

the chalice

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JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Friday, January 24

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JANUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

THEME: INTEGRITY

10:00 am Family Service

10:30 am Adult Service

January 5 "Whole, Holy, and Hole-y"

It's a new year, with the promise of a fresh start, a chance to make resolutions and fix what's amiss with ourselves. But aren't we always in process, always hurting, always healing, always messy, always whole in our brokenness? This morning we will embrace the things that make us unique as the beautiful gifts they are.

January 12 "Not to Save Our Souls But to Grow Our Souls"

In our work- and wealth-obsessed culture, we may confuse our self worth with our net worth. But the landscape of employment has changed drastically in our times, and we are reckoning with the impact of our economy on our selves, our communities, and our world. Our service this morning will reflect on the meaning of work with integrity given this difficult context.

January 19 "Being a Decent Human Being in a Time of Climate Crisis"

Given the magnitude of what we face in these times and the times to come, how do we moderate our personal and collective expectations with integrity and strive for new ways of being and new forms of moral assessment and moral imagination as Unitarian Universalists? This sermon is the second in a series that began with a prior sermon, "The Times They Are A-Changin'".



Guest Speaker Rev. Dr. Michelle Walsh, LICSW is a Unitarian Universalist community minister and shares a private justice consulting and spiritual coaching practice with her husband, Rev. Dr. Clyde Grubbs known as Tuckerman Creative Ministries for Justice & Healing. She also has worked as a scholar activist for many years in urban contexts, teaches as a Lecturer at Boston University, and is the author of *Violent Trauma, Culture and Power: An Interdisciplinary Exploration in Lived Religion* as well as chapters in other volumes.

January 26 TBA

Rev. Jolie will lead worship today, touching on our monthly worship theme of integrity. The specific topic is TBA. Stay tuned! Come to church, it will be great! :)



Monthly Brown Bag Lunch with Rev. Jolie Thursday, January 9 at Noon

No agenda, open to any church members, friends, and visitors. Please RSVP to minister@uusharon.org or (781) 784-3652 x2, if you are planning to come.

From the Minister



We all need a little help sometimes. When my cough morphed into pneumonia just after our December Revels service, I knew I needed to take the doctor's instructions to rest for at least a week seriously. I also felt confused. How could I rest? This was new to me, taking a break from the work I am honored and

called to do with you, the members and friends of the Unitarian Church of Sharon. Very quickly, you all and others in my community showed me the way. Our worship committee, adult choir, and other lay leaders did not hesitate to take over our Solstice service and Sunday worship. My colleagues immediately offered to be on-call in case of pastoral emergency. My friends and neighbors helped me get to the doctor, brought me soup, and helped me and Adam get our kid to daycare each day. And your messages poured in. I have felt all your love and care surrounding me. Thank you for your concern and well-wishes.

By the time this newsletter comes out I should be well on my way to recovery. That said, everyone I talk to about pneumonia - including my doctor - tells me it takes a long time to bounce back. I promise to take it easy upon my return.

This experience of getting sick, pushing myself a bit too hard, and getting a clear message to stop, has reminded me that it is counter-cultural in white supremacy culture to accept my limitations and ask for help. Over three decades ago, members of a training collaborative called Dismantling Racism Works built on previous generations of cultural work to identify the hallmarks of white supremacy culture. It may not surprise you that two characteristics of this culture are individualism and perfectionism. When we grit our teeth and do it alone, when we operate with a sense of urgency that squashes the possibility of collaboration, when messiness and mistakes seem unthinkable rather than part of being human, we might be under the spell of white supremacy culture. We have inherited an old tradition, famously described by sociologist Max Weber in the early years of the 20th century in his book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, that equates our self-worth and individual salvation with work, with the outward appearance of productivity and wealth. Creation groans under the impact of these centuries spent pursuing productivity and wealth, these centuries spent ignoring our commonalities for the sake of individual gain.

There is another way. Our UU principles ask us to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of all, to respect the interdependent web of existence of which we are a part. When we embrace our collective interdependence, when we recognize our inherent worth and dignity regardless of how much we have or how hard we have pushed ourselves, we are answering the call of

Unitarian Universalism, the call of humanity. Let us keep practicing our faith by continuing to take care of one another, resisting the impulse to do everything ourselves or expect perfection. As we head into a new year, a new decade, let us do so the most life-affirming way we know how: together.

And one final note: speaking of what we will do together, all of us in the UCS community are invited to participate in an online course, "Transgender Inclusion in Congregations." This course is a wonderful six-part video series produced by the Transforming Hearts Collective, and is grounded in the concepts of welcome and becoming the Beloved Community. Members of the Social Justice Committee and the Religious Education Committee are taking the lead on hosting sessions so people can view and discuss the videos together. I encourage you to stop by the Do It Now table to learn more and to sign up! See the [Social Justice Committee column](#) for more information.

Warmly,

Rev. Jolie Olivetti

From the Director of Religious Education



Things Change

I am sure that each of us has had that moment -- a beautiful day, a visit with a dear friend, a wonderful gathering -- that we wish would last forever. Inevitably, the sun goes down, the friend must leave, or the party ends. And

we're left with the memories of what was special in that moment. Such moments are bittersweet.

