

# the chalice

Published by the  
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**A Welcoming Congregation  
of the Unitarian  
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## SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

10:00 Family Service / 10:30am Adult Service

For Zoom information [click here](#)

For Order of Service [click here](#)

## September 11 Water Communion

Join us for our annual ingathering service in honor of water. All are invited to bring water and share with us your answer to this question: "how does this water feed your soul?" Wherever this summer has found us, close to home or roaming far, we are grateful to return to church, coming home like rivers to the sea. Rev. Jolie leads worship today. "Intergenerational service at 10:30 AM; no Family Service today."

## September 18 The Language of Prayer

What are prayers and what difference do they make? Some of us do not cultivate a regular prayer practice in our lives, while others may find ourselves praying all the time. Whether or not we have ever found prayer meaningful, we can find meaning in considering the question of today's service: what is prayer to a Unitarian Universalist? Rev. Jolie leads worship today.

## September 25 Owning Our Mistakes

This week the High Holy Days begin, a time of reflection and atonement in the Jewish tradition. What benefit can we gain from a spiritual practice that includes atonement? How can we admit to and learn from our faults without losing sight of our goodness and dignity? Rev. Jolie will draw on the writings of Bryan Stevenson, lawyer and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative in considering how these questions apply not just to us as individuals but to our nation as well.

## From the Minister



Dear Ones

Have you ever heard just the words you needed to hear? I heard the words I needed to hear at Sunday Morning Worship at this year's General Assembly, which I attended in Portland just a few months ago. Rev. Gretchen Haley led us in worship and spoke to this moment, this strange and sometimes difficult time in the lives of our congregations, when we are navigating what COVID has wrought. Rev. Gretchen spoke to the reality that across geographies and across religious traditions, our houses of worship are changing in the wake of and the ongoingness of the pandemic. She spoke to what many of us are feeling about our congregations right now: the burnout, the grief, the worry. And she also reminded us that we need church. For the comfort, the challenge, the community, the spiritual sustenance, the principled witness in a world crying out for all of us to heed our obligations to one another.

Change is normal in the life of a congregation. People move, people move on. The wheel of life keeps on turning. But right now it's like these kinds of changes are on steroids. You might be looking around the church and wondering, where is everyone? You might be just as involved as ever, just now you do so virtually. You might be reading this column as someone who hasn't been back to church in a while, wondering if you will ever feel ready to return.

To each of you I want to say this: Wherever you are at in all these changes, it is OK. It is completely normal that everything feels completely abnormal. And I also want to say this: the Unitarian Church of Sharon is here for you in all of this. We are still here, and we are ready to wholeheartedly welcome everyone who comes through our doors and everyone who joins us online. And we're ready to welcome newcomers. We hope you join us at our Open House on September 24 from 2 pm to 4 pm for an afternoon of fun, fellowship, and showing visitors what we're all about.

Yours in faith,  
Rev. Jolie

p.s. You can now book appointments with me at [www.calendly.com/revjolie](http://www.calendly.com/revjolie). I look forward to meeting with you!

## From the President



I write this in August heat and preparing for our second board meeting.

What a delight seeing so many of you at the August worship service! It was comforting that everyone there was masked. I had never been to a drum circle before, so that was interesting, too. The service made me realize how close we are to resuming weekly services again . . . a month! Who knows where we will be Covid-wise by then.

I want to say again how honored and humbled I am by your trust in me in electing me your president for the fourth time. I will strive to deserve that trust. My phone and my email are always available to you if you have something to suggest or correct. My contact info is on the church website and in this newsletter. Let me hear from you!

I started attending services in this church in 1995. That is before some of our members were born. The minister then (part time I think) was Doug Kraft. I remember him playing the guitar. We called the Rev. Deborah Cayer after that, and I was president towards the end of her tenure. We celebrated her 10th year with us. I was president when we called the Rev. Tricia Brennan as our interim. Then we had the Rev. Jim Robinson and then I was on the search committee which called first the Rev. Wendy Bell as interim and then our current and very dear Rev. Jolie. And during Rev. Jolie's maternity leave we were glad to welcome Rev. Tricia again. Two of those ministers had lengthy and successful ministries here.

