

the chalice

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
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of the Unitarian
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Inside this issue

From the Minister	2
From the President	3
RE News	4
Social Justice	6

DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

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

For Zoom information [click here](#)

For Order of Service [click here](#)

December 4 Eternity Utters a Day

Today's sermon title is taken from the great Jewish scholar Abraham Joshua Heschel and his writings on Sabbath. Our service will consider his reflections on time, and the importance of setting aside sacred time. Rev. Jolie preaching.

December 11 Blue Christmas

Today's service will make some space for the sadness we may feel during the holidays. Social scientists and healthcare practitioners talk about an "epidemic of loneliness" in our society, and those feelings can be exacerbated during this time of year. With insights from Robert Putnam's classic book Bowling Alone, we will explore how disconnection impacts us and how we may find our way to reconnection. Rev. Jolie preaching.

December 17 Solstice - 7 PM

Join our Adult Choir and Rev. Jolie for our annual ritual of words, song, and candles to honor the darkness and welcome the return of the light.

December 18 Revels - Intergenerational Service at 10:30 AM

This service, featuring the young people of this congregation, calls us together to revel in story and song in this season of short days and long nights. The annual Revels tradition at UCS stretches back many decades and has taken many different forms over the years. The theme of this year's Revels is Winter Solstice.

December 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - 4 pm

Come sing Christmas carols, hear the nativity story, and reflect on the message of Christmas. We're trying something a little different this year, to have just one service at 4 pm; hopefully this time is family-friendly and Christmas Eve-dinner friendly as well. Rev. Jolie preaching.

December 25 No church today.

From the Minister



Dear Ones,

Just a few weeks ago, I attended a workshop on Theologies of Disability Justice. This was a workshop for members of my local chapter of the UU Ministers Association, which I'm now on the leadership council of. It was led by Elizabeth Foster, who is currently the Ministerial Intern serving alongside Rev. Clyde Grubbs at our neighbor congregation in Canton. Elizabeth Foster is also a member of the Leadership Circle of [Equal Access](#), a network of UU's living with disabilities, their families, friends and allies, who are committed to enabling the full engagement of people with disabilities in Unitarian Universalist communities and the broader society. Her workshop was fantastic! It included some history of the disability rights movement, including the 1977 "504 Sit-in," in which disabled protestors occupied a California federal building for 26 days to push for legislation that would offer some increased legal protection to people with

disabilities. This dramatic action is the longest occupation of a federal building in history and was successful in getting the regulations they hoped for passed. We also learned about the 1990 "Capitol Crawl" in which disabled protestors crawled up the steps of the Capitol, a protest which helped spur the adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Elizabeth also offered us a couple of different frameworks for understanding disability - contrasting the "medical model" with the "social model." The medical model views disability as resulting from an individual person's physical or mental limitations, and is not connected to their social or geographical environments. The medical model focuses on finding a "cure" or making a person more "normal." The social model, on the other hand, says that society's failure to provide appropriate services causes disability. Elizabeth clarified that disability justice advocates who use the social model in their advocacy are not against medicine; many members of her community rely on the medical establishment as part of their overall capacity for survival and wellness. Rather, it's about where we focus our efforts. The medical model of disability says the individual should change, the social model of disability says institutions should change.

This was all very inspiring and clarifying. And then we got to the part of the workshop that was more of a bummer. We were a group of ministers from all over Southeastern MA, many of us serving in old buildings with a variety of accessibility issues. One by one we shared the ways our buildings help us live up to and, more often, don't help us live up to our call to truly be welcoming to all. The workshop gave me the chance to reflect on our own building. With our repairs to our Sanctuary ceiling recently completed, we will be so glad to be back to worshipping there starting Sunday, December 4. But we also have in the back of our minds the unfinished business that we began well before I arrived as minister - the accessibility of our Sanctuary, particularly the accessibility of the stage. Once we set our minds and hearts back to the task of AIM II, we will surely dig deep into the question: what can we change about our Sanctuary to ensure it is accessible to all?

Yours in faith,
Rev. Jolie

p.s. You can now book appointments with me at www.calendly.com/revjolie. I look forward to meet-

From the President



Did you know that our congregation adopted a mission statement some years ago?

