

the chalice

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
**A Welcoming Congregation
of the Unitarian
Universalist Association**
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DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

THEME: HOPE

10:00 Family Service - December 5th, & 19th
10:30am Adult Service every Sunday

For Zoom information [click here](#)
For Order of Service available the Friday before the service [click here](#)

December 5 "Risking Hope"

Hope can be risky. Maybe it feels easier if we just "don't get our hopes up." But to be without hope is bleak. The times we live in call us to cultivate a hope that is not naive but rather strong and enduring.

December 12 "The Return of the Light"

Six Sources Series: Earth-Centered Traditions

Our Unitarian Universalist religious tradition draws from six sources, including earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life. Today, we turn our attention to traditional winter celebrations which can help us find warmth in the cold and light in the long nights.

December 17 "Solstice"

In person Solstice service returns . . . with some adjustments. The choir will recreate our beloved Solstice service on Friday, December 17 at 7:30PM in the sanctuary. We're all looking forward to singing together again.

December 19 "Revels"

In this time of short days and long nights, let us come together to revel in the things that bring joy and light at this time of year. This service, featuring the young people of UCS, retains some of the traditional elements of the UCS Revels service in a simple yet meaningful way.

December 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 6:30 PM

Join us for our traditional service of carols and candles as we celebrate all the hopes that the Christmas season brings.

December 26 TBD- No services in Sharon, but we'll be invited to worship remotely with one of our nearby UU partners, either Canton or North Attleboro. More information to follow in upcoming weekly Chalice's."

From the Minister



Dear Ones,

I am glad to be coming back from parental leave. It strikes me that, though I am leaving my cozy-at-home days where I have been nesting with little baby Margo for four months, I am also returning home. Home to UCS, home to our mission to grow in mind and spirit while we reach out and serve the world, and home to you all. I want to thank Rev. Tricia, our staff, and lay leaders for all your work in service of our congregation during my leave. I know that I am returning to a congregation that has been cared for with love.

Thank you for the baby gifts, beautiful cards, and messages of congratulations. And of course, thank you for the beautiful quilts! Adam and I were blown away when Rev. Tricia brought them over. They add color and warmth to our house, and bring us many smiles. I'm including some pictures of Margo enjoying her quilt further on in this newsletter.

This time has been very special for our family. Margo is thriving and June is adjusting to being a big sister. It was very good for me to be able to focus so fully on the two of them during the first few months of Margo's life. These kids delight and challenge Adam and me in new ways each day. Thank you for your support which made this parental leave possible.

I hope to reconnect with you over the next several months, whether it be by phone, visiting, or at church. There is much to catch up on: church committee work, social justice in our community, supporting our new staff, the latest precautions and procedures as we continue to try our best to keep each other safe in the ongoing pandemic. These are all vital parts of my ministry, but also, I don't want to lose this question in the mix: **how is it with your spirit?** At almost every UCS meeting I've ever attended we begin with a check-in, an open time to share, even briefly, how things are going in our lives. This is part of how we are church together. We live in a difficult and beautiful world. Our care for one another's spirits as members of a covenantal community helps us move through the difficulty and see the beauty.

Yours in faith and love,

Rev. Jolie

MARGO ENJOYING HER NEW QUILT FROM UCS



Thank you for the beautiful quilts! ~Rev. Jolie

From the President



MAKING THE MOST OF THE SEASON

Let there be light! The hanging lamp between the columns at the front of our church has been dark for the past month. To the rescue comes high school senior Nolan Howard. Bulb replacement is the solution and requires setting up the tallest ladder that the church owns to reach the light fixture. I offer my help, but Nolan says, "I got this!" and within 24 hours the front of our church is beautifully illuminated at nighttime.

Let there be a role model for perseverance! Another high school senior, Daphne Theiler, nailed first place in the state cross-country finals with a story that impresses. Nearing the finish line, she saw the lead runner within striking distance. Not normally one to sprint, she reached deep and found that extra energy to overtake and win first place. This caps a running career that has become her passion. The Boston Globe reported this story with a major headline in the Sports section on Sunday Nov 21st. Congrats to Daphne!

Let there be a coffee hour after the worship service! Our DRE Christine Bulman worked with the church school to stage this hallowed event on the patio right outside the front doors of the church.



