Meeting of the Social Justice Committee
Sunday, March 13th, 11:30 AM – Lunchmaking for MainSpring House

March 2016 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Children's Choir 5:30pm Coming of Age 7:30pm	2 Book Group 7:30pm Adult Choir 7:30pm	3 Yoga 7:30pm	4 Potluck Supper 6pm Conversations at the Meeting-house 7pm	5 Committee Chairs 9am MMAS Theatre Group 7pm
6 Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am RE Classes 10:30am Reiki Event 3pm Youth Group 5pm Covenant Group 7pm	7 Women's Group I (Closed Group) 7:30pm	8 Children's Choir 5:30pm Interfaith Youth Visit 6:30pm Social Justice Committee 7pm Meditation Group 7:30pm	9 Board of Trustees 7:15pm Adult Choir 7:30pm	10 Second Women's Group 7:30pm Yoga 7:30pm Men's Group 8pm	11 Movie Night 7pm	12 Let's Laugh Today 11am Family Fun Event 4pm
13  Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am RE Classes 10:30am MainSpring House Lunchmaking 11:30am Youth Group 5pm Covenant Group 7pm	14	15 Children's Choir 5:30pm Coming of Age 7:30pm	16 Adult Choir 7:30pm	17 Couples Group 7:30pm Yoga 7:30pm	18	19 Coffee House 7pm
20 Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am RE Classes 10:30am Youth Group 5pm Covenant Group 7pm	21	22 Children's Choir 5:30pm Meditation Group 7:30pm	23 Adult Choir 7:30pm	24 Women's Group 7:30pm Yoga 7:30pm Mens group 8pm	25 Newsletter Deadline 5pm	26 Museum Trip 9:30am
27 Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am RE Classes 10:30am Youth Group 5pm Covenant Group 7pm	28	29 Children's Choir 5:30pm	30 Adult Choir 7:30pm	31 Yoga 7:30pm		

Please go to www.uusharon.org/calendars to reserve meeting space or to view the most up to date calendar.

*A Welcoming
Congregation of
the UUA*



FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
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CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT
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