It's been on the front of the Order of Service these past few weeks. "We gather as a liberal religious community, honoring our differences, to support one another as we grow in mind and spirit and reach out to serve the world."

I was part of the effort to draft and adopt this statement, and I liked it then and I still like it now. At the recent board retreat we decided to bring this mission forward.

Now, on a lighter note: It's not part of our "religious" tradition to have saints. We don't canonize heroes or martyrs to UUism, nor paint icons in the Eastern Orthodox tradition nor erect statues to be prayed to in our meetinghouses.

That is not to say we don't have heroes and martyrs. The earliest I can think of is Michael Servetus, who was burned at the stake in 1553 for heresy (denying the Trinity). Then there was King John Sigismund of Hungary, who died in 1571, and who was the only Unitarian monarch in history. In the Edict of Torda, he proclaimed religious freedom in his realm, under the tutelage of Francis David, a Unitarian cleric.

Many of the leaders of transcendentalism would qualify for UU sainthood if we had it: Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller, and others.

More recently we have the Rev. James Reeb and UU layperson Viola Liuzzo, who were murdered in Selma in 1965. And did you see in the Globe recently where the Rev. John Gibbons, from the Bedford UU church, recently got arrested for chaining himself to the door of Faneuil Hall in protest of its naming after a slave owner?

However, if we HAD UU saints, I'm ready to propose some local candidates:

There's St. Jeffrey, whose special talent is technology and makes our worship accessible to those who can't participate in person. There's St. Robert, who coordinates the effort to preserve the sanctuary ceiling and heroically organized the rescue of the Steinway. St. Ellen, whose artistry and energy make our Memorial Garden and grounds beautiful and inspiring. St. Gare and St. Allison who keep us supplied with treats and good coffee and inspiration to social action. St. Mary Forbes, who leads our children in song and signs "Spirit of Life." And as for Saint Elisabeth . . .

Whom do you propose for canonization, in the unlikely event we UUs develop a hagiography?

Valerie White

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education and a Note from our Youth Ministry Coordinator:

This past fall has been a busy one for the Senior Youth Group. They have started to create a youth space in Program C which has entailed planning, fundraising ideas, and a trip to Ikea! This space is important as it makes a "home" for the youth within the church and allows them to take ownership over their own space and responsibility for the youth group belongings/furniture. Coming up [\(read more\)...](#)

Volunteers needed for our dynamic multi-age classroom this winter and spring. We launched the year with a dedicated group of volunteers - Barbara Rose, Pam Baker-Webber, Kristen Hoemke, Sadie Dussault and Jenny Theiler who not only led the fall program but are helping create this year's Revels worship service. Let's give them a break after the holidays! Please email Christine at dre@uusharon if you'd like to know more.

Want more news and information about our programs for children, youth, and families? We have a dedicated monthly newsletter! [Click here](#) for December.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee encourages you to visit the UCS website (uusharon.org) for news and connections about what's happening for social justice at church. The Social Justice pages are a

great source for information on events, opportunities to engage, resources, and links to partner organizations and groups that we collaborate with in our work.

Brown Envelope Collections



In October the Brown E funds supported **UU The Vote** (uuthevote.org), a nation-wide effort by the UUA to register and educate voters on a broad range of important topics this election

season. Total donations came to \$1,014 (including \$900 collected early in the month and sent in prior to the national election date).

The November Brown E donations are going to **Youth On Fire** (aac.org/youth-on-fire/, a program of AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts), a drop-in center for homeless and street-involved youth, ages 14-24, located in Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA. Since opening its doors in 2000, over 3,000 youth have benefitted from YOF programs, including:

- Responses to the basic and urgent needs of homeless young adults at high risk of communicable diseases and victimization
- Connecting youth to services including behavioral health and medical care
- Creating safe and supportive relationships and community groups and events
- Partnering with community and civic organizations, local businesses and public officials to address youth homelessness

In the last two years, the number of clients

served has doubled, while funding has decreased. Your support for their important work is greatly appreciated.



