

The choice

Published by the
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of the Unitarian
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NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
Wednesday, March 21st

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March 2018

MARCH WORSHIP SERVICES

Childcare provided

Sunday March 4: Exploring Humanism

10:00am Family Service

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

Are you an “atheist?” Or a “theist?” Or perhaps a “humanist?” Come join us this morning as we reflect on what humanism is and on what it might mean to be a “religious humanist”.

Sunday March 11: Becoming Indispensable

10:00am Family Service

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

As we kick off the annual Stewardship Pledge Drive, we reflect on what it means to be a church and what it means to become a church that’s indispensable in the lives of its members and families and the community it serves.

Sunday March 18: The Credo Service

10:00am Family Service

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

Come join us this morning as two of our members share their credos – what they believe – with the gathered community.

Sunday March 25: To Walk Together

10:00am Family Service

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

This morning we reflect on the power of covenant and the strength of community. The annual Stewardship Pledge Drive wraps up today.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS Thank you

Thank you all those who help to maintain our church. We are very grateful to Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, Jack Armstrong, Gare Reid, Doug Wilbur and Wilbur Edwards, all of whom put in many hours and overcame all obstacles to purchase and install a new, larger storage shed. In keeping with her quest for organization, Ellen is also heading a task force to rationalize storage in all the closets. If your group or committee has anything at all stored in the church, you should be represented on this group. Many thanks to Terry Fitzgerald for his hours gathering information and quotes on painting the church; to Paul Tuck for installing a new heater in the women’s rest room; and to Gare for restoring the coat closet rack to an upright position.

A reminder: if your group or committee uses the vestry and/or kitchen on Friday or Saturday, we all appreciate your leaving the rooms in good condition for Sunday. This may require using the vacuum in the storage room opposite the kitchen and drying dishes and putting them back in the cupboards.

Submitted by Lindsay Drisko

From the Minister



We live in scary times and the news has been fretful of late, including, most recently, the news of 17 people killed in another school shooting in Florida. Such loss of life is tragic and certainly avoidable, although there exist a myriad of opinions about how to avoid such shootings in the future.

The thought of children and teachers caught in the deadly crosshairs of a military-grade weapon in their school is horrifying. Equally frightening to me is the fear-mongering and bad theology that I hear repeatedly spouted in the public square.

Whatever else gun ownership is, it is not a God-given right. And it is not a solution to the escalating violence in this country. Violence comes from the heart. And its root causes are fear and anger. Setting aside the volatile question of gun regulation, what we most need in this country at this time is for people to be less angry and less afraid.

Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite is a UCC minister, a professor of theology at Chicago Theological Seminary, has written,

"What really scares me, not only this week but all year through, are the Christian theologies that prey on our legitimate fears of human finitude, physical suffering, economic uncertainty, environmental destruction, and the threat of war in order to accelerate anger and alienation."

I agree. And I think what we need most is a religion that counters such vitriol and fear-mongering. We need to hear again the words of one of our own religious forbearers, John Murray, the "father of Universalism," who said,

"Give them not Hell, but hope and courage. Do not push them deeper into their theological despair, but preach the kindness and everlasting love of God."

Those words have become part of our legacy as Unitarian Universalists, part of our vision, part of our values. We need to hear them again and proclaim them loudly. As one of our great theologians, A. Powell Davies, once said, "The world is now too dangerous for anything but the truth, too small for anything but brotherhood."

This church and our larger movement of Unitarian Universalism are vital, not first and foremost because they serve us, but because they are carriers – vessels – of a vision and a set of values that serve our society, our democracy, and our common good. And so, we are called upon to support the church, as those who have gone before us have supported it, to keep that vision and those values alive.

The church's annual stewardship pledge drive will begin later this month. I hope you'll spend some time reflecting on the value of this church and this movement in your lives and in the lives of our communities and our country. And I hope you'll give generously to support the vision and values which inspire us to work together for a better world.

Rev. Wendy

From the Director of Religious Education



I want to have an argument

I keep on going back to the Monty Python skit in which a man walks eagerly into an office and sits down with urgent intensity. The man behind the desk starts

shouting horrible things at him. In shock, the visitor eventually stammers "But I want to have an argument." Abashed, the man behind the desk replies, "Oh,...sorry," pointing to his credential, "This is Abuse."

Things are happening in our society right now that are worth arguing about. And instead of a robust discussion of an issue, we get Abuse. Those verbal body slams send the message that real discussion isn't possible. We can't really talk. Words don't work. This is a very dangerous message.

I believe that discussion and argument are essential skills if we want peace and friendship in our world. We don't see things the same way. If we can't talk about our differences and say what we need (and listen to others share the same), there is only silence, not peace. And when verbal abuse is also present, there is resentment, hatred, fear.

I am left with questions, rather than an answer. What am I doing to help the young people at church learn to discuss and argue fairly? How do we help our children learn to stand up for what matters to them AND to listen respectfully to opposing viewpoints? How do we support them in recognizing verbal abuse and calling it out for the corrosive agent that it is?

