

the chalice

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
***A Welcoming Congregation
of the Unitarian
Universalist Association***
4 North Main Street
Sharon, MA 02067
781/784-3652
www.uusharon.org

President
Valerie White
president@uusharon.org

Minister
Rev. Jolie Olivetti
781/784-3652 x2
minister@uusharon.org

Director of Religious Ed.
Christine Bulman
781/784-3652 x3
DRE@uusharon.org

Youth Ministry Coordinator
Caroline Dixon
yc@uusharon.org

Congregational Administrator
De'En Tarkpor
781/784-3652 x1
admin@uusharon.org

Inside this issue

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

JULY/AUGUST WORSHIP SERVICES

NO WORSHIP SERVICES



From the Minister



Dear Ones,
I write to you from the airport, on my way back from General Assembly 2023 in Pittsburgh. It was a great week, full of meaningful worship services, collegial connections, and new ideas for our congregational life together. As you likely know by now, there was also an important decision about our UUA bylaws to be

made by the Assembly of delegates this year. If you already know what I'm talking about, I'll cut right to the chase: the proposed revisions to Article II were preliminarily accepted, with a few amendments. We now have a full year to discuss the new Article II. At next year's GA, we'll vote a second time, and if there is a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority in favor, the new Article II will be adopted.

If you have no idea what I'm going on about, here it is in a nutshell: the bylaws of our Unitarian Universalist Association are up for revision, specifically Article II where our Seven Principles are documented. In 2020, an Article II Study Commission was convened and charged to "review Article II of the UUA Bylaws, and propose any revisions that will enable our UUA, our member congregations, and our covenanted communities to be a relevant and powerful force for spiritual and moral growth, healing, and justice." The Commission, a mixture of lay leaders and ministers, ranging in age from youth to elders, began work on their task by reflecting as a group and with thousands of other Unitarian Universalists on how to articulate what is at the core of our faith. They presented some of their initial ideas at GA 2022 and facilitated a series of interactive workshops to get feedback and input from the Assembly. Their first draft was made public in the fall of 2022, and the final draft submitted to the Board of Trustees earlier this year.

And then there were the amendments. I'd not be the first to say if you get ten UU's in a room, you'll have 11 opinions. In the months leading up to GA 2023, people submitted amendments to the proposed revisions and discussed them at length in an online forum and in Zoom sessions with the UUA

Board. Out of hundreds of proposed amendments, we ended up with 15 prioritized amendments, ranging from simply adding "supporting new UU communities" to the Purpose of the UUA to going so far as to put the Seven Principles back in the document. We discussed all the amendments that time allowed and voted on whether or not to include each of them in turn. Once we got through the amendments, we finally had time to discuss the thing itself, and whether or not to keep the discernment going on this proposed new Article II for another year.

People expressed their sincere opinions and fierce passions on both sides of each amendment's debate and on both sides of the Article II discussion as well. It could give the impression of a faith divided, though not evenly, with the minority opinion set against the new Article II and the majority ready to continue the discussion in preparation for next year's vote. My hope is that we find a way to connect with one another over the next year, finding common ground and a unified sense of purpose even amidst our disagreements.

I love the proposed new Article II. It's not perfect, but it's good, and I am excited for what it will offer our faith movement. I look forward to reflecting on it with you all next year. (Click this link to read the un-amended Article II, version with amendments will be available soon: <https://www.uua.org/files/2023-02/article-II-study-report-2021-23.pdf#page=21>)

Yours in faith,
Rev. Jolie



Rev. Jolie, Beth McGregor, and Tom D'Avanzo at the 2023 General Assembly in Pittsburgh.

From the President



Were you at the final service of the 22-23 church year? If not, you missed a lot. Jennifer's choir outdid itself (yes, I know, I'm blowing my own horn) . . . so much so that the congregation forwent its customary "rubbing two hands together" and actually applauded. Forbesy's children's choir was amazing in leading us in "River", one of my favorite songs by one of my favorite songwriters, the late Bill Staines. Bill graced us with his music at our coffeehouse a couple of times. Mel was on top of his game at the Steinway, with favorite modern and classical oeuvres. And Jolie's reflection about the 100 year anniversary of Norbert Capek's flower ceremony ALSO evoked applause.