In June, I will retire from my work as your professional religious educator. When you hired me, I wrote a column for the Chalice titled "Am I DREaming?" because your job offer was a dream come true for me. I love working with this energetic, ever-changing, big-hearted, open-minded congregation. The adventures we've shared over almost 16 years!

In my retirement, I hope to pursue interests that I've had to shelve: travel, activism, and art. While I look forward to these new experiences, I am touched by the bittersweetness of the ending of a relationship that has been so very special to me.

I'm telling you now so that we have time to dwell in the bittersweet and say a robust goodbye -- and so that this congregation has the time to discern its needs before recruiting your next religious educator.

With gratitude,

Louise

From the President



2019 has been a year of wonder for me. Wonder at how to do the next good thing; the wonder of why people suddenly are gone; wonder in learning (and unlearning) new things. It has also been a year of hope - hope for a better world; a safe climate to grow and be in; and hope in the new people I meet. It's also been a tiring year

— one where I have to turn off the news, to find time away from the polarization we are experiencing as a country, and from the confusion of fact and fiction.

And yet, I end this year feeling that today is good. I get to watch my grandchildren grow, and my children parent. I see little ones in our congregation and schools learning about kindness, welcoming, curiosity, and tradition. I hear children speak their simple truth — heartwarming phrases like “that’s so cool,” “she is my friend,” and “I can do this.” I get to plant and care for many gardens, and make friends along the way. There is much that I am grateful for, and I find I’d like to focus on that gratitude as we close the year.

I am grateful for this church and the community we have built here.

I am grateful for the chance to contribute and to lead.

I am grateful for our Board and our Committees and all the volunteers that make the church thrive.

I am grateful for the hard work volunteers did last year to find a wonderful, settled minister for us.

I am grateful for Louise and the RE Committee and the tremendous work they do providing a good education for our children and youth.

I am grateful for my husband, my family, my friends, and my health.

And, I am grateful that in 2020 we have a chance to build a better world.

I leave you with words from an evening prayer in the Mishkan T’Filah:

*We are called unto life, destiny uncertain.
Yet we offer thanks for what we know,
for health and healing, for labor and repose,
for renewal of beauty in earth and sky,
for that blend of human-body which inspires compassion,
and for hope: eternal, promising light.
For life, for health, for hope,
for beautiful, bountiful blessing,
all praise for the source of being.*

May we move forward into the new year with hope and gratitude. Happy New Year!

Susan Olson Drisko
President

Dear friends:

We are so grateful for Louise's many years of service, and we congratulate her on her retirement! We are sad to see her go, but she has shepherded our Religious Education program wisely for many years, so we are in good shape for the transitions ahead of us.

Louise informed the board of her plans to retire in June 2020 at the board meeting on Wednesday, December 11. We asked the board to keep the news in confidence so Louise could tell the RE Committee in person at their meeting on Monday, December 16.

She has given us plenty of time to do the important work we need to do now: say goodbye, celebrate Louise, and search for a new religious education professional to serve our congregation. We will assemble a transition team early in the new year, and begin collecting information from the congregation about the Religious Education leadership we seek, to inform our search process.

We look forward to doing this work with you. If you have questions or are energized to engage with this transition process, please know we will be fully ready to have these conversations early in the new year. For now, Rev. Jolie is on a week of sick time (see previous message about pneumonia), followed by a week of vacation. She will be back in action on January 2, 2020!

Yours in faith,

Rev. Jolie Olivetti, Minister, UCS
Susan Olson Drisko, UCS President

Twelfth Night Open House and Yankee Swap at McGregors

Beth and Rory McGregor will open their home at 52 Upland Road on Saturday, January 4th, from 5 to 9 PM for their traditional Twelfth Night Open House and Yankee Swap. We'll provide hot mulled cider, cold punch and a few snacks. You're invited to drop in at any point, bring a tidbit for the table (preferably finger foods) and if you'd like, a wrapped gift you'd like to recycle and take your chance at swapping for something you'd rather have. All are welcome, but be aware that parking is scarce, with the driveway reserved for those with mobility limitations and parking not allowed on Route 27, so you might have to hike in from a side street or the train station.

Religious Education News

January in RE

We welcome the New Year in our Religious Education classes!

The **Preschool-Kindergarten** children will learn about the chalice and its important role as a symbol of love, peace and joy to UUs. They will make chalice necklaces to wear and fruit chalices to eat. They will learn that all kinds of people can be friends and will express their caring for others by making cards for people who are sick or lonely.

The **Grade 1-2** students will begin the new year with the **3-4 graders** for one class devoted to the gift of oneself: time and love is the most important gift of all. On January 12th, they will delve in to their first experience of *Our Whole Lives* curriculum and will learn about their bodies, gender constancy and roles.

The **Grade 5-6** students will learn about non-violent civil disobedience before their class transitions to **Grade 3-6** on January 12th. Together they will build community by cooperatively solving a puzzle in a human knots game; create a petition for an issue that is important to them; and play a game that will allow participants to experience being excluded/excluders and protected/protector.

The **Grade 7-8** students will embark on their study of Islam as they continue their exploration of world religions. A major part of this month's session focuses on the Five Pillars of Islam. The students will explore the fascinating similarities and differences between Islam and UUism. On January 26th, the class will visit our neighbor, the Islamic Center of New England.