In December, Brown Envelope donations during regular services will be sent to the **UU Urban Ministry** (uum.org), a social justice organization based in Roxbury, at the First Church Roxbury Meetinghouse. The UUUM has continued its work in Boston for nearly 200 years by facing the moment we are in, summoning the resources to address it, and convening people to work together to make change. Forty-six UU churches in Eastern Massachusetts, including the UCS, support the work.

Our Mission: We work across race and place to dismantle racism and white supremacy culture and to advance racial, social, and economic justice.

Our Vision: We envision a Greater Boston where all people live with freedom and dignity, and have equitable access to resources and opportunity to shape the present and the future.

Programs include:

Safer shelter and workforce development programming for survivors of domestic violence

Academic enrichment for Boston-area youth of color

Arts and Humanities programming grounded in a social justice message that amplifies artists and historians of color in our neighborhood

Your support will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

During our Christmas Eve services this year (Saturday, 24 December), all donations will be given to support the work of **Father Bills & Main-Spring House**, who offer shelter and resources to the homeless communities of Brockton and Quincy.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

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 **\$57,575** in the over 2 ½ years 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, equaling more than a \$2,680 boost to date), 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!

(A special donation of \$300 in grocery cards was made in November at the **Sharon Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** at the First Congregational Church, in support of their Community Food Pantry for Sharon residents.)

MainSpring House lunch making: join in for an intergenerational project on Sunday, 11 December during Coffee Hour as we assemble 90 brown bag lunches for the guests of MainSpring House in Brockton. Each month we send lunches to the shelter, and we need your help to put them together. Want to help more? Contact Gare Reid (agreid@rcn.com) if you want to be a shopper, or to deliver the boxes of lunches. **Do you and your household eat food too?** 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 you 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). Stop by the Social Justice Table in the Vestry during Coffee Hours to learn more about this user-friendly program. And then wash your hands, grab a mask, and find your spot in the assembly line on the 11th!

Fair Trade Marketplace – Wrapped up last month after 33 months of greeting you in the Circle.

Our monthly attempt during Covid to keep folx well stocked with coffee and chocolates, along with other social justice opportunities, has come to a close. Most of our customers are able to shop and purchase Shopping for Justice grocery cards at the Fair Trade Table during Coffee Hour each week, and the number of pre-order customers has dwindled to very few. If you are unable to join us on Sunday mornings for whatever reason, please contact Gare Reid (agreid@rcn.com) and we can work out alternative solutions to keeping your pantry well stocked. It has been quite a run, especially when we reflect that we started this experiment in March of 2020 when it looked like we might have to pause regular church life for a few weeks, maybe a month or so at most! There's no telling what the future will bring, but we will strive to make sure that the UCS community has access to healthy, economically responsible products that make for a better, safer world. Thanks for your support!

SJC Meeting for December: the monthly SJC meeting will be on Sunday, December 4th at 12:30pm. Look for the link in the UCS Calendar. We will continue to offer zoom participation, while some folx may be ready to resume gathering in the physical Library for face-to-face conversation. Please join us as we look to the New Year for opportunities and challenges to make a difference in the world.

8th PRINCIPLE

8th Principle



HEADS UP: Starting with the January, 2023 Newsletter, the title of this section will be changing FROM "8th Principle" TO "ARWG REPORT." This is in keeping with the recently released revision proposals to Article II, which make major changes in the way Article II is formatted. While the Commission has been seeking wide feedback on these proposed changes and a final vote will not be taken until General Assembly 2024, the current proposal no longer contains a separate section listing our principles; instead, it embeds the messages within each of our current 7 principles, along with the 8th principle, throughout the entire Article II. (To review the proposed changes, [click here](#)). Given this anticipated change, and in our desire to connect the messages within the current 8th Principle to all that we do as a congregation, the members of the ARWG felt this section heading change would allow us to present our messages to the congregation in a broader context.

For those unfamiliar with the Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG) here at UCS, as stated in the November Newsletter, our goal is to support the congregation in continually evolving into an intentionally and proactively anti-racist faith community through reflection, action, listening and learning; paying special attention to the voices of people of color in our own congregation and neighborhood.