There were many joys and concerns expressed, including by the many children present. I learned things about Yogi Berra I didn't know. For me, at least, the sharing in beloved community moved me nearly to tears. We heard that one member has achieved a long-held goal to enter the hospital chaplaincy and has a job!

The flower ceremony resulted in a colorful bouquet which reflected our different kinds of beauty and our diversity coming together. At the end the children handed out the flowers and I got a Queen Anne's lace, one of my favorites and the ancestor of the carrot.

And then there was the food . . . the rainbow Jell-O was there. And salads and deserts galore, and skilled grillers cooking veggie burgers to order and providing a continuous supply of burgers and franks.

Jean Fox as worship coordinator (finishing her term as president of the worship committee—thanks, Jean!) graciously allowed me to make an impromptu announcement. I know I have written about this before, but it is probably a good idea to mention again:

This fall, when our worship resumes, we will be holding cottage meetings to think about two important issues. Is it time to consider changing our name to include Universalist and to become not a church but a society, meetinghouse, fellowship, or congregation, or . . . ? Is it time to reactivate the "AIM 2" project, renovating the sanctuary, making the stage accessible, getting new seating, improving the audio-visual tech, updating the lighting, improving the energy efficiency with different windows, more insulation?

So when we come back together in September, we will not only rejoice in our reassembly and our favorite beans, we will have some deliberation to do. See you then!

Valerie White

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A Note from the Director of Religious Education

For me, summer at church is a quiet time of transition between two church years. As I put things away and clean up from last year, I am re-organizing and prepping the space for next year. It is a time for planning and orienting to the coming program needs. It is a time of creative anticipation. It actually flies by and before we know it, September, with its energy of renewal and homecoming is upon us.

This summer, there is an extra bit of work to be done. As you may know, the RE Committee has been helping to revamp the supply closet which in turn is connected to a reshuffling of the classrooms based on our evaluation of how they were used this past year. The RE office will also be re-oriented this summer to accommodate a seating area that welcomes sit-downs and conversations with more ease.

It's rare to see people at church over summer break, but I would very much welcome the sight of some, and help with any of the above-mentioned projects! Room C has been set up as a supply sorting area with clearly marked stations so that work can be done even in my absence (in July, I'll be attending Faith Development Week at Star Island and may drop in on Ferry Beach RE week since my parents live in Saco!). Aside from sorting RE supplies and reorganizing the closet, there are two tall bookcases that need to be loaded with waiting children's books, there is a table full of items to donate and a certain amount of trash and recycling to deal with. If you're interested in helping out, please set up a time to meet me at the church using this [Calendly](#). I can help you get oriented to the tasks at hand, and you can continue to come whenever you want a break from the heat - downstairs at church is nice and cool!

Here's to safe, restful and adventurous summer for all!

Blessings,
Christine

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.

The Transgender Emergency Fund assist with homelessness prevention, shelter assistance, nutrition assistance, prescription co-pay assistance, transportation and escorts to medical appointments, and more.

With no formal summer services in July and August, there is not Brown Envelope Fund recipient until the fall. If you have a standing B.E. donation coming to the church each month, contact Gare Reid (agreid@rcn.com) and we will find a good pocket to park the funds in for an appropriate cause to support later this fall.



Brown Envelope Collections

The May Brown Envelope collection raised \$3,074.25 to support the Louis D. Brown

Peace Institute and their annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace. Funds were collected here at the UCS at services and online, and additional funds were donated to the Peace Institute in support of our walking team, Sharon Walks for Peace. The walk this year was a powerful event, and we hope to send an even bigger contingent next year on Mother's Day 2024. Thank you for your generous contributions.

In June, for Pride month, the Brown Envelope donations was split between two funds to support trans people. The first fund is housed at First Parish Malden, our neighbor UU congregation which is serving as fiscal sponsor to partner organizations of our UU Service Committee. These partners are working behind the scenes at this time for security concerns. First Parish Malden is accepting donations on their behalf, which will go to building direct support, mutual aid, and travel networks for trans people and their families who are either traveling to seek care that is no longer available where they live, or helping to relocate them entirely. The second fund is the Transgender Emergency Fund - MA (transemergencyfund.org), the only organization dedicated to supporting low income and homeless Transgender individuals in Massachusetts.

