

the chalice

Published by the
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Universalist Association*
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH
5PM
Submit articles to
newsletter@uusharon.org

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

10am Family Service

10:30am Adult Service (while children are in their religious education classes)

February 5: **Being Allies, Building Movements**

This service will explore ways that we can join together to support and empower the social justice work that is needed in the world today. Guest Speaker Ian Trefethen will share his experience as a white male working as an ally in the field of anti-racism. Some will remember that Ian spent part of his youth as a member of our own UCS village, and has gone on to put his principles into action. We will also launch our project to explore "The Third Reconstruction," Reverend William Barber's guide to building a moral movement to overcome the politics of division and fear. Expect timely words to help us chart ways forward in our complex world. (Strong coffee available after the service....)

February 12: **Cherishing Life**

The poetic odes of Pablo Neruda invite us to cherish the simple and the ordinary. The service will include several odes being read in Spanish and English, a classical Spanish guitarist, and exploring how Neruda's life and spirit can evoke the Sacred in daily life.

February 19: **Authenticity**

One of the key commitments a Unitarian Universalist makes is to live with authenticity. This service will explore the life and work of Mary Anne Evans (whose pen name was George Eliot), one of England's greatest novelists who had to battle the larger society to declare her authentic life. She was active in a Unitarian Chapel in London and her story inspires us to be our fullest and truest self.

February 26: **Compassion and Mindfulness**

This service will explore the life and teachings of the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama is certainly one of the greatest spiritual examples of the past fifty years.



Weather Related Cancellations
Call the church at 781.784.3652 to learn
whether services or other activities are
canceled due to weather.



From the Minister

Retirement and Transition

As I shared last month, my wife and I have decided to stay living in this wonderful town of Sharon. I retire in four months (at the end of May). I look forward to more time with family and friends, to pursue some personal interests, and I am exploring volunteering my time and skills in a UU congregation somewhere within a reasonable drive (up to ten hours a week).

When a settled UU Minister leaves a congregation, there are certain guidelines that they must follow. These guidelines are not arbitrary. They have been decided upon after decades of experience and discussion within the denomination. Since I will be living in Sharon, here is how these guidelines need to be applied here:

- + I cannot attend any service or event at the Unitarian Church of Sharon unless specifically invited by the interim or settled minister;
- + I cannot do any pastoral care or counseling with any member of the congregation;
- + I cannot discuss “what is happening at the church” with any member of the congregation;
- + It is not appropriate for me to accept social invitations from members of the congregation.
- + I cannot officiate at any rite of passage unless specifically invited by the interim or settled minister.

Of course, if we meet each other around town it is lovely to say hello and share a brief conversation. I have deep and fond feelings for everyone in the congregation (and I am not just saying that to be polite – it is the truth). I will enjoy seeing you – but within the guidelines outlined above. My wife Appleseed is not bound by these guidelines. She is free to do whatever she wants. But having been a minister’s spouse for forty years, she understands it is not wise to talk about church politics.

- Jim Robinson

From the Director of Religious Education

The challenge of being your child’s primary religious educator

I once was chatting with a fellow UU who shared a tale from the trenches of parenting. She and her 9 year old were in the elevator on the way out of the pediatrician’s office. It had been an ordinary visit. Suddenly her child started freaking out – crying and clinging to her desperately. She scanned the environment for the trigger. Nothing obvious. After sitting her child down and helping him calm down somewhat, she discovered that he had just realized that death was irreversible and that someday she would die. And he didn’t want her to.

These bolts from the blue are a normal and disconcerting part of parenting. Children do not have dawning awarenesses on a schedule. They just happen when they do – often inconveniently. Suddenly a parent is blindsided with a curious “where did I come from?” a desperate “what happens after someone dies?” or an indignant “who started racism, anyway??”

UU parents have it somewhat harder, because we don’t share a creed. Each of us believes as we do – and we accept that people worshiping next to us may have come to different conclusions about the mysteries of life. The thing is, while we may understand our own conclusions, we may not know how best to talk about what we believe with our children. Will what we have to say overwhelm or confuse them? Is it developmentally appropriate?

Don’t despair. There are simple things that you can do. One is to prepare yourself for these conversations by reflecting on what you believe. Another is to compare notes with fellow UU parents. Which conversations have they had? Which children’s books have been helpful? Another is to consult with your minister or director of religious education. We’re here to help (preferably before you end up with the inconsolable child in the elevator).