When Deb announced her departure, we were in the early stages of the AIM project which resulted in our accessibility and our new addition. There was some concern about our ability to carry on. I remember that at the meeting after that announcement I said, and Deb seconded, "The church is not the minister!" Reflecting on that list of ministers, and sensing the continuing cohesiveness and power of this beloved community, I think again that "The church is not the minister." We are a powerful and organic whole, a whole that includes all of us in all our theological diversity, and that includes skilled and professional ministry. Hallelujah!

*Valerie White*

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### From the Interim Director of Religious Education

I am filled with hope and enthusiasm as we enter in to this year poised to welcome Caroline Dixon into the Youth Ministry position, to implement a dynamic new elementary-aged model, and to offer some of Unitarian Universalism's premier tween and teen programs: Coming of Age and Crossing Paths (formerly Neighboring Faiths).

The third and final year of religious education interim, this year demands focus as you determine what you are looking for in your next DRE and assemble a search team. To that end, I will be asking you to articulate your vision so that you can put it out there to the world.

It is a time to step in, to breathe life into the future you envision for the RE program and for the church, as congregational life is enriched by active participation of children, youth and families.

I believe the journey toward a renewal and rebirth of the religious education program is well underway. The key to your success lies not just in the professional leadership you invest in, but in your own investment of time, effort and love. This program is made possible only by the cooperative effort of church members.

I look forward to working with you all this year.

In faith,  
Christine

### Hello from our new Youth Ministry Coordinator:



My name is Caroline Dixon and I am the new Youth Ministry Coordinator for the Unitarian Church of Sharon. I was raised in UU churches (Kingston and

then Sharon) and was able to meet most of my close friends through Youth Ministry program-

ming. Since turning 25, I have been a youth group advisor for the SiCoRockWell Senior Youth Group. I was also an adult advisor for the Youth Empowerment & Spirituality Conference at Star Island in the summer of 2021. I am looking forward to working with the UCS youth to build a community full of learning, growing, and fun!

### September Religious Education Calendar (includes important dates for Sharon public schools)

**September 6:** 6:45pm RE Committee meeting, all welcome

**September 8:** 6:30 SpiritPlay Facilitator Training

**September 11:** Intergenerational Ingathering 10:30am Worship service, all ages. Childcare for age 4 and under.

5:00pm Senior Youth Parent Open House on Zoom

**September 13:** Sharon High Open House (Tuesday)

**September 18:**

10:00am Family Service

10:30am Children's Orientation to SpiritPlay, Middle School Orientation to Crossing Paths

11:45am Orientation to SpiritPlay for Families, Orientation to Crossing Paths for Parents and Caregivers, Junior Youth Check-in

5:00pm Senior Youth Group

**Sept. 20 Sharon schools Early Childhood Open House**

**Sept. 21 Sharon schools 7 & 8 Open House**

**Sept. 22 Sharon schools Grade 6 Open House**

**September 25:**

10:00am Family Service

10:30am SpiritPlay, Crossing Paths

12:00pm Coming of Age Orientation for youth and families.

5:00pm Senior Youth Group

**Sept. 26 - 28 Rosh Hashanah No School (Mon-Wed)**

**Sept. 28 Sharon Elementary Open House**



## SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee encourages you to visit the UCS website ([uusharon.org](http://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

The June Brown E recipient was the Massachusetts chapter of GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, <https://www.glsen.org/chapter/massachusetts>). GLSEN Massachusetts is a grassroots initiative, working locally in our communities to ensure safe schools for all students, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. There are 43 Chapters around the country doing this important work. Our chapter supports students and educators locally, organizes around LGBTQ affirming public policy, plans teacher trainings, and hosts events for students, educators, parents, and allies. Generous donations last June came to \$1,542.80. Thanks to everyone who chose to support this vital work.

As we had only infrequent and informal gatherings at church on Sunday mornings this summer, there was no regular Brown E collection for July and August. However, some funds were donated, and the Minister's Discretionary Fund was chosen as the recipient for this period. This fund allows Reverend Jolie to support various needs within the UCS community as well as special cases that come to her attention.