Sunday Nov 21st witnessed churchgoers enjoying one another's company while sipping freshly brewed Equal Exchange coffee and nibbling on rolls prepared for the occasion. Adults and youth mingled for almost an hour after the worship service before heading home.

And let us welcome back our minister, Rev Jolie, from her parental leave! Can you believe that 4 months have elapsed since we were together last? Careful planning prior to giving birth to Margo, her second daughter, brought Rev Tricia Brennan back to UCS Sharon as our parental leave minister. Even with the challenges of Covid, the congregation has persevered by reopening the church safely and starting up worship services and RE programs. Now as the Winter Solstice approaches, we celebrate Rev Jolie's return and look forward to the New Year with thanks that all is well!

Rory McGregor

December 5th there will be an outdoor coffee hour to celebrate Rev. Jolie's return.



We hope to see you there!

PIC•COLLAGE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Fall Outdoor RE Program Draws to a Close

After a year and a half hiatus, the religious education program at UCS started back up in September. Really, we're making history. It's likely that the RE program has been in continuous operation since its inception. The halt, as we know, was abrupt and unexpected. Starting something back up after an unplanned, lengthy break is one thing. It's another to reboot amid a number of limitations. But we did. Sunday morning programming has been less frequent and more fluid. OWL and Youth Groups are off to a great start. This fall has been successful because everyone involved has been open, flexible, and willing. This in fact is the "success". Adjusting our expectations and focusing on being together on Sunday mornings has yielded many simple, delightful moments of discovery and connection. I wish I had more photos that capture those moments to share with everyone, but the lack of photos, ultimately means we were all truly present in the moment. Deep gratitude to the RE Committee, volunteer teachers, families, and staff that committed themselves to bring us back together this fall despite the challenges. I have no doubt that we will continue to show up wisely and creatively as we continue to make our way back into religious education programming in a new world.

In Faith,

Christine



This picture of Eden with the beautiful seeds we harvested from the Three Sisters Garden, speaks to the "seeds" we have created in our return to RE this fall. Let us tend them with care this winter and may we plant our humble beginnings in fertile soil this spring, whether indoors or out, and watch our program evolve to new heights.

Senior Youth Group Cookie Decorating Party



Calling all high schoolers! Join us for a cookie decorating extravaganza on December 12th in the vestry!! This is just one of the events that our SYG has been planning for the new year. We look forward to seeing you there!

December Revels



This winter celebration of Light will return to UCS this December complete with a barn, special stories & music, and glowing Santa Lucias who along with their cohort will remind us of the reasons we come together to light candles of peace, love, and hope.

The accompanying theme this month is Simplicity. For those whose children will participate, we will continue to show up with openness, flexibility, and an expectation of joy! Here is the schedule:

December 1	6:30 pm	Santa Lucia Zoom meeting of 7th and 8th graders
December 5	10:30 am	Children's REvels fun and creativity, vestry
	12:00 pm	8th-grade costumes and planning, vestry
		7th-grade costumes only (prior to OWL), vestry
December 12	10:30 am	Children's REvels fun and creativity, and run-through, vestry
	12:00pm	7th & 8th Planning and Rehearsal, vestry
December 19	8:30 am	7th & 8th Bun-baking, location tba
	9:30 am	7th & 8th grade Santa Lucia Rehearse in the Sanctuary
	10:30 am	Revels Service
	11:30 am	Santa Lucia Buns available for congregants!

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

Claudia Fox Tree Program:

Settler-Colonist Ties to Thanksgiving and Columbus: The Indigenous Perspective

If you missed this powerful program on 2 November due to technical problems with the virtual broadcast, there is a limited time opportunity to see it again in full. This was an educational presentation that dispelled inaccurate information, addressed the myths surrounding Thanksgiving and Columbus, and provided missing historical facts from the Indigenous perspective. The presentation transformed what we have been taught about the Indigenous experience and highlighted the resiliency, contributions and enduring impact of First Nations in order to develop a common memory of historical events. Presented by the Sharon Racial Equity Alliance (SREA) and co-sponsored by

- Sharon Historical Society
 - Medfield Together
 - Mass Audubon
 - Action Together Walpole
- **Social Justice Committee, Unitarian Church of Sharon**

“We hope that you found this event to be as rich and thought provoking as we did. SREA recognizes that many people had difficulty locating the link and apologize for any inconvenience that may have caused. For those that were unable to attend the program or would like to view the presentation again, we are sharing the recording. The below recording is temporarily shared with you as a courtesy for your personal viewing only. No downloading, duplication, sharing or dissemination is allowed. The presenter and hosts have placed their trust in you by allowing the presentation to be recorded and viewed on a temporary, limited basis. We ask that you please honor their trust by abiding by these restrictions.”