I'd love to hear where you are on this journey with your family. What has been helpful? What wasn't? This community is rich in experience. Let's share the wealth!

Blessings,

Louise

FATHER TIME MARCHES ON

By Rory McGregor

52 Upland Road, Sharon MA

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Take a look at the three faces of the clock tower at the Unitarian Church of Sharon MA, located in the very center of the town. The clock hands are now moving and it's once again telling time. Having been out of operation for the past 2 years, its return to reading the correct hour and minute is welcome news to the many passers by who rely on the clock for their daily travel.

Why the clock met its demise is unclear. What is known is that the drive motor and one adjacent gear had outlived their useful lives, causing time to come to a stop. Given that the clock works is over 150 years old, the life expectancy of the components has definitely been surpassed, but most still appear to be in good working order.

History reports that the clock was converted from purely mechanical operation using a pendulum driven by falling weights (the traditional gravity method) to being powered by electricity around 1960. Donald W. Brookfield, a local resident in Sharon, was responsible for making this happen. Don was an inventor and the founder of a company in Stoughton, Brookfield Engineering, which makes a scientific instrument called a "viscometer". (This device rotates a rod or "spindle" immersed in a beaker of fluid, measures the resistance to rotation, and reports this value as viscosity of the liquid.)

Don recognized that the mechanical-drive clock could benefit from conversion to electric power. This would negate the need for someone to go up to the belfry each week to reset the weights. Using the small motor that drives the Brookfield Dial Reading viscometer, Don improvised a gear train which harnessed the rotational motion of the motor to drive the much larger clockworks in the belfry.

Three separate clocks, one facing north, one east and the last one south in the belfry of the Sharon Unitarian Church, serve the local community, helping pedestrians to reach the nearby train station in time for commuter rail trips to Boston or Providence. The north facing clock face stopped working late in the last century. Anyone approaching the church on Rte 27 (North Main Street) from the Cobb Corner direction would see an incorrect time and



North Face of the Clock Tower in the UCS

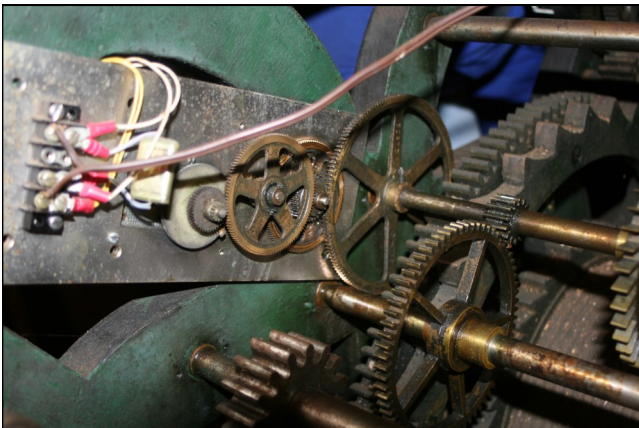
immediately double check their watch or cell phone to make sure they had the correct time.

I had been a member of the church since 1976. I had thought that it would be a great service to the town, as well as the church community, to get the north facing clock working again. In fact, the town provides an annual stipend to the church of \$150 to keep the clock in good working order for the benefit of the public. When the church conducted its recent building project to add a two-story annex to the main building, the construction foreman for Digiando Brothers of Milford, George Chapman, inspected the clock and determined the cause of failure for the north face. He removed the failed gear and gave it to the church. This was our first major project to repair part of the clock and learn about how gears work. The learning experience was essential for what followed when the motor failed two years ago.

Paul Tuck and Rory McGregor removed the plate that holds the drive motor in place. On that plate is a small gear assembly that connects to the motor. Both items required replacement. Paul used the internet to search for replacement components. Once received, we put them together and saw that it worked, but not reliably. We then called upon Don Brookfield's son, David who lives on Brook Road in Sharon and still works at Brookfield Engineering. David replaced the motor yet again with a stronger drive, refabricated the adjacent drive gears, and ran a validation test for 3 days on the assembly to make sure everything worked reliably.

The Building & Grounds team at the church gratefully received the new drive motor with first stage gear from Brookfield Engineering. Members of the Brookfield family still attend the church and were pleased to know that their father's handiwork with the clock tower had been restored to full working order by son David. The new motor and drive gear were easily installed in the drive train and the clock hands started moving once again. However, the motor drove in a direction that caused the clock hands to move backwards. We quickly corrected this error and everything is now working perfectly.

The church congregation was pleased with the result and gave its thanks to those who had helped bring about this long awaited repair. Now all is once again in timely working order with the clock tower at the Unitarian Church of Sharon.



Clock Works in the Belfry at the UCS

Our Committees

AIM Committee Seeks Additional Members

The AIM2 Committee is looking to add two new committee members as we begin the next phase of the renovation of the sanctuary. Between now and the annual meeting in June, we will be working with our architect to develop two alternative schematic designs for the renovation. The schematic designs are being developed from input provided by the congregation and from requirements identified by UCS' standing committees (primarily Worship and Religious Education). A final schematic design agreed upon by the congregation will become the basis for the development of a detailed design and bid documents for the renovation.