Let’s talk!

Blessings,

Louise

February in Religious Education

An important theme in our **Preschool-Kindergarten** class is "Church is a place to wonder and ask questions." This month they will hear stories, paint and glue while talking about the wonder and beauty of the stars, the moon and snow. The children will also make Valentines Day cards while learning about the different ways we can express love and friendship.

The **Grade 1-2** class will complete a service project that involves the creation of a group greeting card. On February 19th the class will join with Grade 3-4 for a session which shares the Story of King John Sigismund and the first declaration of religious tolerance. The group will end the month with a class exploring the idea that the love of our family home is always present even when we are not.

The **Grade 3-4** group is working on a service project that includes developing a relationship with Syrian children living in refugee camps. They will participate in the joint session with Grade 1-2 about Unitarian Transylvanian King John Sigismund. A lesson that encourages seeing others with awe will complete the month.

The **Grade 5-6** students will spend the month working on a special project of their own design that encompasses the power of stillness, presence, silence and listening, which are the themes they have recently explored in RE class. They will take a break from their project on February 19th for a special group session with Grade 7-8.

Grade 7-8 OWL students will have two OWL sessions this month. The group will join with Grade 5-6 for a special session on the 19th.

RE Volunteer Survey: When can you come out and play?

The RE Committee is organizing a special enrichment workshop/playshop for all RE volunteers in March. Master Storyteller Cindy Rivka Marshall will lead a lively two-hour program of games, activities, and exercises called "Making Storytelling Fun!" We are trying to figure out which date works for most volunteers. Teachers are encouraged to respond to the doodle survey in their email before February 8. The date of the program will be announced by the end of that week.

Ni Howdy!

A joyful celebration of community

- Traditional New England country dance
- Chinese New Year performances, activities, treats

Saturday, February 4 4-6 pm
Fellowship Hall,
First Congregational Church
(29 N. Main, Sharon)

For children, elders, and everybody in between!

Sponsored by the UCS Religious Education and Membership Committees.

SYG's 26th Annual PAN WAFF Breakfast:



Please come support the Senior Youth Group and enjoy a delicious pancake and waffle breakfast tradition on **Sunday February 12th, from 9am -10am** in the church vestry. In addition to plentiful amounts of pancakes and waffles, there will be gluten free options available, as well as eggs, bacon, sausage, fruit, coffee, and OJ. Everyone is welcome! The cost is \$7 per adult, \$5 per child, and \$20 max for a family. All proceeds go to support the Senior Youth Group. Hope to see you there!

Additionally, we are looking to borrow your pancake griddle or waffle iron to help us make enough pancakes and waffles for the event! If you have either or both and are willing to lend them, please email Chris, the Youth Coordinator, at yc@uusharon.org, and drop them off in the church kitchen before 7am February 12th.

Senior Youth Group Explores Service Trip Options

The Senior Youth Group is exploring options for a youth service trip for sophomores, juniors, and seniors in 2018. Possible destinations include: West Virginia, Nicaragua, Florida, or Arizona. Possible dates include: February, April, or June 2018. Youth and their parents are encouraged to respond to the doodle survey in their email about which dates work with their busy schedules. Once we know who is interested in participating, the group will decide on their preferred destination.

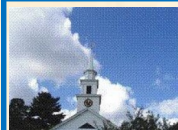
Parents or youth who have questions about the 2018 Youth Service trip should contact Chris Scheller or Louise Marcoux.

February Programs

Book Group: On Wednesday, Feb. 1, 7:30pm we will discuss “The Poisonwood Bible” by Barbara Kingsolver.

Adult Choir: Is always open to new voices. Speak with Choir Director Jennifer Spencer.

Pot Luck Supper : On Friday, Feb. 3, at 6pm bring a dish and enjoy the company.



Conversations at the Meetinghouse

Friday, Feb. 3, 7pm

“The National Black Doll Museum of History and Culture”

Debra Britt, Founder and curator of the National Black Doll Museum, will be our speaker. The National Black Doll Museum of History and Culture opened its doors in historical downtown Mansfield in July 2012. Rich in culture, the museum celebrates black history through the eyes of a doll collector. Ms. Britt will share the museum’s story and mission. Dolls are a child’s first introduction to self image, their stories are key elements in our personal heritage. For more information visit the website nbdmhc.org.