**<https://vimeo.com/641933830>
Password: SREA-Foxtree2021**



We are proud that the Unitarian Universalist Association recognizes the Unitarian Church of Sharon as a Welcoming Congregation. As part of this distinction, and in conjunction with our goal of building the Beloved Community, the Social Justice Committee is pleased to share the news that UCS is deepening our commitment to justice by implementing a long-overdue realignment of the current societal norm of restroom

labels with binary gender signage. A recent unanimous vote by the Board of Trustees has approved the proposed changes, and after a period of time for congregational reflection and discussion, we anticipate making the change to gender-neutral signage for all of our restroom facilities.

Currently, there are two identical but separated 2-stall restrooms upstairs, one for ‘women’, the other for ‘men’, along with two single stalls restrooms for anyone to use at the lower level. The proposed plan is to designate all restrooms for “all genders.” The bathrooms downstairs can also be used for people who prefer a private space or aren’t ready yet for this change.

We anticipate that there will be some who are more comfortable than others with the prospect of sharing a 2-stall room with another person of an unknown gender, and this reluctance is understandable, based on our past cultural reluctance to recognize the reality of gender diversity. Our proposed changes will flip the assumptions that so many of us have grown up with, and assert the respect for each individual to use our facilities equally. As a nod to this potential level of discomfort, we propose adding signage outside of the upstairs, 2-stall rooms indicating that there are single stall rooms available on the lower level, giving everyone the opportunity to choose the privacy that a restroom for one person allows. Given the HC access at both levels, and the presence of the elevator, that gives everyone equality of options, and removes the potentially hurtful and disrespectful signage that we currently have in place.

The SJC is planning for a number of opportunities to discuss and reflect on this change in labels in a range of formats, including small groups, Sr and Jr Youth gatherings, and via existing church committees. Depending on what we hear from the congregation, we hope to install the new restroom labels in early 2022. We look forward to hearing everyone’s thoughts and reactions to this plan.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee encourages you to visit the UCS website (uusharon.org) for all the latest news and updates on what's happening for social justice at church. The Social Justice pages are a great source for the most up to date information on events, opportunities to engage, resources, and for links to partner organizations and groups that we collaborate with in our work.

Brown Envelope Collections

For October, the Brown Envelope donations supported the **Indigenous Environmental Network** (ienearth.org). IEN was formed by grassroots Indigenous Peoples and individuals to address environmental and economic justice issues. IEN's activities include building the capacity of Indigenous communities and tribal governments to develop



mechanisms to protect our sacred sites, land, water, air, natural resources, health of both our people and all living things, and to build economically sustainable communities. Donations totaled \$503.80 for their work.

Our Brown E recipient during November was the **Gifts for Kids** program, an annual effort to support regional families in economic distress during the holiday season (www.giftsforkidsma.org). Once again, due to Covid19 restrictions, the tradition of shopping for specific children and their wish lists has become a fundraising effort that will allow our community support agencies to help individual families shop for their children this holiday season. If you gave to the program in past years, you likely have received a donation request in the mail. This year, please consider a donation to this worthy program (established over 30 years ago by our own Pat McDougall!), by either sending a check to the church, using our online payment portal, or sending a check directly to GKF.



UCS support for Gifts for Kids was once again strong this year; perhaps we will be able to shop for individual children again in 2022!

The Brown Envelope recipient for December will be **NeighborWorks Housing Solutions** (www.nhsmass.org). Health and well-being start with having a safe and affordable home in a stable and opportunity-rich community, and NeighborWorks promotes these condi-

tions by developing housing, and by providing housing resources and education in collaboration with partners in the public and private sectors. Their services include rental assistance; emergency financial help; shelter and homelessness prevention; first-time homebuyer education and counseling; financial coaching; foreclosure prevention; affordable residential and small business loans; and construction and management of high-quality rental housing across Southern Massachusetts.