There are currently six members of the committee. Why do we want to add two more members? There are two reasons. First, we would like to get younger (wouldn't we all!). Younger in this case means both in terms of age and by adding members who are new(er) to the congregation. People who have joined UCS in the last few years that perhaps have less knowledge of what has been but who have more ideas of what could be. Younger also means not as old! We have the 'elders' aspect fully covered. Having a couple more youthful newer members would help the committee become more representative of the congregation. Both aspects are especially important as we work to enable a design that will fulfill the needs of our congregation for the next 50 years.

Second, we would like to add committee members who have backgrounds, or have contacts with people who have expertise in subjects that will be very important elements of the newly renovated space. Examples include acoustics, lighting, audio visual, and renewable heating and cooling solutions. Our architect will certainly bring their own expertise in these subjects. But as we learned during the design of the addition (AIM1), we have extraordinary talent and experience within our congregation that can be the difference between a result that is the architect's design and one that is embraced as our design. We also learned during AIM1 that in order to be fully realized each of these elements must be drivers of the initial architectural design and not simply add-ons to the design. Any help in these areas even on a part-time or on a referral basis would be a big plus.

What does an AIM committee member do? We meet once a month as a committee. During the upcoming months, we will be working with the architect and outside experts to support the development of the schematic designs. The majority of our time will be spent meeting with the church membership and other committees to finalize the specific requirements for the sanctuary renovation that drive the schematic designs. Once the schematic designs are produced, we will be hosting multiple meetings to present the designs to the congregation and to collect and channel feedback to the architect on desired changes until as a whole we agree on the final schematic design to carry forward..

If you are interested in joining or helping AIM, please contact Jack Armstrong at jackarmstrong@comcast.net or speak to one of the committee members. The current members of the AIM2 committee are Jack Armstrong (Chair), Tom Kinraide, Mare Parker-O'Toole, Gare Reid, Joe Rando, Edele Panesidi, and Colleen Tuck.

Jack Armstrong

Caring Committee Update

The Caring Committee of the UCS, working closely with the minister, exists to provide thoughtful attention and assistance to our members and friends with the understanding that we all need support at times in our lives. The group leads the effort to assist members with driving needs, visits and other types of communication, as well as food drop-off/deliveries. These supports are typically short-term – for example, organizing rides for a member after a surgery or scheduling meal drop-offs while a member is ill.

If you are in need of support, please reach out to the Caring Committee by speaking with any of the members or emailing caringcommittee@uusharon.org.

If you would like to sign up to receive information when other members could use a hand with meals, rides, or other short-term needs, please send along your email address to: caringcommittee@uusharon.org

Conversations at the Meetinghouse

On February 2nd, over 70 people from the greater Sharon and adjoining communities participated in a Civil Conversations workshop. The evening's discussion, titled "How Can You Believe *That?* Exercises in listening to one another when many don't", was conducted by Rumni Saha, Ray Wallace, Laurie Wallace, Jenna Koiner and Andrew Plumridge. It offered attendees some basic guidelines to help make these conversations more comfortable, and included a practice component. It also provided practical guidance to help address challenging situations with an open mind, compassion, and respect for those with a different perspective.

The large turnout expressed the need many are feeling about how to communicate respectfully and effectively with those who may hold beliefs and opinions quite different from their own. Our hope is that this evening was the starting point of more opportunities to continue having these important conversations, both formally and informally. Discussions are also currently underway to bring the message and dialogue to the greater community via Sharon Community Television. Thank you to all who attended and participated, thereby contributing to the resounding success of the evening.

Rumni Saha

Religious Education News

Youth Groups

Senior Youth Group

Meets on Sundays from 5-7pm in the Vestry. Senior Youth Group is open to any and all individuals in grades 9 - 12 and folks are encouraged to bring friends! February saw our



annual PanWaff (Pancake & Waffle) Breakfast Fund-raiser to benefit Rosie's Place. We raised just over \$200 which will go towards hosting a meal at Rosie's Place this spring. A huge THANK YOU to everyone who came out for breakfast in support of SYG and this cause, we look forward to seeing you next year!

For March, SYG is in the midst of planning and organizing our upcoming Youth CONvention—this year's theme is Ice Cream CONe - to be held overnight at church Sat-Sun March 24th-25th. Youth are working collaboratively with others from the Foxboro and Murray congregations to put on this event and we're looking forward to having a great time!

Junior Youth Fellowship Group

The weather again did not cooperate for sledding in February, so, by popular demand and unanimous vote, Junior Youth Fellowship Group headed back to Boda Borg for another fun afternoon of team-based mental and physical challenge puzzles! New puzzles were solved, alliances made, and we also enjoyed the on-site taco bar for lunch.

Our March event is scheduled for Friday night, March 9th when we will be connecting with a local potter to create our own chalices out of clay. JYFG meets once a month and all events are open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders in our congregation.