Ni Howdy!: Sunday, Feb. 4, 4pm: See page 3 for information.

Covenant Groups: Meets on Sunday evenings. These are small groups which use specific sharing guidelines as they discuss key spiritual and ethical questions. If interested in joining one of the groups, contact Jim Robinson at revrobinson@uusharon.org.

Children’s Choir: Is always open for new voices. The choir rehearses each Tuesday from 5:30pm to 6:30pm (with pizza included).

Meditation Group: Meets every Tuesday evening 7:30pm-8:30pm and is always open to new members.

Women’s Support Group: Is open to new members. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month from 7:30pm-9pm in the minister’s study.

Men’s Support Group: Is open to new members. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month from 8pm to 9:30pm in the library.

Let’s Laugh Today: Saturday Feb. 11, 11am -12noon– Free. Enjoy this unique exercise of simulated laughter combined with gentle breathing that brings more oxygen to the body’s cells. Any age and any level of physical ability can participate in this uplifting experience! Led by Certified Laughter Yoga Teachers, Linda and Bill Hamaker. Please bring your water bottle and at least one canned good for the Sharon/Stoughton Food Pantry. New laughs are always welcomed! See www.letslaughtoday.com for more information.

Pan Waff Breakfast: Sunday, Feb. 12, 9am. See page 3 for information.

Not Just Another Coffeehouse: Saturday, Feb. 18, 7pm. See page 5 for information.

Writer’s Group: Meets Sunday, February 19, 12noon to 1pm, in the church library. Share your original poetry or prose, or come and enjoy hearing others share theirs.

Art in the Heart: Meets Friday, Feb. 24, 7pm in the vestry. Join us for an evening of play, fun, creativity, and community. We will provide for you a variety of artistic media under the guidance of our Art in the Heart team of Kate Parker-O’Toole, Mare Parker-O’Toole, Dia Cheney, Jean Fox, and Appleseed Robinson. This is art without right or wrong, good or bad, better worse—rather it is art for everyone to enjoy. Let your inner child play!

Not Just Another Coffee House

Saturday, February 18 at 7pm



Audrey Budington of Sanbornton, NH (fiddle) and international Brandon Brown of Glasgow, Scotland (guitar) play a lively variety of original and traditional tunes, influenced by Irish, Cape Breton and Scottish styles. Spirited compositions, contemplative melodies, spunky innovations-Audrey's and Brandon's flair is deftly expressed in their playing. Both attend the prestigious Berklee College of Music in Boston where Audrey majors in Performance and Brandon majors in Professional Music with concentrations in Film Scoring and Performance. Enjoy their great music along with our delicious home made desserts and Fair Trade beverages.

From the Ministerial Search Committee

Right now the most important thing we can do is to savor our remaining time with Jim Robinson, celebrate his ministry, and prepare to say goodbye. But meanwhile your Ministerial Search Committee is also preparing for the two-year period of interim ministry that will begin this summer, while we conduct a thoughtful search for the person the congregation will call to become our new settled minister. We would like some input about what should happen during the interim period and the minister we should hire to serve and work with us for the coming two years. We encourage everyone to share your thoughts via this brief anonymous survey.

Please fill out a brief Internet survey at the following location: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L96F6TB>

Thank you!

The Ministerial Search Committee: Tom D'Avanzo, Melissa Leonard, Beth McGregor, David Nichamoff, David Slater, Laurie Wallace, Valerie White

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The listserve group email is used to notify you about special services, meetings, changes in plans, or anything related to church business.

To subscribe, please go to:

www.uusharon.org/announcements-sub-unsub

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At First Parish UU-Canton, Joe Amster and Barbara Casaly started a group on Tuesday, January 17, to discuss and take action on the Trump agenda based on the Indivisible Guide:

<https://www.indivisibleguide.com/>

Some people from the Five Points Cluster congregations have expressed interest in participating, and we welcome you and encourage you to join us!

Our next meeting is this **Tuesday, January 31, at 7 PM, in the Chapel at First Parish UU-Canton** (1508 Washington Street, Canton). Those who gather will decide on the next meeting date and time.

From Our Partner Churches....

News From... Our Partner Church in Portsmouth!