Some of our plans involve:

A monthly "media" event, using a movie, podcast or other type of media form to focus on the issue of racism, white supremacy and other forms of oppression, with reflection and conversation to follow. Starting in January, we plan to start showing clips from the documentary series "Race: The power of an Illusion," which examines the origins, beliefs and consequences of what we call "race," and which debunks the assumption that, as Larry Adelman, the Executive Producer of the se-

ries writes: "the world's peoples can be divided biologically along racial lines." Since its first showing in 2003, many have used the documentary as a starting point to examine their own deep-seated beliefs about the idea of race and explore how many of our social divisions are based, not on fact, but, on assumptions and false narratives that have long been perpetuated in this country.

We will be providing specific details and dates in the January Newsletter and in future Friday weekly emails. In the meantime, if you are interested in checking it out, you will find information on this webpage: <https://www.racepowerofanillusion.org>. Additionally, we are currently considering hosting these media nights on a Friday evening, but are certainly open to other suggestions, especially if this time is not good for families with younger children. If this is something you might be interested in attending, please let us know what days of the week/times work best for you by contacting Barbara Nelkin-Rose, Chair of ARWG.

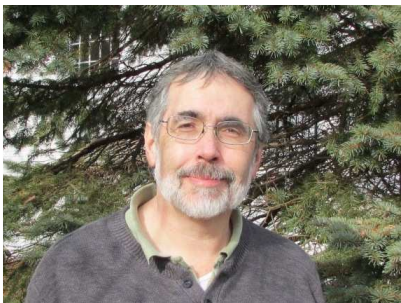
Alco Conversations, otherwise known as Alcove Conversations, will be offered during Sunday morning Coffee Hour, when members of the ARWG will make themselves available to speak one-on-one or in small groups with those interested in having deeper conversations about what it means that we have adopted the 8th Principle, how we can accountably take action to dismantle racism/ other forms of oppression, and how this all relates to our "spiritual wholeness." So next coffee hour, grab a cup of coffee or tea and come share your thoughts, questions and suggestions with us. We will be waiting for you outside the vestry in the alcove near the exit to the Memorial Garden.

UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023 – Submitted by Barbara Nelkin-Rose**

The theme for General Assembly 2023 is "Faithfully Becoming," and promises to be an important and exciting event as UUs choose our next steps forward, elect a new President to lead our Association and consider the changes to Article II recently proposed by the Article II Study Commission ([click here](#) to review the proposed changes). We are truly at a threshold moment within our faith and it is hoped that GA 2023 will be attended by many UUs either in person or virtually. For more information about GA 2023, [click here](#).

CHURCH NEWS

"Coming this holiday season: a CD (and digital download) of our longtime **Musical Director Mel Springer** at the piano. Mel recorded 17 songs in our sanctuary earlier this year, and we're delighted to make them available in the next several weeks, projecting release date around December 1st. Pricing is to be determined, but for more information please contact Jean Fox at jmfoxden@versizon.net."



Our friend and fellow UCS member Jim Mullin is sick with cancer and would love to receive visits and phone calls. He also asks that anyone who can would consider donating blood, as he has received several life-saving transfusions at this point. Though of course there's no system for people to donate directly to a particular person, it would mean a lot to him to know that people are giving blood and thinking of him.

Jim's E-mail: jrmullin@verizon.net

Phone number: (508) 543-2701

Address: 6 Winter St Foxboro MA 02035

Art Wall

The art wall is welcoming works that depict the natural world (water, plants, earth...). In conjunction with these elements of nature, people and animals would also be welcomed in the art works.

Any questions please contact Dinah Altman at drpa18@gmail.com or text 781-956-0238 or see me in person.

Thank you. Contact Dinah. Show your work!

The Not Boring Book Group

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

For our December selection, we will read A Spool of Blue Thread by Anne Tyler.

From the family's arrival in Baltimore in the 1920s into the twenty-first century, the lives of four generations of Whitshanks unfold in and around the house that has always been their anchor.

Join us in the church's virtual library via Zoom at 7pm on Wednesday, December 7th

Men's Discussion Group

Purpose:

Topical discussion group for men.
Group is currently open.