Have questions about our Senior and Junior youth programs? Want to sign up for an upcoming event? Interested in volunteering to help with the groups or have a student who might be interested in joining? Email our Youth Coordinator Chelsea Gould at yc@uusharon.org

Chelsea Gould, Youth Coordinator

Coming of Age in March

Tues, Mar 6, 7:30 pm Youth

Tues, Mar 20, 7:30 pm Youth and Mentors

March in RE

By Karen MacKinnon, RE Assistant

The Month of March will see our **Preschool-Kindergarten** children experience the joy and freedom of creative movement, and explore and celebrate the love they feel from parents. The class will learn that everyone needs help from time to time and that it is ok to ask for help. They will also talk about animals both as pets and in the wild.

The **Grade 1-2** students will conclude their Our Whole Lives studies this month focusing on babies and families. They will explore how families nurture babies, how babies join families, and the ways that families celebrate special occasions.

The **Grade 3-4** class will learn about the Hindu beliefs in having reverence for all living creatures and living without harming animals. The class will visit the food pantry on March 11th, then they will spend some class time coming up with ideas that they can carry out to help the food pantry.

The **Grade 5-6** group has spent some time thinking about and planning a social action project for their class. This month they put their plans in action and will create comforting blankets that they will give to babies, children and dogs in need.

Continuing with their study of Islam will keep the **Grade 7-8** class engaged this month as they prepare for a class visit to the mosque later this year.



Junior Youth Fellowship Group's outing to Boda Borg

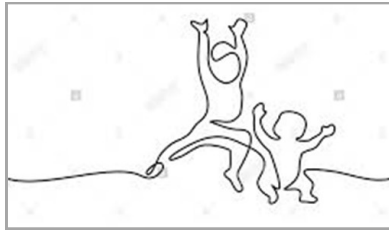
All of our religious education classes will also spend some time this month preparing for RE Sunday which takes place on April 8th. It is a special celebration where each class chooses something they have learned this year to share with the congregation.

Religious Education News, continued

Move It!

A workshop for RE Volunteers

For years, we've been yearning for someone who could teach us how to make children's religious education a more embodied experience. Enter Bethany Vaccaro, certified expressive arts facilitator and DRE at the UU congregation of South County, RI!



Would you like to find out how to incorporate meaningful physical activity into your classes? Join Bethany for an active and embodied exploration of movement and meaning-making on **Thursday, March 22**, from 7-8:30 pm. You'll come away with some new skills to make your Sunday morning of volunteering both more lively AND more grounded. RSVP (not required, but helpful in terms of preparing enough materials) to Louise at dre@uusharon.org.

Food Pantry Field Trip

Our 3rd and 4th graders -- and their families -- are invited to participate in a field trip to the Ilse Marks Food Pantry in Stoughton on Sunday, **March 11**. The caravan will leave church at noon. Our tour will be led by Henrietta Polanzak.

This field trip builds the foundation for the group's social action project in March: What is a Food Pantry? How can we support it?

Questions? Contact Louise Marcoux.

Share what you love!

Poets, dancers/movers, artists, crafters – here's your opportunity to share your interests with youth in grades 5-8 this spring. Which Sundays would you like to help with?

April 1: Poetry? Collage? What would you want to share?

June 3: Guerilla Art: Planning a chalking project

June 10: Guerilla Art: Chalking for change

Fear not: you'll be paired with a seasoned RE volunteer.

Find out more: Louise Marcoux at dre@uusharon.org.

Volunteers Needed

Treasurer

Treasurer position opens July 1, 2018. Do you have a facility for working with numbers? Do you have the ability to learn a simple financial software package? (An experienced user will provide tutorials.) Would you consider working with a fine group of former treasurers and current Board members?

Please consider "giving" of your time in this important job as part of your church life. Call or e-mail Susan Allison of the Nominating Committee OR suggest a candidate, and your name as "nominator" will be kept confidential!

Memory Tea

Save the Date **Sunday April 29** for annual Memory Tea - a gathering to share memories of those we have lost in past.

Nina Lynch, Caring Committee

Share Your Vision; Help Plan Our Future

Annual Pledge Campaign

Sunday March 11th is the start of pledging for the church fiscal year that begins July 1st. Members and friends are being asked to consider what they are willing to give financially during this important year when we are searching for our new minister. As part of the pledging process, Stewardship Committee is hosting get togethers during the weekend of March 16-18 to vision the future for our church community. Sessions take place in the church vestry on

Friday, March 16, 7– 9 pm, light supper

Saturday, March 17, 9– 11am, breakfast

Sunday, March 18, noon – 2pm, lunch

Choose one that fits your schedule. Food/beverage will be served. Babysitting at church will be available. Past experience tells us that these discussion groups are most helpful in reaffirming who we are and what we hope to accomplish. We encourage you to come. To attend and for child care go to <https://doodle.com/poll/6ntetgcnwr89nhmm> or email admin@uusharon.org or call the church office at 781-784-3652 x1.