Over the summer, join us for **MainSpring House lunch making** on 2nd Sundays each month, 9 July and 13 August; Rev Jolie and Barbara Nelson-Rose will share a meditation or spiritual moment to make these gatherings a Service on Service. Bring a simple lunch and we will break bread together after the bagged lunches are ready to go. On those Sundays we will also have available our **Fair Trade** coffees and chocolates, along with **Shopping for Justice** (S4J) grocery cards. (And a heads-up: we have been warned to expect price increases for our Fair Trade goods come the fall, so buy early and buy often! Profits from sales allow us to support a number of social justice efforts, including seeding the Minister's discretionary fund to help community members in need. Thanks for your support.)

Wondering how we pay for the MSH lunch making supplies? We fundraise to purchase items for this effort 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 from the stores, 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). You get to restock your pantry and fridge while folks in Brockton get a healthy lunch, all tied together through Shopping for Justice grocery cards!

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

And were you wondering what happens to those cards once you finish buying bananas and frozen pizzas? Well, if you bring them back (empty of course) to church, we collect them and send off batches to a recycler in Ohio who turns them into reconstituted products like outdoor park benches. Who knows, maybe the new bench in the Memorial Garden exists in part thanks to YOUR grocery shopping habits as we support hunger programs in Brockton?!



Many thousands of dollars of used grocery cards heading off for recycling and NOT ending up in a landfill....

Pride Celebrations!

On Saturday, 1 June several UCS members gathered at the **Arlington Street Church** in Boston for a **Pride Celebration Service**, which then led us out onto the streets for the newly invigorated return of the **Boston Pride Parade**. The roar of support and love from the crowds lining the streets were amazing, and the energy was infectious!



Arlington Street Church kicks off Boston Pride and Bostonians turn out in droves to celebrate Pride.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

The very next day Sharon took up the celebratory mood with our **Rainbow Sunday Service**, followed by our annual **Human Rainbow** on the steps of the Church, then poster making and cheering on the **Sharon Pride Car Parade**; the party then moved down to the waterfront at Lake Massapoag for fun, music and crafts.



Annual UCS Human Rainbow. and Fans with posters gather to cheer. and Pride Car Parade rolls by.

ANTI-RACISM WORKING GROUP (ARWG) formerly 8th Principle



Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG) REPORT

UCS SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER – ARWG SECTION

While Summer is definitely a time for relaxing and soaking up the sun, we hope that you might also find some time to engage in some reading/listening/contemplation/discussion focused on anti-racism, anti-oppression work and the messages reflected in the **8th Principle**:

“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.” (The 8th Principle)

When we return to full swing in September, the ARWG will continue its commitment to plan and facilitate events that will support UCS in becoming an intentionally and proactively anti-racist and anti-oppressive faith community, doing the work necessary both within and beyond our own walls. We see our role as a dual one: 1) providing the space and opportunities for the congregation to engage in hard and uncomfortable conversations AND 2) offering specific action steps we can take to eradicate the current systems, structure and policies which marginalize and harm certain oppressed communities, such as the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and transgender communities. We hope you will join us in this work. As always, **we seek and welcome your input**. Please reach out to Barbara Nelkin-Rose with any thoughts or suggestions about future events you would like to see offered, as together we work towards living the messages within the 8th Principle and our core values as UUs.

SPECIFIC WAYS TO GET ENGAGED:



Sunday afternoon July 9th, 4-6 PM at the Sharon Historical Society Museum, 16 High St. in Sharon. Outdoors, weather permitting, or in the lower level meeting room of the museum if it rains. Come join the Sharon Historical Society (SHS) in its third annual community reading and discussion of Frederick Douglass's famous and stirring speech, "What, to the slave, is the 4th of July?" The reading will be followed by a panel discussion, facilitated by Kiana Pierre-Louis, focusing on the ongoing resonances of the speech today, along with opportunities for general discussion. Refreshments will also be provided.