Leslie Cox, Administrative Assistant

Coming of Age meetings in January

THE THEME: **Good and Evil**

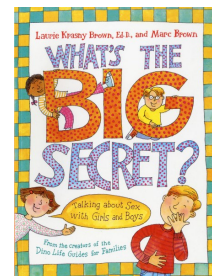
Tuesday, Jan 7: Youth only

Tuesday, Jan 21: Youth and Mentors

Please bring your journal to every meeting!

Our Whole Lives for Grades 1-2 starts in January

We launch the Our Whole Lives (OWL) comprehensive sexuality education program for first and second graders on Sunday, January 5, with a parent-child orientation. At least one parent per child needs to attend this program in order to give informed consent about their child's participation. In addition to learning what happens in the class, parents will be oriented to the weekly homework assignments.



OWL 1-2 families are encouraged to pick up a copy of Laurie Krasny Brown's *What's The Big Secret*, the read-along book for this class.

Jan 5: Parent-Child Orientation 12:30 - 3 pm. Optional family luncheon from noon to 12:30. Childcare will be available for siblings. Click here to RSVP: [RSVP for Orientation/Luncheon/Sibling Child-care](#) Please note that there is no charge for the luncheon, childcare, or orientation.

Jan 12, Our Wonderful Bodies 1: 10:30-11:30 am

Jan 26, Our Wonderful Bodies 2: 10:30-11:30 am

If you have questions about OWL, please contact Louise Marcoux.

RE Volunteer Enrichment Workshop: Games for Group Development



Want to learn more about how fun and games can strengthen the bonds between group members or shift group dynamics? Twinks Hastings, game leader extraordinaire, will lead a work/playshop for YOU on Saturday, February 29, at 2 pm. RSVP on the RE Bulletin Board in the Vestry or by clicking on this link: [RSVP for Games with Twinks!](#) Please save the date for this fun and highly informative program. Twinks Hastings is the Director of Religious Education at First Parish Brewster.

Contacting the RE Office in January

Louise Marcoux will be out of the office from January 6 to January 17. During this time, you will be able to reach Leslie Cox, our Administrative Assistant, in the RE office on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 am to 3 pm. Leslie's email is adminassist@uusharon.org.

Normal RE office hours are Tuesday through Thursday from 9 am to 5 pm, and by appointment.

Religious Education News, continued

YOUTH GROUPS

Senior Youth Group

Meets on Sundays from 5-7pm in the Observatory (aka Nursery). Senior Youth Group is open to any and all individuals in grades 9 - 12 and folks are encouraged to bring friends! This past month we drank a lot of hot cocoa, had a game night, lit candles and celebrated festivals of light. Upcoming in January are more games and planning the PanWaff Breakfast!

Junior Youth Fellowship Group

In December, JYFG got cozy drinking hot cocoa and singing along to Moana! In January, JYFG will be trying to solve puzzles at Boda Borg! JYFG meets once a month and is open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders in our congregation.

Have questions about our Senior and Junior youth programs? Interested in volunteering to help with the groups or have a student who might be interested in joining? Email our Youth Coordinator Katie Byron at yc@uusharon.org.



Endowment Committee

The Endowment committee has the goal of increasing and preserving the church's endowment. Our endowment is money that has been donated, usually in the form of bequests, for the purpose of enhancing the church's operating budget in perpetuity. This is accomplished by the rule that only 4% of the amount of the fund can be distributed each year and then only when the fund is at least \$50,000.

Currently there is just over \$22,000 in the fund and the committee has the goal that the fund will grow and become an important part of the church's finances. An endowment fund is a long range project. Our goal is to encourage church members to name the church in their wills or estate plans, or as a beneficiary of their IRA, or insurance policy. Over time these planned gifts will accumulate and the next generation of churchgoers will benefit. Furthermore, if times become hard, the endowment will ensure the church's survival.

Building an endowment is an important part of supporting the church. We give money each year to the church not only because of what we get personally from the church community but as a gift to others in the church community, those not yet in the community, the towns that the church serves, and the world at large. We support the endowment fund because we want that gift to continue after we die. We are the recipients of a gift from those who supported the church over the last 250 years and we need to pay it forward for those who will come to the church 250 years from now.

More information is available online at the uusharon website: About US -- Committees -- Endowment. Or email endowment@uusharon.org

Pam Baker-Webber, Endowment Committee Chair



Snowy Revels - photographer Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks

A little kid needs YOU!

A call for volunteers: Would it do your heart good to hold a baby every once in a while? Our nursery providers would appreciate the help of on-call volunteers to assist in the nursery when attendance is high. We've been blessed with a solid cohort of infants and toddlers -- and when numbers rise past 6, we like to have a third adult in the room. It's hard to predict when this will happen, but we want to be prepared when the time comes. We hope to develop a pool of on-call nursery volunteers. It's a once-in-a-while commitment that supports our growing congregation. Background check required. Safety training provided. Get more information or sign up by clicking here [Sign up here](#) or on the RE Bulletin Board in the Vestry.



January Programs

Music and Arts

Notice the change of venue
for the Coffeehouse!