New church clock:



The John Pounds Memorial Unitarian Church of Portsmouth, England, UK (our partner church) has purchased this clock and placed it in the sanctuary (for the worship leader to notice and not go too long!). When their church president, Kathleen Durning, visited UCS in the fall, Jim Robinson gave her the clock as a gift (since she was noting that the worship leaders needed it!). So the congregation celebrated the clock as a link with their partner church in America. Beneath the clock is a portrait of an earlier minister dedicating the plaque to John Pounds, namesake of the Portsmouth Church and inspiration for the ragged school movement in England.

From our Partner Church in Gyulakuta, Romania -

We received this note of gratitude from the mother (Izabella) of the Unitarian high school student (David) that we are helping to sponsor (\$600 a year). Her English is not perfect but her gratitude is well expressed. She has been ill and unable to work (she is a teacher), but hopes to return to work as indicated:

“Yesterday I received the scholarship for David. Thank you very much. Please thank in my name to the congregation in Sharon and everyone who helped. David now goes back to school. It ended on vacation. There is very cold here, a lot of snow fell, the house is warm. David is very clever informatics. Many people turn to him to help them. I am well, thank God. David helped me a lot. I hope to go to work in the spring.

Fondly, Izabella.”

Visit Another Church on a Holiday Weekend?



I hope almost everyone is familiar with the Five Point Cluster. It is a cooperative effort between the Sharon, Foxboro, North Easton, Stoughton, and Canton UU Congregations to develop mutual support and activities that might be too big for a small church but just right for a group of churches. One of the Cluster’s projects is an effort to visit other churches on the Sunday of holiday weekends. We recently hosted people from other churches on New Year’s weekend. On MLK weekend I attended the service at the

North Easton church. It is a beautiful church built by the Ames family, the industrialist family that originally owned the land and buildings of Borderland State Park. The congregation is small but made of friendly and dedicated people. I enjoyed going to that service and the ones at the other Cluster churches and they enjoyed having visitors. One thing I find interesting is that all the services are a bit different. For example, in the North Easton Church’s greeting everyone gets up and walks around greeting everyone they can, unlike our service (and most others) where we greet the nearby people. It also seems like everyone’s covenant is slightly different. Rest assured though that the UU spirit is the same everywhere.

I am concerned that I am often the only one from our congregation who goes to these opportunities and would love company. The February 19th shared service will be in Foxboro, at the Foxborough Universalist Church, in Foxboro center, starting at 10am. Let me know if you are interested or just come along.

Jim Mullin

SOCIAL JUSTICE UPDATES - FEBRUARY 2017

The Third Reconstruction Book Discussion: On our February 5th service, "Being Allies, Building Movements", will explore ways we can join together to support and empower the social justice work needed in the world today. After our Guest Speaker, Ian Trefethen, shares his experience as an ally in the field of anti-racism, we will launch our project to explore *The Third Reconstruction*, Reverend Barber's guide to building a moral movement to overcome the politics of division and fear. This will include three Book Discussion Sessions based on the Unitarian Universalist Guide by Gail Forsyth-Vail created to invite participants to explore and examine themes from the book.

Book Discussion #1 - Moral Dissent - **Saturday, February 18th**,
from 2pm to 3:30pm (Program Space AB)

Book Discussion #2- Leadership - **Sunday, February 26th**,
from Noon to 1:30pm (Program Space AB)

Book Discussion #- Building Fusion Coalitions – **Saturday, March 4th**,
from 3 to 4:30pm (Program Space AB)

You are welcome to join all three sessions, but since they stand alone, you are welcome to attend the session/s that interest you and fit into your schedules even if you have not yet completed the book. It is a good time to be together and share our ideas as we face the justice issues in our world today. Please join us in this important project!

(Note: There are several copies of *The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics, and the Rise of a New Justice Movement* in our church library and in the Vestry during coffee hour. You can also purchase your own copy through Beacon Press (www.beacon.org) or as an e-book through your preferred vendor.)

Brown Envelope Update: During the month of December, we raised **\$919** in Brown Envelope funds for the food pantries in Sharon-Stoughton, Canton, Foxboro, Norwood, and Walpole, and the Social Justice Committee added \$331 so that we could present each of the 5 food pantries with a check for **\$250**. We raised **\$1275** for the residents of the MainSpring House homeless shelter in Brockton with all of our Christmas Eve offerings. Thanks for your generosity!