Our Brown Envelope collection in September (starting the Sunday after Labor Day) will be directed to our Partner Church in Gyulakuta, Tran-

sylvania. For many years, our congregation has supported fellow UUs in Romania. The money we raise via our Brown Envelope Collection in September pays for a musician during their worship service and for a copy of the monthly Romanian Unitarian magazine for each family, as well as other urgent projects. They are enormously grateful for this support. Caution: we only have 3 services in September to support this effort - please give soon!

### Food Pantry Donations:

Our ongoing special collection for the Sharon/Stoughton Food Pantry (and now including the Community Food Pantry managed by the Congregational Church of Sharon) plus 4 other local pantries in adjacent towns, has raised over \$55,500 in the 30 months since the economic impact of Covid began to take hold. As the pandemic evolves, the needs at our local food pantries continue, 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. And we of course continue to accept canned and other staple food items in the collection bins at church: kid snacks, canned soups and ready-to-eat cereal are especially requested. As we endure the 3rd year of the Covid pandemic and related economic uncertainty, this ongoing effort by our community is making a real difference in the lives of our neighbors. Thank you for your generosity!

**NOTE: Raccoons have found their way into the outdoor collection bin, with a passion for boxed cereal. Please leave only canned goods outdoors, with soft packaging donations left indoors (use the inside bin, or inside the vestibule please!).**

## ***SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued***

**MainSpring House** lunch making rolls on! Summer breaks don't stop us; Covid didn't/ doesn't make us blink; we push through economic turmoil like it's soft PB&J. Since we last had a 'normal' Coffee Hour inter-generational lunch making effort for the guest of the shelters in Brockton, way back in the spring of 2020, the UCS community has kept our commitment to provide monthly brown bag lunches for up to 120 folx in need. That's over 3,000 healthy meals (or some 6,000 slices of bread!) assembled and paid for by your efforts. We fundraise to do this with our Shopping for Justice program (S4J), where we ask you to purchase grocery cards from local chain stores for your personal shopping needs. We buy the cards in bulk, and get a 5% discount, which funds the lunch program (your grocery purchases are one-to-one, dollar for dollar, since the 5% donation comes from the stores). Since Covid hit, we have used a range of solutions to keep our commitment each month, from single families 'doing it all', to family 'pods' taking home kits to assemble lunches in the safety of their own kitchens, to RE social justice teamwork projects, to hands-on hunger ministry gatherings on Sunday mornings during our breaks, all of which keep us rolling. As we resume Sunday morning gatherings this fall (still a hybrid option for the services, not so much for lunch making), we will attempt to restart our tradition of second Sunday Coffee Hour lunch making in the Vestry. Wash your hands, grab a mask, and find your spot in the assembly line! And if you and your household happen to eat food yourself during the rest of the month, consider joining our Shopping for Justice program – cards are on sale at Coffee Hour, as well as through our monthly Fair Trade Marketplace on the 3rd Wednesdays of the month. Your grapes and tuna fish will taste better if you purchase them with a

S4J card – many people say it, so it must be true!

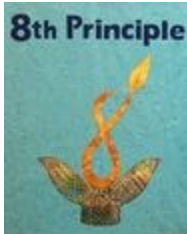


### **FT Marketplace – Wednesday, 21 September, 4-6pm**

In addition to our Social Justice Table during Coffee Hour each Sunday morning following the services, the SJC will continue to offer our monthly Marketplace for pre-ordered coffee, chocolates, other special food items, as well as S4J grocery cards. As we enter the fall, we will offer pickups on the 3rd Wednesday afternoons each month. Look for an email to the congregation for details about what, when and how to order, and then stop by the church on 3rd Wednesday afternoons to gather your goods. Thanks for your patronage – all profits support various Social Justice projects and programs, and our S4J program funds the 90 bag lunches that we assemble and send to the MainSpring House homeless shelter in Brockton each month.

**SJC Meeting for September:** the monthly SJC meeting will be on Sunday, September 11th at 12:15pm. Look for the link in the UCS Calendar this month. We will continue to offer zoom participation, while some folx may be ready to resume gathering in the physical Library for masked face-to-face conversation! There are plenty of topics in the news and events at home and around the world that will call for our attention as we enter the new church year – please come to our meetings, bring your passion and energy, and help us chart a path forward as we work to help heal our ailing world.