Not Just Another Coffeehouse

Contra-Square Dance

Saturday January 11th 7PM, \$15

First Congregational Church: 29 North Main Street

No Dancing Experience Required



The Resemblance will provide live music and Paul Wilde will be the Caller. The Resemblance is Anne Magee and Oliver Farrell, a mother and son duo. Anna, a life-long musician, has been playing with Oliver for about 10 years, ever since he started learning the fiddle. Both are members of two large New England contra dance bands, and various other groups and ensembles. The dance will be beginner friendly Paul Wilde will walk us through each dance before the music begins to play and then tell us what to do during the dance. It will be loads of fun.

The 2019 UU Theater Nights



Join us for Dead Man's Cell Phone at Mass Music and Arts Society (MMAS) on Saturday, January 25 at 8:00pm for this oddball comedy. An incessantly ringing cell phone in a quiet café.

A stranger at the next table who has had enough. And a dead man – with a lot of loose ends. The play was awarded a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play and will bring a welcome break from the winter blues! If we have enough participants we will begin the evening with a private pot luck reception at 7:00pm. Please let me know if you can join us. Tickets are \$28 for non-members/\$26 for members. Friends and non-members are welcome! Contact Pat McDougal for more information.

There are also **two tickets available for this show through the Caring Committee** – if you'd like to try out this fun event and cost is currently an issue keeping you from attending, please reach out to the MMAS -Caring Committee Liaison, Evelynne Swagerty, or let any member of the Caring Committee know. If we have more requests than tickets, we will randomly draw a ticket recipient and notify you in-person or via email.

Here is the rest of the season:

DEAD MAN'S CELL PHONE Sat. Jan 25

NOISES OFF! Sat. Mar 21

BLITHE SPIRIT Fri. June 19

Children's Choir meets regularly on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30pm in the vestry. Pizza included. Performing in church twice a month. The choir does not meet when the school is out. Questions? Contact Forbesy at forbesyrussell@hotmail.com or 781-201-9533.

Support Groups

Al-Anon Meeting - An 11th step Al-Anon group meets at UCS each Sunday evening at 7:15pm. It is an open meeting.

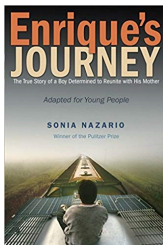
Men's Group is a group for men who are members and friends of UCS. We gather on the first and third Monday of each month at 8 pm to talk about our lives and topics of mutual interest. We are open to new members. If you're curious please feel free to drop in on one of our meetings. For more information ask Jon Slavin (jslavin37@gmail.com) or any other group member.

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

January Programs, continued

Interest and Discussion Groups

Book Group – will meet again on January 8, 2020 (rather than New Year's Day) at 7pm in the Nursery to discuss **Enrique's Journey**, by **Sonia Nazario**, the true story of a Honduran teen who faces hardships and peril when he decides to try to find his mother, who migrated to the US 11 years earlier.



We usually meet at 7pm on the first Wednesday of each month in the church library. Everyone is welcome, whether or not you've read the book.

Let's Laugh Today: "Let's Laugh in the New Year at Let's Laugh Today" on Saturday, January 11th at 11am and Wednesday, January 22nd at 7:00pm in Program Rooms A/B. You can attend one or both of these free hour sessions! Laughter Yoga is now seen as a credible complimentary health therapy that provides a workout exercise program for people of all ages and all levels of physical abilities. New laughers are always welcomed! You can sit or stand. There are no poses, just yogic breathing. Please bring your water bottle because laughing can be dehydrating. Led by Certified Laughter Yoga Master Trainers, Bill and Linda Hamaker. If you have any questions, just call them at 508-660-2223 or e-mail e-mail billandlinda@letslaughtoday.com. See www.letslaughtoday.com.



Meditation Group meets weekly. It is an open group, available to anyone who cares to give it a try. We meet Tuesdays at 7pm for one hour of silent meditation. The one-hour period is divided into two sitting periods with an optional period of walking meditation in the middle. This division also allows participants to join us for just 30 minutes of meditation and then leave, without any disruption, instead of (or after) the walking meditation. Please call Susan Allison or Ray Wallace with any questions.

Movie Group will watch **The Commitments** on January 10, 2020 at 7:00 pm. Funny, musical and occasionally dramatic, this is the story of tumultuous rise and fall of a Dublin Soul band, The Commitments, managed by Jimmy Rabbitte, an unemployed wheeler and dealer with a vision to create "The Worlds Hardest Working Band".

Seeing White: is a discussion space in which white people are able to explore what whiteness is and how whiteness operates in our society. Our January meeting happens on Sunday, January 26 at 7:30 pm. Participants are asked to listen to the Scene On Radio podcast Episode 40 (Seeing White, part 10): "Citizen Thind" prior to our meeting.

Writer's Group – Meets on second Sunday of the month, at noon 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.

Sexuality Education -- it's not just for kids anymore!

Do you have the sinking feeling that youth from this congregation end up with far greater LGBTQ awareness than you have?

Remember, they have the benefit of coming of age in a far different culture than you did. And they have had the benefit of participating in Our Whole Lives -- where all questions are welcomed AND answered thoughtfully and completely.

Finally there's a program for adults who want to catch up to our youth on Transgender Awareness. It's called Transforming Hearts and it's coming to our congregation in January.