Stewardship Committee: Fred Bramhall, Pat McDougal, Rory McGregor, Peter Raskin, David Schoenfeld, Colleen Tuck,



March Programs

Music and Arts

Adult Choir – Meets Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm in the vestry and Sunday mornings before service. New voices always welcome.

Art from the Heart meets every 4th Friday of the month, in the vestry. Art from the Heart is an evening of play, fun, creativity, and community. We will provide for you a variety of artistic medium under the guidance of Jean Fox. This is art without right or wrong, good or bad, better worse—rather it is art for everyone to enjoy. Hope to see you there!



Children's Choir

We love to hear our children singing! Children's choir welcomes all. Meets Tuesdays 5:30 to 6:30pm in the vestry. Pizza included. Performing in church twice a month. Please note the choir does not meet when the school is out. Questions? Contact Forbesy at forbesyrussell@hotmail.com



MMAS Theatre Group

The next theater night at Mansfield Music Arts Society is on **March 24** to see William Shakespeare's classic *The Tempest*. The Tempest tells the story of castaways brought to an island through a tempest created by the magician Prospero, who was exiled there with his daughter Miranda. In this contemporary retelling, audiences will experience Shakespearean plays as they were originally intended – through the expression of sound and movement. Do not miss this special season offering! There is one more show reserved for us and that's *Hair* on April 28th.

Our make-our-own-pot-luck reception starts at 7:00pm and the show starts at 8:00pm. Tickets are \$26.00 unless you are a member in which case they are less. The performance will take place at 377 North Main St. Mansfield.

If you would like to attend any of the shows please email me at mcdougal.pat@gmail.com just to let me know and then send a check (separate checks for each show please) **made out to MMAS** to me at 40 Jordan Drive, Stoughton 02072. Guests and non UU members are always welcome. Please pass the word.

Pat McDougal

Not Just Another Coffee House

Diane Edgecomb with harper Margot Chamberlain

Saturday, March 17

7pm, doors open 6:30pm

In A Celtic Evening, Diane brings to life Ireland's storytelling treasures from the humorous Legend of Knockgrifton to the hauntingly beautiful Deirdre of the Sorrows. The most famous of all Irish romances, Deirdre weaves together Druidic prophecies with a forbidden passion so profound it dares to defy the fates. The performance is set against a lush background of harp music: original and traditional melodies played by the versatile Margot Chamberlain on a variety of Celtic folk harps. Enjoy an evening of humor, passion and music with these two inspiring performers. Margot will be joined for the evening event by Celtic harper Barbara Russell.

"Thoughtfully composed and beautifully presented, A Celtic Evening was a joy for us all. The combination of both your talents made for an inspirational evening that moved the audience to laughter and to tears, and left us with a feeling that magic was in the air." Stephanie Plunkett, Events, Norman Rockwell Museum

www.livingmyth.com

During intermission enjoy our home made desserts and fair trade beverages.

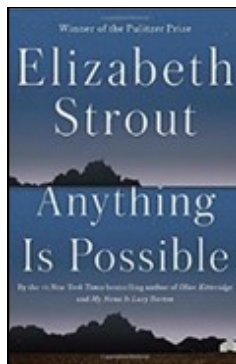


Diane Edgecomb

March Programs, continued

Interest and Discussion Groups

Book Group – Join us in the church library at 7pm on Wednesday, March 7th, when will discuss Elizabeth Strout's **Anything is Possible**, in which a cast of small-town characters copes with love and loss. The discussion of the next book, *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane*, is postponed to April 4.



Everyone is welcome, whether or not you've finished the book. With rare exception, we meet at 7 on the first Wednesday of each month, in the church library.

Covenant Sharing Groups – Covenant Group One meets every first and third Sunday at 7pm. Covenant Group Two meets every second and fourth Sunday. To join Covenant Group Two contact Laurie Wallace. Covenant groups are small groups (between 8 and 12 members) who discuss core spiritual and ethical themes, using specific guidelines for sharing which ensure that the experience is safe for everyone involved.

Journey Group - An evening of meditation, chanting, sharing and reading/discussion of spiritually related materials. The meetings are facilitated by Barbara Nelkin-Rose and are scheduled for selected Monday evenings in the Library. The group is now closed. If you would like to join, please contact Barbara.

Let's Laugh Today – Bring the whole family and get your giggle on by attending a FREE Laughter Yoga session in Program Rooms A/B from 11am to noon on **Saturday, March 10th** (and every second Saturday of each month). Any age and any level of physical ability can participate in this uplifting experience! Enjoy this unique exercise of simulated laughter combined with gentle breathing which gives enhanced vitality, energy and a feeling of real well-being. Several SPECIAL guests are attending this month! Please bring your water bottle because laughing can be dehydrating. Led by Certified Laughter Yoga Teachers, Linda and Bill Hamaker. If you have any questions, just call them at 508-660-2223 or e-mail billandlinda@letslaughtoday.com. PLEASE BRING AT LEAST ONE CANNED GOOD FOR THE SHARON/STOUGHTON FOOD PANTRY. New laughs are always welcomed! See more information and more opportunities to laugh at www.letslaughtoday.com.