## 8th PRINCIPLE



The 8th Principle reads in full: *"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."*

Having adopted the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle at our annual meeting last June, we now have the important work of addressing what that means for our congregation and how we implement it. This is a topic that the members of the Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG), along with Rev. Jolie, have been addressing over the last few months, and it is one which has led to deep, complex and stimulating conversations. While we have talked about a variety of ways in which we can apply the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle here at UCS, it is clear to us that we are being called to do this work on both a congregational level and an individual one, **as well as** within and beyond our walls.

To give true meaning to our adoption of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, it is the hope of the ARWG

- 1) That everyone at UCS – whether in their leadership capacity as Board Members and Committee Chairs, or as individual congregants - feels called to engage in the work of anti-racism and other anti-oppression work in a way that most resonates with them.
- 2) That congregants understand, as stated in the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, that our commitment to "accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions," is intertwined with our spiritual growth, both as individuals and as a congregation practicing Beloved Community.

In order to manifest our hope into a reality, the ARWG's goal is to provide opportunities for everyone to feel invited into this journey and to work together as a whole, supporting one another and holding one another accountable. We understand that as individual congregants, we are not all at the same place in our understanding of, or our experience with, anti-racism work or other types of anti-oppression work. We range from those who are looking to take immediate action on a large scale to those who have had limited exposure to anti-racist work and are looking first and foremost for more education and spaces for deep discussion, perhaps even starting with fundamental questions raised by the **Article 2 Study Commission** at GA this year. Questions such as: What do you consider to be key values of Unitarian Universalism? Or What is missing from our current covenants or faith language?

While we are still in the process of planning specific activities and events, one current opportunity is to join our Exploring Dismantling Racism discussion group which meets on Wednesday mornings at 10am. [See calendar for more information.] We understand that not everyone who may be interested in joining such a group is available at that time so we are willing to explore other times to meet. If you are interested, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose.

We also had planned to provide a more structured opportunity to engage in this work using the **Study/Action Guide** related to the **Widening the Circle of Concern** report issued by the Commission on Institutional Change. While we may still do this, we also now have the opportunity to use the feedback forms developed by the Article II Study Commission which were provided at General Assembly this year. **Be sure to check the weekly Friday Chalice for upcoming opportunities and specific dates.** If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose.

### 8TH PRINCIPLE TIMELINE

#### 2013:

· An 8<sup>th</sup> Principle was initially called for in 2013 by Paula Cole Jones (founder of ADORE - "A Dialogue on Race & Ethnicity" and former president of DRUUMM - "Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries") who was joined by her friend Bruce Pollack-Johnson, a member of the UU Church of the Restoration in Philadelphia, in creating the first draft of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle.

#### 2017 (June) - General Assembly:

· A refined draft of the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle, with input from a number of UU anti-racist activists, was first recommended for adoption by the UUA at the 2017 General Assembly (an official vote is scheduled for the 2023 GA).

· The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) **Commission on Institutional Change** was established and charged by the UUA Board of Trustees to conduct an audit of white privilege and the structure of power within Unitarian Universalism, and analyze structural racism and white supremacy culture within the UUA.

#### 2020:

· The Commission's audit resulted in a report entitled **"Widening the Circle of Concern,"** which was completed in February of 2020.

· A new **Article II Study Commission** was fully seated and convened by the UUA Board of Trustees with the instruction to review Article II, which includes the UUA Bylaws, Principles and Purposes. The instructions specified that the Commission, in reviewing the current Article II and in recommending changes, was to use the essence of the findings in the "Widening the Circle of Concern" report and the call by the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle to "accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions." For more information on these presentations click on this link: <https://www.uuworld.org/articles/ga-considers-article-ii>. If you would like links to the recorded presentations, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose

#### 2020-2022:

· Since being appointed in 2020, the **Article II Study Commission** has been actively conducting its study, part of which has been to seek participation and input from individual congregations and individual UUs.

#### 2022 (June) -General Assembly:

· Based on the feedback it received and numerous internal conversations, the **Article II Study Commission** made a number of presentations regarding the different elements of Article II (Purpose, Freedom of Belief, Values, Covenant, Inclusion and Inspiration). The presentations included theological reflections, current drafts of proposed Article II revisions, and a request for feedback on the thoughts, ideas and questions shared during these presentations. The feedback forms raise important questions which can serve as helpful tools in helping us engage in the journey as put forth in the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle.