Why is this so important? The experiences of the past year have demonstrated that many, many well-meaning UUs, including the editor of *UU World*, *lack the awareness and communication skills necessary to be truly affirming and welcoming toward transgender members of our congregations.*

Transforming Hearts is about helping open-minded, loving-hearted people live out their belief in the inherent worth and dignity of each person. Sometimes it is hard to see how our well-intended words and actions can inadvertently hurt and exclude the very people we hope to welcome and affirm. The videos and group discussions offer ways of moving beyond what we think should work to what actually promotes connection.

Don't wait until a loved one comes out as transgender to embark on this learning journey. Prepare yourself for that moment by participating in Transforming Hearts in 2020. Click here to sign up or get more information: [Transforming Hearts online sign up](https://transforminghearts.org/sign-up)

Louise Marcoux, DRE, she/her/hers

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



Here is the latest SJC news about what's happening in the area of social justice here at the UCS. We all participant in these efforts, one way or another, and working as a community, our impact is felt within and beyond our walls. Learn more about

some of the current projects that you might want to keep an eye on this month:

Brown Envelope donations



Every month the SJC selects a program, cause or organization working towards social justice, and we offer congregants a chance to support their work via our Brown Envelope donations when we pass the plate during services. We attempt to reach out

to a range of recipients, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, on a wide range of topics.

For November, the Brown Envelope collection donations to **BIJAN, the Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network**, (www.beyondbondboston.org) raised \$1,018.30. "We provide accompaniment, which can include support in court or at ICE check-ins, legal referrals, fundraising for bond or legal fees, letters of support from the community, rides for families to visit loved ones in detention, and logistical assistance with paperwork or bond payments. We also help with housing, transportation, and other immediate needs of people released on bond who have no other resources in the community."

During December, we are once again supported the **5 local food pantries** in our surrounding communities of Foxboro, Walpole, Norwood, Canton and Stoughton/Sharon through the Brown Envelope program. Our gifts, delivered after the holiday season, are especially appreciated as pantry staffs report that January is often a particularly lean donation period for them. And, as has been our tradition for many years, the entire collection from our Christmas Eve services was donated to the **Father Bill's & MainSpring House** program for the homeless in our area. Your support for these efforts is greatly appreciated.

In January 2020, the Brown E collection will go to support the work of the **Equal Justice Initiative** (www.eji.org), an Alabama based organization led by Bryan Stephenson. The EJI is committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting the basic human rights of the most vulnerable people in America.

Stay tuned for a new movie to be released on 10 January: "**Just Mercy** is a powerful true story about EJI, the people we represent, and the importance of confronting injustice. Based on the bestselling memoir by EJI director Bryan Stevenson, Just Mercy presents the unforgettable story of Bryan Stevenson (Michael B. Jordan) and the case of Walter McMillian (Academy Award winner Jamie Foxx), who was convicted and sentenced to death for a crime he did not commit. Just Mercy has won several awards at film festivals and is slated to receive the National Board of Review Freedom of Expression Award in January. Some scenes in the movie were shot in Montgomery and feature local landmarks."

The 5C GROUP

Responding to Climate Change through Curiosity, Compassion and Connection

The 5C Group grew out of a much needed space where we could come together and share our emotions and thoughts about the devastation our planet is facing, born from the disconnect that has occurred between humans and nature. While each meeting focuses on a different topic, each one is designed to create a safe space to share authentically our own relationship to nature as well as what we are experiencing as a result of climate change. In this sharing, we lean on the support of each other and by processing various emotions, such as grief, anger, guilt and powerlessness, we set an intention to leave feeling more hopeful, resilient and empowered to move forward and take the action that is needed to save our planet, each in our own way. Our next meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Sunday, February 23, 2020** after coffee hour and we invite you to join us. Currently, childcare is not provided, however if we know in advance that it is needed, we will try to arrange for such care. If you would like more information about the 5C group or would like to be added to our group email list, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose.

Upcoming Dates:

Sun, 5 January - SJC monthly meeting, Library, noon

Sat, 11 January - CommUnity Closet coverage, 9:00am – 1:00pm

Sun, 12 January - MSH lunch making, Vestry, 11:30am

Wed, 15 January - Environmental Advocacy Day, State House, Boston, 9am-1pm

Mon, 20 January - MLK Jr Day

Fri, 24 January - Safe Communities Act Hearing, State House, Boston, 11am

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continues

Transgender Inclusion Workshops



The Do It Now Table this month will once again have sign-up sheets available for the **Transforming Hearts**

Collective 6 session online course-Transgender Inclusion in Congregations. The course is designed to deepen an understanding of gender and transgender identities and provide additional skills and practices to help create a truly welcoming congregation and Beloved Community. Come find out more about the course and the various ways you can engage in it and let us know which ways and times work best for you. Whether you choose to attend a meeting hosted at church or form your own group outside of church, we are looking forward to your participation!