As of this writing, readers from diverse backgrounds are still being recruited to participate in the reading, so if you'd like to be a reader, or help in any other way, please contact Beth McGregor (epjmccg@aol.com, 339 364-1778).

ARWG Summer Meeting – While a specific date has not yet been set, our group hopes to meet in-person over the summer and would love to have you join us and share your ideas and thoughts about where to put our energy next year. If you're interested in attending, or finding out more about this group, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose.

ANTI-RACISM WORKING GROUP (ARWG) formerly 8th Principle, continued

Summer Reading/Listening Recommendations

You may have noticed in the June 11th Friday Chalice, a recommendation list of books and other media forms, put together by Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, who writes: A favorite James Baldwin quote challenges us to take our blinders off and openly and honestly see the differing realities that comprise America: "Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be changed until it is faced." We can speed change along by delving into the lived experiences of peoples with which we are less familiar. We can listen and learn. So this summer, with sand beneath your feet, and ocean waves at your toes, or a fishing pole in your hands, we invite you to also choose a good read from our recommendations below. These recommendations were responses to the question: What was the one book/ movie/TV program that inspired you or made you think more deeply on a certain topic related to oppression. (As you can see, many of us offered more than one!)

Choose one or more and let the Dialogue continue!

Barbara Nelkin-Rose:

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent by Isabel Wilkerson. (While this book has been the subject of some criticism, I found it revelatory in understanding the systemic racism which exists in the U.S.)

So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo

Beth Hoke: Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates.

Beth McGregor: The Sum of Us by Heather McGhee.

Gare Reid: Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

Jon Slavin:

"Eyes on the Prize" PBS Series

The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin (powerful and fantastic)

"Seeing White" podcast from Scene on Radio.

Patty Fitzgerald

Personal Librarian by Heather Terrell (historical novel)

Born a Crime by Trevor Noah.

Me: Gender Queer, A Memoir by Maia Kobabe (graphic novel)

Stony the Road— Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Jim Crow by Henry Louis Gates

"Basic Black" Friday nights on PBS

Soil: The Story of a Black Mother's Garden by Camille T. Dungy;

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria...and Other Conversations about Race by Beverly Daniel Tatum, PhD

South to America: A Journey Below the Mason-Dixon to Understand the Soul of a Nation By Imani Perry

Rumni Saha:

Men We Reaped: A Memoir by Jesmyn Ward;

Home Place-Memoirs of A Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature by Drew Lanham;

I'm Still Here- Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown (easy read);

Stand Your Ground- Black Bodies and the Justice of God by Kelly Brown Douglas (important read but heavy).

Sharon Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Calendar

This is a good [resource](#) to check out happenings in the town of Sharon:

ANTI-RACISM WORKING GROUP (ARWG) formerly 8th Principle, continued

ACKNOWLEDGING JUNETEENTH

We hope you were able to participate last month in 1 of the many local events celebrating **JUNETEENTH** (June 19th), also known as FREEDOM DAY and EMANCIPATION DAY. Juneteenth, a federal holiday since 2021, commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans and is celebrated on the anniversary of the order by Major General Gordon Granger proclaiming freedom for enslaved people in Texas on June 19, 1865. To learn more about this important holiday, I encourage you to watch this informative 6 ½ minute [video](#), in which Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. provides the facts and fiction around Juneteenth and why it's such an important holiday.

One of the local events was held on the Walpole Commons. It was a joyous event offering great entertainment by a number of Black performers, informative booths and storytelling for the kids! Thanks to Janet Schmidt for making sure our congregation knew about this event, which is becoming an annual event. Hopefully, even more of us can get involved next year.



CHURCH NEWS

Dear Friends,

The Workship Committee is seeking **three** new members and **one Senior Youth** to join our Committee for the upcoming new church year!

We would welcome anyone who wishes to join us as we continue to do this important work of the church. I have had the pleasure of being Worship Chair these last five years and will be stepping down after my involvement with Worship over several years. I am pleased to announce that Ellen Bordman will be acting in that role beginning July 1st. Please reach out to either one of us or any member on Worship prior to that date.

The Committee will be meeting in August for their Annual Retreat and will be welcoming new members at that time as the new church year is planned.

Wishing you all a safe and happy summer!

Jean Fox,
Worship Chair