During our Christmas Eve service/s this year, whatever Covid will allow, we will once again devote the entire collection that night to the work of **Father Bills & MainSpring House** in Brockton (<https://helpfbms.org>) to support their work on behalf of the homeless population in our region.

Food Pantry Donations:

Our ongoing special collection for the Sharon/Stoughton Food Pantry, and 4 other local pantries in adjacent towns, has raised over \$47,350 to date. As the Covid pandemic continues to unfold, the needs at our local food pantries continue to expand, and they are grateful for our support. Donations by check to the church are converted to Shopping for Justice grocery cards (and that means that we can increase your donation by the 5% discount that we get from the stores), which the pantries then distribute to their guests. This effort for over 1½ years has been truly astounding – thank you to all who have participated.

And a tip of the hat to Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks who recently coordinated the drop off of our grocery cards and food stuffs at the Sharon/Stoughton Food Pantry. Ellen made an extra delivery that day of some home baked treats for the devoted staff of the Pantry who work behind the scenes to make the process as helpful as possible for their recipients – we all owe those dedicated volunteers our thanks for their work month after month. Thank you Ellen (& David) for showing them some UU love.

Workshop on Relationships Across Difference

Please join Sharon Pluralism Network for a virtual, interactive workshop on **Tuesday** evening, **December 7th** from 7-8:30pm on **Cultivating Authentic Relationships Across Difference**. The workshop will be led by Judy Kaye, a diversity practitioner with 25 years' experience who has designed and conducted hundreds of workshops on diversity and inclusion and effective communication. The workshop is intended to answer a number of important questions:

- 1) Why is it so hard to cultivate these authentic relationships?
- 2) What obstacles get in the way?
- 3) Why does it matter?
- 4) Why is it important - to me?

For more information and to register for this important event, please use this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cultivating-authentic-relationships-across-difference-tickets-208694800767>

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued**FT Marketplace – 15 December,
Wednesday, 3-5pm – in time for (some)
Holidays!**

Until Covid allows us to return to the Vestry for after-service Coffee Hour on a regular basis, the SJC will continue to offer our monthly Fair Trade Marketplace for pre-ordered coffee, chocolates, other special food items, as well as Shopping for Justice grocery cards. Look for an email to the congregation in early December for details about what, when and how to order, and then stop by the church on 15 December between 3 & 5pm to gather your goods. Thanks for your patronage – all profits support various Social Justice projects and programs.

CommUnity Closet update:

Our 5 Point Cluster program for distributing donated clothing remains in limbo. Behind the scenes a team of volunteers from all of the churches continues to evaluate plans and scenarios for resuming the program, but for the time being, we are unable to accept clothing donations.

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CHURCH NEWS**IN MEMORIAM: LINDEN FINGERSON**

It is with great sorrow that we mourn the death of our dear friend and fellow church member Linden Fingerson. We will miss Linden's sense of humor, strong moral compass, and beautiful singing voice, among many other wonderful things about them. Rev. Tricia was in touch with their family to learn that Linden's wishes were for an outdoor memorial in the warmer months, so Rev. Jolie will work with the family and our congregation to plan such an occasion.



For the first time in 20 months, we enjoyed a coffee hour on the patio after the service on November 21. The event was put on by RE, but any committee, group, or individual is welcome to host an outdoor coffee hour!

CHURCH NEWS, continued

UCS Room Reservation Procedure for Events and Meetings

Submit room reservation request on the church calendar. Person who submits the request will be responsible for compliance with the following guidelines.

Occupancy limits for rooms are listed here and posted outside the entrance to each room.

Program Room A – 14

Program Room B – 12

Program Room A & B – 22

Program Room C – 12

Vestry – 30

Nursery - 9

Library – 10

Sanctuary – 50

Masks are required.

Social distancing at 6 feet is required.

Window (s) open at least half-way. This is still under review by Buildings & Grounds.

No food or drink allowed, except bottled water.

Turn on air purifier. Set temperature for room thermostat. Turn off both before leaving.

List name of your event and all attendees with contact info (phone or email) and leave on Admin desk in church office. Use back side if additional space is needed.