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

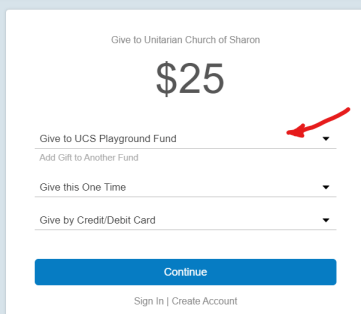
Where: UUC Sharon Library

Questions? Contact Gary Webber @ gwebbaker@comcast.net

CHURCH NEWS

Do you like the sound of children playing? Do you like knowing that the children of this church have a safe and fun playground? Of course you do! Help us finish creating our new playground by contributing to the Playground Fund. Funds will go toward paying for the new equipment already installed as well as the very special two-story tower that will be the centerpiece of the playground. You can contribute through Breeze, or by sending a check to the church directly with Playground in the memo line.

Every cent is important to our mission so please only use online giving if you are able to cover the processing fees (2.9% + \$0.30/transaction for credit cards and 1% + \$0.25/transaction for bank transfers). Otherwise, dropping off the money or sending a check to the Unitarian Church of Sharon 4 N Main street will let us keep all of your donation. Thank you!



Are you looking for a way to lend a hand?

We are in need of someone to take on the role of overseeing the sign-up of Greeters, Flowers and Coffee via Sign-up Genius. This would involve checking Sign-ups and sharing that information weekly with De'En. It would also involve direct outreach when slots are empty.

Thank you to Ken Zaniewski who attended the hearth for so many years!

Please contact Reverend Jolie for details.

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Help spread the word about the **new sign up page for Greeters, Flowers and Coffee Hour at church**. Ask a friend to be a greeter with you, or to make the coffee. new link!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0d4daba92ea2f49-coffeegreeterflo>

BACK IN THE SANCTUARY

One of the best things about our being **BACK IN THE SANCTUARY** (from my point of view at least) is that the annual Solstice Service will be there!

This service, presented by the choir, is our annual celebration of the return of the light. There will be lots of seasonal music, much of it pagan themed, lovely readings, and candle-lighting. The choir has been performing this music for many years and we're good at it! So mark your calendars for 7:00PM December 17, and come celebrate the Winter Solstice.

Valerie White
Choir Coordinator

We need your help! Point your phone's camera at this QR code to sign up to be a greeter, bring flowers, or make coffee.



CHURCH NEWS



Are you interested in learning how to meditate? Or hoping to improve your practice?

Did you know that with a commitment of just 15 minutes per day, you can improve the quality of your life through meditation? The investment of time is small, but the benefits are enormous.

Emotional benefits of meditation can include:

- Gaining new perspective on stressful situations
- Building skills to manage your stress
- Increasing self-awareness
- Focusing on the present
- Reducing negative emotions
- Increasing imagination and creativity
- Increasing patience and tolerance

The physical benefits are impressive as well. According to the Mayo Clinic, research suggests that meditation may help people manage symptoms of conditions such as:

- Anxiety
- Asthma
- Chronic pain, depression
- Heart disease and high blood pressure
- Sleep problems
- Tension headaches and more

I'm Carol Abram, a Meditation Instructor and I will be offering FREE one hour group meditation and mindfulness discussion at your church on Thursdays from 7:00-8:00PM. This session is open to meditators at all levels including beginners. Please subscribe to my blog at: <https://www.wavesofcontentment.com/home> to be notified weekly about dates we will be meeting.

If you have any questions, please email me at: carol@abramdesign.com

New meditation group meets at UCS on Thursdays from 7 - 8 pm. Meeting in Vestry until repairs to Sanctuary are complete (then will move back to Program A).

If you're interested, please get on Carol Abram's mailing list to stay abreast of any changes to the schedule. Any questions, you can email her: carol@abramdesign.com

Sandy Hook anniversary vigil - please join us in the center of Sharon on Dec 14, 4:30-6:30 pm

Town Wide Sandy Hook Anniversary Vigil December 14th 4:30 PM

All are welcome to join local members of the Moms Demand Action Sharon Group, town officials, and community members and clergy, to remember the victims of Sandy Hook Elementary School and their families.

Bring a battery operated candle and/or make a sign showing support for victims of gun violence. This is a family friendly event for all ages! To RSVP please [click here](#).