Meditation Group—Join our circle of mindfulness meditation on Tuesday evenings at church at 7.30 PM. Return as your schedule permits, if you have been a part of the circle over the past few years. If you have not experienced the quieting of your mind, we encourage you to join us. For one hour we practice both sitting and walking meditation. Sometimes we lay out a special canvas labyrinth produced by one of our own youth groups. If you have questions, please arrive at 7:15 PM or contact Ray Wallace or Susan Allison.

Writer's Group – Meets on second Sunday of the month, at 12noon to 1pm, in the church library. Come share a poem or prose piece you have written with a supportive and interesting group. Or just come along to enjoy to writings and the conversations.

Support Groups

Al-Anon Meeting - An 11th step Al-Anon group meets at UCS each Sunday evening at 7pm. It is an open meeting.

Men's Support Group - Meets on second and fourth Thursdays of the month, at 8pm in the church library. New men are always welcome to join.

Reiki Support Group - Meets every first Sunday of the month at 3pm. This is a closed group. Please call Laurie Wallace, if you have questions.

Women's Support Group – Meets on second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 7:30pm in the Program Space A/B. New women are always welcome to join.

Movie Night

Friday, March 9 7PM

Loving - is a historical drama film which tells the story of Richard and Mildred Loving plaintiffs in the 1967 US Supreme Court decision *Loving v Virginia* which invalidated state laws prohibiting interracial marriage.

Popcorn is free.

Movie group meets every second Friday of the month at 7pm.



SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



Brown Envelope Update

In January, we collected \$1,328.46 in Sunday BE donations for UU Mass Action. March BE funds will go to the Syrian American

Medical Society (SAMS).

The recipients of BE funds collected on three February Sundays will go to the Equal Justice Initiative (eji.org), an Alabama-based organization led by Bryan Stevenson, committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society. A special fundraising appeal from the UUA on behalf of Black Lives of Unitarian Universalists (BLUU) on February 11 raised close to \$2000 in checks and cash collected, and pledges to be fulfilled later. If we reach \$2000 (\$10 per member), the contribution will be matched dollar for dollar. Stay tuned for an update in a future edition of the Chalice.



CommUnity Closet, Brockton, February 10 - guests and UCS volunteers sorting and hanging the

clothing donations. Photos taken by Elizabeth Siftar, with permission given by guests and volunteers.

CommUnity Closet Update

Saturday, February 10 was our church's day to send volunteers to the CommUnity Closet at the UU Church of Brockton, 325 West Elm Street. We had a great turnout, both in volunteers and guests. We started at 9am in the sorting room, getting donations on hangers and ready for guests to come in and choose the clothing they need. We had lots of energy and enthusiasm getting ready for opening at 10 am. Guests arrived in groups and as singles and the line filled the hallway to the clothing room quickly. They were welcomed warmly and returned the greetings with smiles. Several volunteers assisted the guests in choosing clothing, getting the right sizes and filling their bags. There were approximately 80 guests. We restocked the winter clothing racks several times and began sorting and hanging the spring clothing for next month's opening.

After closing activities were completed, Sharon volunteers were invited to enjoy a meal with members of a church who use the building for their services. Camelia Rodriguez, who led our volunteer group and has been active in the core group since the Closet opened, said: "It was a very special moment. Having a predominantly white group embraced by a black Christian community, with many differences in language, culture, religion...it's what it's all about...knowing that our commitment is being appreciated and valued."

We continue to collect new and gently used clothing in the Vestry, and we are now accepting Spring items for people of all ages. Men's clothing is especially needed, as well as new socks, underwear, women's sanitary products, and reading glasses.



CommUnity Closet, Brockton - Camelia Rodriguez and 2 guests

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, Continued

Nicaragua Service Trip for Adults



When: July 15-23, 2018 (end date is flexible, depending on group members)

Where: Mostly in Chacraseca, a large rural community outside of the Pacific coast city of Leon, with the possibility of a day in Managua and another 1-2 days to visit other cities (Granada, Masaya).

Who: Adults of all ages, church members or not, ideally in a group of 6-10 people

Costs: \$500 per person, which covers a place to sleep, all meals, some sightseeing, and ground transportation. Airfare is extra (\$500-\$700). The group is asked to raise \$2500 to cover some of the costs for building a house. The family already owns the land and pays a modest mortgage for a portion of the cost of the house. Our Brown Envelope collection for May will contribute to this total, and if the trip doesn't happen, our funds will support FNEI's housing, health and education programs.

What: Activities that can be included, and that could happen simultaneously:

House and stove construction, led by experienced and skilled

local builders; visits and interactions with students and teachers in schools, teaching English to adults and/or children, working on gardening projects in the community, meeting informally with community residents.