In January, Brown Envelope money supports the work of the UU Urban Ministry, based in Roxbury. February funds will go to Centro Presente (cpresente.org). Based in East Boston, Centro Presente works on immigrant rights, worker rights, and civic engagement.

Social Justice Committee will meet on Sunday, February 12th at 12:00 PM in the church Library. Everyone is welcome to attend our monthly meetings, where we plan and coordinate the social justice activities of the church and discuss current issues.

The featured Vestry Gallery Artist this month is **Kari Thostenson**, showcasing her impressive photographic talents. Kari is selling her images as note cards at the Social Justice Corner during Coffee Hour, with all profits supporting social justice projects of the church. Stop by and visit with Kari and see the world through her lens.

Nicaragua Service Trip Update: The trip is on for July 2017! Although we don't have the minimum number usually needed, FNE International's director, Michael Cipoletti, has agreed to confirm the trip for a group as small as three people, with the hope that we can increase the number, or we will be a small and mighty group working with the local volunteer staff. See last month's Chalice for more details on the trip and stay tuned for updates.

Individual Opportunities for Social Justice Updates and Actions:

- **UU Mass Action** - Sign up to receive updates from the state action network organizing and mobilizing 140 UU congregations and 20,000 UU's around issues of social justice. Go to uumassaction.org and click on *About Us* on the home page to get to the sign-up link.

(Continued on page 8)

SOCIAL JUSTICE UPDATES - FEBRUARY 2017, Continued

(Continued from page 7)

- **Become a UCS Social Justice Change Agent** – Receive monthly email alerts about opportunities to act on time-critical social justice issues, primarily by contacting state and federal legislators. To participate, please email Kari Thostenson at kjhoste@gmail.com.

Shopping For Justice – You can buy **Shopping for Justice** cards at church during coffee hour or order extra cards in advance. We have cards in various denominations for Shaws, Stop & Shop, and Big Y, and +/-5% of the value stays with the church to help fund our social justice projects in support of people who experience food and housing insecurity locally and beyond.

Upcoming Dates:

-Sunday, February 12, 11:30 AM – Lunchmaking for MainSpring House (with peanut-free, dairy-free WOWBUTTER)

-Sunday, February 12, 12:00 Noon – Social Justice Committee Meeting (Library)



A swarm of UCS Women, girls, boys and men gather together to join well over 150,000 protest marchers in Boston on 21 January.



UCS was also represented in Washington D.C. (and elsewhere) by a few members, where many messages were delivered to our nation's leaders.

February 2017 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Book Group 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm	2	3 Pot Luck Supper 6pm Conversations at the Meeting-house 7pm	4 Committee Chairs 9am BCD Board Webinar Ni Howdy! 4pm (Offsite) MMAS Theatre Group 7pm
5 Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am Religious Education Classes 10:30am Senior Youth Group 5pm Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	6 Women's Group I (Closed Grp) 7:30pm	7 Children's Choir 5:30pm Meditation Group 7:30pm	8 Board of Trustees 7:15pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm	9 Second Women's Group 7:30pm Men's Group 8pm	10 Movie Night 7pm	11 Let's Laugh Today 11am Circle Suppers 6pm
12 Pan Waff Breakfast 9am Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am Religious Education Classes 10:30am Membership Committee 11:30am Social Justice Committee meeting 12pm Senior Youth Group 5pm Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	13	14 Children's Choir 5:30pm Meditation Group 7:30pm	15 RE Committee Meeting 7pm Caring Committee 7pm Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm	16	17	18 1st "Third Reconstruction" book discussion 2pm Coffee House 7pm
19 Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am Religious Education Classes 10:30am Writer's Group 12pm Senior Youth Group 5pm Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	20	21 Children's Choir 5:30pm Meditation Group 7:30pm	22 Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm	23 Second Women's Group 7:30pm Men's Group 8pm	24 Newsletter Deadline 5pm Art in the Heart 7pm	25
26 Family Worship Service 10am Worship Service 10:30am Religious Education Classes 10:30am 2nd Session "The Third Reconstruction" book discussion – Leadership 12pm Adult Education Committee 4pm Senior Youth Group 5pm Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	27	28 Children's Choir 5:30pm Meditation Group 7:30pm	Please go to www.uusharon.org/calendars to reserve meeting space or to view the most up to date calendar.			



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*A Welcoming
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