#### 2023-2024

· In January of 2023, after continued discussion of proposed changes to Article II based on feedback received on their 2022 GA presentations, the Article II Study Commission will present the Board of Trustees with its recommended proposal. It is then expected that the proposal will be presented at the 2023 UUA General Assembly where a simple majority vote will allow it to go forward at the 2024 GA for a final vote. For the proposal to be adopted at the 2024 General Assembly, a two-thirds majority vote will be required.

## UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022

NEW SECTION: **UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2022 – Submitted by Barbara Nelkin-Rose**



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
MULTIPLATFORM / PORTLAND • 2022

Those of us who attended this year's UUA General Assembly met with Rev. Jolie in August, to share our thoughts, impressions and experiences and discuss what we thought was important to bring back to the congregation.

During our discussion, 2 major themes arose:

1. The importance of understanding that, while General Assembly meets for only a few days over the summer, GA is actually a year-long process and one which genuinely seeks input from individual congregations and congregants. In this regard, we have set an intention to engage our own congregants in this process early on allowing for reflection and feedback on issues that will be addressed at the 2023 GA.

2. We should use the impressive presentations offered by the *Article II Study Commission during GA, as tools to explore our own thoughts and reflections about what Unitarian Universalism means to each one of us individually and as a congregation AND how that understanding impacts the actions we take both within our own walls and beyond. The presentations focused on 6 different elements of Article II (Purpose, Freedom of Belief, Values, Covenant, Inclusion and Inspiration) and included theological reflections, current drafts of proposed Article II revisions, and a request for feedback on the thoughts, ideas and questions shared during these presentations. We plan to review/discuss at least some of these presentations as a congregation during the upcoming year, so be sure to check future monthly newsletters and the Friday Weekly Chalice for specific events. If you are interested in reviewing any of the presentations sooner or on your own, you can find them by [CLICKING HERE](#). The Article II Study Commission was given the task of reviewing Article II, including the UUA Bylaws, Principles and Purposes, and to then report their findings and recommendations at the 2022 GA. In conducting their review, they were specifically instructed to keep in the forefront the 2020 report "Widening the Circle of Concern" written by the Commission on Institutional Change which focused on analyzing how white privilege, structural racism and white supremacy was interwoven into the systems, structures and policies within the UUA and Unitarian Universalism as a whole.*



## CHURCH NEWS



**IS  
BACK**

**SEPTEMBER 10TH @5 PM**

PIC•COLLAGE

The Bean Supper is BACK. We will be gathering on the meetinghouse green for a pot-luck style meal on Saturday, September 10th at 5PM. Be on the look-out for sign-ups for needed food items and job assignments, coming to your inbox the last week of August.

### Men's Discussion Group

Purpose:

Topical discussion group for men. Group is currently open.

When: 7:30pm 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month

Where: UUC Sharon Library

Questions? Contact Gary Webber @ [gweb-baker@comcast.net](mailto:gweb-baker@comcast.net)



Come one, Come all!

Unitarian Church of Sharon Open House

**Saturday Sept 24, 2 pm to 4 pm**

Welcome visitors and help show them what our community is all about!

### The Not Boring Book Group

The Not Boring Book Group meets on the first Wednesday of most months.

Our next conversation will be **at 7pm on Wednesday, October 5th**, in the Church Library. Whether that will be virtual, in person or hybrid is currently TBD.

We will discuss Jojo Moyes' *The Giver of Stars*, historical fiction about pack horse librarians in a remote area of Kentucky during the Great Depression. (Not without controversy, there is another version of the story, *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* from which Moyes' version may have been derived.)

You're welcome to join us even if you haven't finished the book - or even started it! The themes often provoke spirited discussion, either way.

**UU artists:** The theme for September's art wall will be "Portraits" - How We See Each Other and Ourselves.

All media welcome including photography, drawing, painting, sculpture.

Contact me at: [drpa18@gmail.com](mailto:drpa18@gmail.com). to contribute.

Dinah

## CHURCH NEWS

We held a memorial service on the grounds in June to celebrate the life of our dear friend and church member Linden Fingerson, who died in November 2021. Here are some of the photographs that Elizabeth Siftar took of the occasion.