Why go to Nicaragua with FNEI? FNEI (fneinternational.org) has a longstanding relationship with the people in Chacraseca and other communities in Nicaragua. They have, since the beginning, worked together with the local people to meet local needs, and involving volunteers; promoting cooperation, respect, and empowerment for everyone involved. We have found the people to be warm and welcoming, and we have felt safe there. Trip participants benefit from learning about the lives of people in another country by living

and working with them for a bit of time. We get to see our lives and our culture from a different perspective. It's an opportunity to learn about solidarity, that we're all in this (world) together.

Gare Reid (in photo from 2014 trip, 2nd from left) shared the following reflection, based on his experience as a participant in three of our church's youth trips:

"Fifteen dollars, what can you buy with fifteen dollars? Maybe a new book or a lunch out. For me, I can put a smile on the faces of 60 elementary school students in Nicaragua. During the summer of my sophomore year of high school, I had the pleasure of going to Nicaragua to teach English in an elementary school. During one of my last days there, we took the children to the zoo. After a fun day there, we all had lunch outside of the zoo and ate a bagged lunch that we had prepared at the school. When we were finishing our lunch, we saw an ice cream cart coming down the road. So, as a group, we decided

to buy an ice cream for every child. Once we told them the news, all of the kids ran into a single file line and got their ice cream. One of the students went up to the principal of the school and told her, *"I never want to leave, this school gives me everything."* I have had three life-changing opportunities through traveling to a struggling community in Nicaragua with two empowering organizations, ATRAVE and FNEI, to teach English in an elementary school, plant cashew trees



2014 Nicaragua trip—Gare Reid second from the left

and vegetables throughout the community, and work on two housing construction projects. It is amazing what you can learn from staying in Nicaragua for just one week. I would encourage anyone to take advantage of this life-changing opportunity."

We are optimistic that we will have the minimum of 5 people committed to the trip by the **new deadline of March 18** - but please speak up NOW if you think you want to go, even if you can't make a definite commitment yet. If we are able to go ahead with planning, we can add people to the group later. Please contact Janet Schmidt (jcscoch@gmail.com).

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, Continued

Join UU Mass Action for UU Advocacy Day!

When: Tue April 10, 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Where: Arlington St. Church, 351 Boylston St., Boston

(We leave for the State House at 1:00 PM)

This year's program will include:

Music - Matt Meyer, Rhythm Revelations
Spoken Word Poet - Anthony Thomas
Keynote - Rev Elizabeth Nguyen, Senior Strategist
- Side with Love, Witness Ministries in Multicultural Growth and Witness

There are many important bills that need to pass this session. Most of the priority legislation will be climate bills, but we will also be advocating for the Safe Communities Act, Raise the Minimum Wage, and Paid Family and Medical Leave.

Tickets are now on sale. Early bird rate \$25 through March 26th:

Register here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/uu-advocacy-day-tickets-43038642739?mc_cid=cff58659ee&mc_eid=7d8031c322

Help make this event a success and register early!

- To give the organizers enough time to make legislative appointments for you.
- To get the preparation materials to you before the event. This gives you a chance to understand the legislation and discuss it with others at your con-

Clean Energy Lobby Day at the State House

Feb. 14: The group met with staff of Rep. Louis Kafka, Sen. Walter Timilty, and Sen. Paul Feeney. Lobbying was focused on the omnibus bill - An Act to Promote a Clean Energy Future. The omnibus bill, which features numerous energy bills, is a statement of our need to fight for the health and safety of our communities. The bill will provide solutions to help Massachusetts reach the 2050 climate goals, which include CO2, methane and other global warming emissions reductions. Several advocacy groups participated in Lobby Day, including Mass Power Forward, Massachusetts Climate Action Network, Mothers Out Front, UU Mass Action, Sierra Club, Clean Water Action Massachusetts, and Elders Climate Action.

The next monthly meeting of the **Social Justice Committee** is on Sunday, March 4, 12 – 1:30 PM in the library. There is no formal process for becoming a member of the committee, and church members and friends are welcome to attend any meeting. Share your ideas and concerns there or contact one of the co-chairs, Elizabeth Siftar and Gare Reid. We encourage everyone who wants to stay informed about social justice initiatives at the state level to sign up for UU Mass Action's weekly updates (uumassaction.org).

Upcoming Dates:

Sunday, March 4, 12 Noon – 1:30 PM – Social Justice Committee Meeting (Library)

Sunday, March 11, 11:30 AM – Lunch making for Main-Spring House (Vestry)

Sunday, April 8, 12 Noon – 1:30 PM: Social Justice Committee Meeting (Library)

Tuesday, April 10, 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM: UU Mass Action Lobby Day



Clean Energy Group Feb 14 - UCS Social Justice Committee members Bri McElevey and Elizabeth Siftar with Laura Wagner, UU Mass Action Exec. Director, Paul Lausten and Matt Eiland. Bri, Elizabeth, Paul and Matt are members of No Sharon Gas Pipeline

Conversations At the Meetinghouse



On Writing *We Did It For You! Women's Journey Through History*

DR. THEA IBERALL

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2018, 7 PM

After the Women's March in 2017, many people joined into groups called huddles in order to keep the momentum going. When the Medfield Huddle was looking for an action, Thea Iberall offered her script of *We Did It For You! Women's Journey Through History*, the story of how women got their rights in America, told by the women who were there. Twenty women from history share their stories with a young girl who takes her freedoms for granted. Iberall wrote this jukebox musical in 2010 to encourage women, young and old, to take action in order to bring about a more balanced society. In this conversation, Iberall will share how she chose the characters and constructed the script to make it both educational and entertaining. She will identify the five areas in which women needed champions in order to gain rights.