NAME OF
EVENT _____

DATE _____

ATTENDEES listed below
CONTACT INFO listed below

Staying Connected!

When you're doing something or discovering something new that's particularly enjoyable, do you ever wish you could share it with fellow members?

If you would like to help keep people engaged during this challenging, and often isolating time, organizing or helping to organize an event, online or off, the Fellowship Committee is here to help!

While we would love to have new members, you do not have to join us to offer an event.

Just send an email to any one of these addresses to let us know!

Gautam Trivedi <gpatri2005@gmail.com>, Jennifer Theiler <jennytheiler29@gmail.com>, Kate Slater <kate.zlater@gmail.com>, Lauren Grasso <lkgrasso@gmail.com>, Nathaniel Plumridge <natplum@gmail.com>, Patty Fitzgerald <pmfitzie@gmail.com>, Rev. Jolie Olivetti <minister@uusharon.org>, sadie dussault <sadiedussault@gmail.com>, Susan Edinger <susanedinger@yahoo.com>.

Thanks!
Fellowship Committee, at your service

DID YOU KNOW?

There are TWO church email notification systems you can sign up for? The first is for official business and is only used by church administrators for important announcements, snow days, etc.

The OTHER is the Social List, where you get notified - or can notify others - of opportunities and fun events coming up

sooner than you might have thought, so they don't pass you by

in the crazy hubbub of life!

It's easy to join! Check it out here!

How do I sign up for the Social Discussion list?

Simply send an email to social-subscribe@lists.uusharon.org or [click this link](#) You will receive a confirmation e-mail and instructions for what to do.

CHURCH NEWS, continued

The Not Boring Book Group

For our **December 1st, 7pm**, session in the Virtual Library, the Not Boring Book Group has chosen Chaim Potok's ***Davita's Harp***.

Potok's only book with a female protagonist, ***Davita's Harp*** explores the confrontation between secular fundamentalism (communism) and religious (Jewish) fundamentalism in the 1930s and 1940s, and the impact on individuals committed to them. Everyone is welcome to join us, whether or not you've finished (or even read) the book.

The link to the virtual library session is <https://zoom.us/j/6525468701?pwd=b2JuMlI5TVJzWTNHZ2ZyUzVYcFh1dz09>

Conversations at the Meetinghouse

Sustainable Sharon Coalition presents Reimagine Our World: Reimagine the recycling bin, the shared roadway, the power grid and our relationship to nature

Friday, December 3rd, 2021 @ 7 PM

Zoom Meeting Hosted by: Unitarian Church of Sharon
<https://zoom.us/j/8492141385?pwd=c051YkIVUGtOOFN1V21MVXFBRXplQT09>

Meeting ID: 849-214-1385

Password: 3652

Join us for four mini-presentations on hot topics such as: What the heck should we be putting into the recycling bin? How can Sharon improve transportation safety through Tactical Urbanism? What's Sharon's solar status and Sharon Power Choice? How to weather the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, also known as COP26?

Eve Carey, Recycling Coordinator, Town of Sharon and Sharon Public Schools;

Michael Littman, Transportation Engineer at the Volpe Transportation Center;

Silas Fyler, Board Member, Town of Sharon's Energy Advisory Committee;

Shawn Moriarty, Education Coordinator and Camp Director, Moose Hill Audubon Sanctuary

Conversations at the Meetinghouse is a monthly program held 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

Monthly Stewardship Meeting

December 5th @ 12:15 pm - 12:45 pm

Please join the Stewardship Committee for a 30-minute conversation with Vail Weller, the Congregational Giving Director of the Unitarian Universalist Association. She'll be talking about a theology of generosity and how this relates to congregational stewardship.

Join the Zoom Meeting using the browser in your computer:

[https://zoom.us/j/8492141385?](https://zoom.us/j/8492141385?pwd=c051YkIVUGtOOFN1V21MVXFBRXplQT09)

Caroling by the Campfire

December 12th @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Bundle up! and bring your preferred hot or cold beverages (spiked or smooth), as well as chairs, and we'll gather around

the firepit to engage in one of the most enjoyable traditions of the Christmas holiday season - caroling. We'll have as many firepits as we need to keep comfortably distanced. Wood contributions are welcomed!

Questions? pmfitzie@gmail.com - Patty Fitzgerald for the Fellowship Committee.