For the last few weeks, the Transforming Hearts working group has been inviting congregants to participate in an online course created by the Transforming Hearts Collective entitled **Transgender Inclusion in Congregations**. The course is geared toward people from generally LGBTQ-welcoming congregations or faith groups who want to deepen their understanding of gender and transgender identities and create Beloved Community. There are six sessions, each of which includes a 45- to 60-minute lecture by Rev. Mykal Slack and Zr. Alex Kapitan, reflection questions, and resources that take the conversation deeper. The lectures are all pre-recorded so there are various ways to engage in the course, either in a group setting or individually. Our hope is that most of you will choose to meet in group settings in which we can learn and grow together, sharing our reflections and responses to the lecture material and creating a space of deep and enriching conversation.

Please come to the Do It Now Table during coffee hour to learn the different ways to engage in the course and to sign up for a date and time that works best for you. Specific dates in January for reviewing Session 1 of the course will soon be added to the church calendar. If you are unable to attend a group meeting or prefer to watch the videos individually, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose for the code needed to access the materials. Whether you choose to attend a meeting hosted at church, form your own group outside of church, or watch the lectures individually, we are looking forward to your participation!

Also **MARK YOUR CALENDARS** to attend church on Sunday, March 29, 2020 as we are excited to have Zr. Alex Kapitan share the pulpit with Rev. Jolie on that day and provide a workshop related to the course, *Transgender Inclusion in Congregations*, after coffee hour. More information will be provided in the February newsletter.

Update on the Safe Communities Act New Hearing date Friday, 24 January

We are committed to protecting the safety of everyone in the Commonwealth, no matter where they are from. The **Safe Communities Act** will help ensure that everyone in Massachusetts, regardless of immigration status, can get emergency services, contact the police, or enter a courtroom without fear it will lead to deportation. When communities have strong relationships with law enforcement, fewer crimes go unreported, and individuals seek necessary help and medical care. Law enforcement should focus their limited resources and time on ensuring the safety of our communities and enforcing local laws. Our communities are safer when victims and witnesses know they can report crimes and serve as witnesses without fear of being deported. Massachusetts has a long tradition of standing up for the dignity of all. The Safe Communities Act ensures that all people in our Commonwealth enjoy the same protections under the law.

Working with guidance from UMass Action (uumassaction.org), the UCS remains involved in this ongoing effort, including recently orchestrated letter writing and phone campaigns, and sending attendees to the legislative hearing on the Safe Communities Act, rescheduled for Friday, 24 January, 11am at the State House. Stay tuned for more information as this vital legislation moves forward. Thank you for supporting the Safe Communities Act!

Gifts for Kids 2019

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2019 **Gifts for Kids** program. Over 1200 children and youth in our region will be having happier holidays thanks in part to your efforts.



Gifts for Kids 2019 - one of the many piles of donations gathered to support kids and youth in our communities - Thank You!

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continues

An Overview of the December 6th Climate Strike

by Sebastian Armstrong, Youth Activist
Intro and edits by Gare Reid, SJC Co-Chair

[The newly formed Blue Hills Chapter of the SUNRISE Movement meets monthly at the UCS, and their recent participation in the Climate Strike and Rally in Boston is reported here:]

"Despite the freezing cold, dozens of Sharon High School students joined the latest national school climate strike on December 6th to demand a right to a livable future.

"As students and teachers arrived for another Friday at Sharon High, they were greeted by bold messages written in chalk on the sidewalk and a line of students holding hand painted signs and singing: "We're gonna strike for life and everything we love, we're gonna strike for you, will you strike for us?" No one could ignore us.

"We marched from the high school chanting, "This is what democracy looks like!" and arrived at the Sharon Unitarian Church at 8:15. We decided to have the rally indoors. During my speech I explained why we need to keep on striking in order to build a mass mobilization to win the Green New Deal.

"After the rally, our march continued to the train station, where we found many commuters waiting outside for the train. They definitely seemed surprised to see us there. We arrived early at Copley Square for the Boston Climate Strike. After an hour, we congregated in front of the library and began chants such as: "Get up, get down, keep the fossil fuels in the ground!" The cold air carried our voices far, and at the sound of "get up"

everyone lifted their signs and sent a wave through the crowd.

"Following the rally, we started a mile-long march to the statehouse. I held up a yellow sign of the Sunrise shield, and with the rest of my group from Sunrise Blue Hills, we found our way to the front of the march. When I turned around, all I could see were hundreds signs and faces of young climate activists. We felt unstoppable.

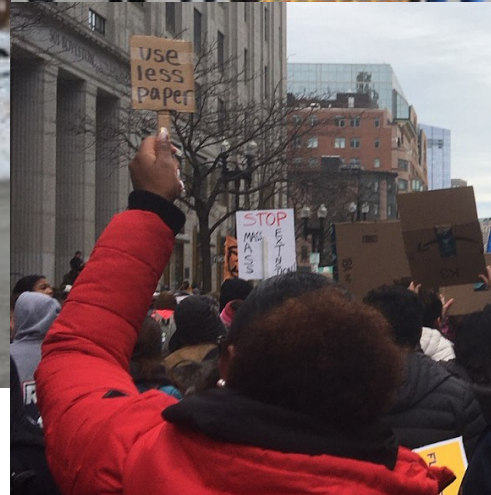
"We made history during our direct action at the statehouse. Even from the bottom floor, you could hear the echo of chants and the stomping of feet. We congregated in front of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and began chanting "Who's house? Our House!" repeatedly. It felt as if the chants would never die down until a speaker came forward from the crowd, holding up a gavel above his head. He cited several pieces of leg