Dr. Thea Iberall is an inductee into the International Educators Hall of Fame. In her work, she uses her ability to provide insights into how we can see the future by knowing the past and to teach through performance, the written word, sermons, and storytelling. Her musical *We Did It For You! Women's Journey Through History* was part of the California Women's Suffrage Centennial Celebration and premiered in Massachusetts in 2017 to standing ovations.

Conversations at the Meetinghouse is a monthly program held on the first Friday of each month (October to June) at 7PM where members of the community share their expertise and experience about important issues of the day.

Free and Open To Public

March 2018 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Please go to www.uusharon.org/calendars to reserve meeting space or to view the most up to date calendar. </div>				1 ESL 6pm (LIB) Personnel Committee 7pm (MIN) Ministerial Search Committee 7pm (VES)	2 Pot Luck Supper 6pm Conversations at the Meetinghouse 7pm (A/B)	3 Committee Chairs 9am (VES)
4 Family Worship Service 10am RE Classes 10:30am Worship Service 10:30am SJC 12pm (LIB) Reiki Support Group 3pm (A/B) Senior Youth Group 5pm (VES) AI-Anon Meeting 7pm (LIB) Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	5 Women's Grp I (Closed Grp) 7pm (LIB)	6 Children's Choir 5:30pm (VES) Meditation Group 7:30pm (LIB) Coming of Age Youth 7:30pm (A/B)	7 RE Committee 7pm (NUR) Book Group 7pm (LIB) Sustainable Sharon Coalition 7pm (A/B) Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (VES)	8 ESL 6pm (LIB) Second Women's Group 7:30pm (A/B) Men's Support Group 8pm (LIB)	9 JYFG Clay Night 6:30pm (VES) Movie Night 7pm (A/B)	10 Let's Laugh Today 11am (A/B)
11 Family Worship Service 10am RE Classes 10:30am Worship Service 10:30am Writer's Group 12pm (LIB) 3-4 grade field trip 12pm (OFF) Senior Youth Group 5pm (VES) AI-Anon Meeting 7pm (LIB) Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	12 Journey Group (Closed) 7:30pm (LIB) Massapoag Ukulele Group 7:30pm (VES) Building & Grounds 7:30pm (A/B)	13 Children's Choir 5:30pm (VES) Meditation Group 7:30pm (LIB)	14 Membership Com 3pm (LIB) Sustainable Sharon Coalition 7pm (A/B) Board of Trustees 7:15pm (LIB) Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (VES)	15 ESL 6pm (LIB)	16 Stewardship focus group 6pm (VES, A/B))	17 Stewardship focus group 8am (VES, A/B) Coffee House 7pm
18 Family Worship Service 10am RE Classes 10:30am Worship Service 10:30am Stewardship focus group 12pm (VES, A/B) Senior Youth Group 5pm (VES) AI-Anon Meeting 7pm (LIB) Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	19 Women's Grp I (Closed Grp) 7pm (LIB)	20 Children's Choir 5:30pm (VES) Meditation Group 7:30pm (LIB) Coming of Age with mentors 7:30pm (MULTI)	21 Caring Committee Meeting 7pm (MIN) Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (VES)	22 ESL 6pm (LIB) RE volunteer workshop "Move It!" 7pm (VES) Second Women's Group 7:30pm (A/B) Men's Support Group 8pm (LIB)	23 Art in the Heart 7pm (VES)	24 Youth CONFERENCE 3/24 8am – 3/25 9am (MULTI)
25 Youth CONFERENCE 3/24 8am – 3/25 9am (MULTI) Family Worship Service 10am RE Classes 10:30am Worship Service 10:30am Senior Youth Group 5pm (VES) AI-Anon Meeting 7pm (LIB) Covenant Sharing Group 7pm	26 Journey Group (Closed) 7:30pm (LIB) Massapoag Ukulele Group 7:30pm (VES)	27 Children's Choir 5:30pm (VES) GRASP 7pm (LIB) Meditation Group 7:30pm (LIB) Meditation Group 7:30pm (A/B)	28 Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm (VES)	29 ESL 6pm (LIB)	30	31



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

UNITARIAN CHURCH
OF SHARON
4 NORTH MAIN STREET
SHARON, MA 02067



*A Welcoming
Congregation of
the UUA*

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
WORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES
CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT
781/784-3652

SEND AN EMAIL TO
ADMIN@UUSHARON.ORG
OR VISIT US ON THE WEB AT
www.uusharon.org