Overview of Climate Strike, Continues on page 13

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continues

An Overview of the December 6th Climate Strike, continues from previous page



islation that are yet to be passed in Massachusetts which promote climate justice and could make our state 100% renewable by 2035. He asked the crowd for a motion to vote: "All in favor, say Aye." The deafening "Aye!" from the crowd that followed seemed to send a shockwave through the walls. A slam of the gavel shattered the silence afterwards, and the speaker said, "The bill passes unanimously." The crowd exploded. For the next three hours, Sunrise Boston continued the action by sitting in on Governor Charlie Baker's office. Our demands were for him to support the Green New Deal and to agree to pass the Mass Power Forward bills. I did not see Charlie Baker there, but we kept chanting nonetheless and without losing energy. One chant went, "Hey Baker, we've got something to say: If you don't have a plan you've gotta step out of the way!"

"I stayed at the statehouse until 5:00 at which point I had to leave or risk arrest; many people decided to stay for longer though and overall 27 people were arrested at the sit-in! Even if the turnout from Sharon was far less than before due to the weather, I feel that the last strike on Dec. 6th showed Massachusetts that we're very determined and will never give up. For certain, we'll be back and striking with millions of activists across the country on Earth Day. Standing strong together, we will never be defeated."



Climate Strike - a message that brought many smiles on the streets of Boston!



SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continues

Green Tips from the last month and a New Year Tip:

December 1

Frustrated by those piles of extraneous catalogs arriving in the mail, especially at this time of year? Take a moment to contact the vendors of those that you simply toss straight into the recycle bin and ask to have your name removed from their lists. Your mailbox will thank you, the vendor will be better off, and Planet Earth and her forests will be the big winner - it takes just a few minutes to fix this one!



December 8

Did you know that most wrapping paper is made from freshly cut trees? Unlike many other papers it is not recyclable so its ends up in the landfill or is incinerated. Please consider alternative gift wrapping options <http://greenblizzard.com/2010/12/17/conservate-your-use-of-holiday-wrappings/>.

December 15

Having trouble finding the perfect gift for someone? Please consider donating to a worthy charity or cause that is important to your loved one instead of purchasing stuff they may not want or need. Not sure which charity to trust? Go to the Charity Navigator website and check out their ratings of many organizations. <https://www.charitynavigator.org>

December 22

Did you know that using egg replacer is a way to green your holiday baking? Check out these healthy egg substitutes. <https://www.onegreenplanet.org/natural-health/the-healthiest-egg-substitutions-for-holiday-baking/>

New Tip for the New Year

Planning your New Year's Eve Party? **Don't buy noise makers.** Most of these are throw-away, and are a complete waste of materials. Instead, opt for good old banging on pots and pans, or shaking tambourines or maracas. Check out this website for other tips. <https://www.mnn.com/family/family-activities/stories/ten-tips-for-a-green-new-years-eve>

If you have comments or suggestions please contact Tawnya Smith at createforpeace@gmail.com

Ongoing Social Justice opportunities: Ongoing Social Justice opportunities: you can support social justice causes in other ways as well: visit the Social Justice Corner in the Vestry, following Sunday worship services, where you can buy Fair Trade coffees, chocolates and other items, as well Shopping for Justice supermarket gift cards in various denominations for Shaws, Stop & Shop, and Big Y (+/-5% of the value is donated by the stores and stays with the church to help fund our social justice projects in support of people who experience food and housing insecurity). We also collect non-perishable food items for the local Food Pantry in the front Lobby, along with toiletries for the overnight guests of MainSpring House homeless shelter in Brockton. Once a month we also assemble 100 bag lunches for MSH. Clothing items for the CommUnity Closet are always welcome (drop-off in the Vestry). Don't forget to learn more about our monthly suggested offering for a worthy cause via our Brown Envelope donation program, and keep an eye out for our occasional Do It Now action requests at Coffee Hour for participatory efforts on a range of topics. Together, we can make real changes in this ailing world of ours!



Solstice Service, Dec 20, 2019 led by Adult Choir and Jennifer Spencer, the Choir Director

Take a Step for Positive Change

Are you concerned about racial & economic justice?

Are you looking for a way to connect with others who also care & want to make a difference?

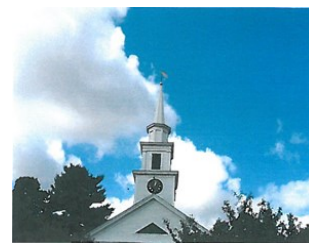
If so, we invite you to make your voice heard by attending the **Voices for Action Social Justice Forum**. Voices for Action is part of a community action campaign organized by **Sharon Interfaith Action** that is bringing local people together to identify and take action on a justice issue identified by people living in or nearby Sharon.

Voices for Action Social Justice Forum
Sunday February 9th 3-5pm
Temple Sinai
25 Canton Street, Sharon MA

If you're interested, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose or Janet Schmidt for more info and to schedule a 1:1 conversation with a member of Sharon Interfaith Action.

Sharon Interfaith Action was created in 2017 to reach across economic, racial and class divides to develop relationships and partner with people most directly impacted by injustice. SIA currently has membership from seven local congregations.

Conversations At the Meetinghouse



Join friends of Sustainable Sharon Coalition and the UCS Social Justice Committee at *Conversations at the Meetinghouse* Friday, January 3, 2020!

REDUCE: Less is More in 2020

6pm Potluck Dinner*

7pm Conversations at the Meetinghouse

Bri McAlevey will speak about transitioning to more of a plant-based diet to reduce our carbon footprints.

Paul Lauenstein will speak about the Sharon Solar Network and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels.

Linda Orel will speak about reducing habitat loss in our area.

Kathi Mirza will speak about reducing waste!

The event will take place at the Unitarian Church of Sharon, 4 North Main Street. Contact Ellen Bordman eesbordman@gmail.com or Elaine Price elaine.price160@gmail.com for more information.

*Did you know that reducing the meat and dairy that you eat can reduce your carbon footprint? Even modest changes in your diet can make a difference because of the energy-intensive way that meat is produced in factory farms and because livestock is fed with grain that requires energy and chemical-intensive methods to produce. Vegetarian and vegan dishes can also help you to increase the vitamins and minerals in your diet as well as beneficial fiber.



Please consider bringing your favorite vegetarian dish (no meat, but with eggs and dairy) or vegan dish (no meat, eggs, dairy, or animal products like gelatin) to share and join in our efforts to green our practices at the Unitarian Church of Sharon.

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.

January 2020 Calendar

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

CALENDAR

To view up to date calendar and to reserve a meeting space please go to

<http://www.uusharon.org/calendars/month/>

1

Adult Choir
7:30pm (VES)

2

ESL 6pm (LIB)
Personnel
Committee 7pm
(MIN)
Ukulele Group
7:30pm (LIB)
Grades 1-2 Team
Transition Meeting
7:30pm (B)

3

Potluck Dinner
6pm (VES)
Conversations
7pm (AB)

4

Committee
Chairs 9am
(VES)

5

Religious Education 10:30am
(multi)
Family Service 10:00am (SAN)
Adult Service 10:30am (SAN)
Our Whole Lives 1-2: Parent-Child
12pm (ABC, NUR)
SJC meeting 12pm (LIB)
Senior Youth Group 5pm (NUR)
AI-Anon 7:15pm (LIB)
Covenant Group I. 7:15pm (VES)

6

Women's
Group I. (At
Capacity) 7pm
(LIB)
Men's Group
8pm (A)

7

Children's Choir
5:30pm (VES)
Coming of Age
Youth 7:30pm
(AB)
Meditation Group
7pm (LIB)

8

Book Group 7pm
(NUR)
Board of
Trustees 7:15pm
(LIB)
Adult Choir
7:30pm (VES)

9

Brown Bag Lunch
with Rev. Jolie 12
pm (VES)
ESL 6pm (LIB)
Women's Group II.
7:30pm (LIB)

10

Movie Night
7pm (A/B)

11

Let's Laugh
Today 11am –
noon (A/B)
Circle Supper
(OFF)
Coffeeshouse 7pm
(Congregational
Church)

12

Religious Education 10:30am
(multi)
Family Service 10:00am (SAN)
Adult Service 10:30am (SAN)
Writer's Group 12pm (LIB)
Starting Point 12pm (AB)
Senior Youth Group 5pm (NUR)
AI-Anon 7:15pm (LIB)

13

14

Children's Choir
5:30pm (VES)
Meditation Group
7pm (LIB)
Membership
Committee 7pm
(VES)

15

SUNRISE
Movement
5:30pm (AB)
Adult Choir
7:30pm (VES)

16

ESL 6pm (LIB)
Ukulele Group
7:30pm (LIB)

17

18

19

Religious Education 10:30am
(multi)
Family Service 10:00am (SAN)
Adult Service 10:30am (SAN)
Senior Youth Group 5pm (NUR)
AI-Anon 7:15pm (LIB)
Covenant Group I. 7:15pm (VES)

20

Women's
Group I. (At
Capacity) 7pm
(LIB)
Men's Group
8pm (A)

21

Children's Choir
5:30pm (VES)
Coming of Age
Youth and
Mentors 7:30pm
(multi)
Meditation Group
7pm (LIB)

22

Let's Laugh
Today 7pm (AB)
Caring
Committee
(Closed) 7pm
(MIN)
Adult Choir
7:30pm (VES)

23

ESL 6pm (LIB)
Green Team
Meeting 7pm (AB)
Women's Group II.
7:30pm (LIB)

24

Chalice
DEADLINE

25

Rental: Kinraide
9:30am (VES)
UU Theater Night
8pm (OFF)

26

Religious Education 10:30am
(multi)
Family Service 10:00am (SAN)
Adult Service 10:30am (SAN)
Senior Youth Group 5pm (NUR)
Seeing White I. 7:30pm (NUR)
AI-Anon 7:15pm (LIB)

27

Religious
Education
Committee
7pm (B)

28

Children's Choir
5:30pm (VES)
Meditation Group
7pm (LIB)
Coming of Age
Youth & Mentors –
Make Up 7:30pm
(ALL, but Library)

29

Transgender
Inclusion 7:15pm
(AB)
Endowment
Committee 7pm
(LIB)
Adult Choir
7:30pm (VES)

30

ESL 6pm (LIB)



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