

Issue

**AUGUST 2025**

# The Foreword

The Newsletter of the  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst  
6320 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221  
**634-3010** (x101 for office)  
**Office Hours** Tues.—Fri. 9am to 2pm [www.uuamherst.org](http://www.uuamherst.org)



**UU AMHERST**

*Fostering Justice  
and Compassion*

## Our Staff:

### Minister

Rev. Michelle Buhite  
Office.....x102  
[minister@uuamherst.org](mailto:minister@uuamherst.org)

### Finance Clerk

Camilla Lee.....x103  
[bookkeeper@uuamherst.org](mailto:bookkeeper@uuamherst.org)

### Office Administrator

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### Director of Faith Development

Katie Cosgrove  
[dfd@uuamherst.org](mailto:dfd@uuamherst.org)

### Children's Program Assistant

Molly Breen

### Youth Program Assistant

Kyla Hoffman

### Minister Emerita

Rev. Maureen Q. Thitchener

## Engaging In the Work of Unitarian Universalism

It's been a very full summer so far; just ask me or Kim Diana Connolly. Both of us have been working on behalf of the Central East Region as well as the larger Unitarian Universalist Association. Both of us are members of the Church of the Larger Fellowship, the fully online ministry whose work also includes connecting incarcerated UUs with information and friendship. (If you're interested in knowing more about CLF and/or this particular ministry, please ask us!)



Some of the UU "crew" at CERSI.

Kim Diana and I both attended General Assembly (GA) in Baltimore in June. She was co-leader of the covenant team and I was one of her minions.

Kim Diana and I also attended the Central East Region Summer Institute (CERSI), along with several others from our congregation (yay!). I served on the ministry team, which included daily worship and vespers as well as 24 hour chaplaincy. There were four others on the ministry team to help share the load. Kim Diana was concluding her second term on the Summer Institute Committee on Ministry (SICOM), and led conversation groups as attendants considered what changes to make to the Covenant

And now let me tell you the other things that Kim Diana has been doing in service to the greater UU community. Although she is no longer on SICOM, she has taken another role of strategic planning with our region and the UUA. And she has just been appointed to the UUA National Board of Review. Clearly, Kim Diana's gifts and enthusiasm for this faith are noticed and appreciated! And, if you were at church for her service on July 13th (one day after CERSI - sorry Kim Diana!), then you know that she has begun a covenant renewal process for UU Amherst.

So, if we look tired after summer 'vacation,' - now you know! We've been working on behalf of the larger UU community. (Or should that be "commUUnity"?)

Busily,  
Rev. Michelle

## Our Covenant

*Together we promise:  
To gather in compassionate  
community,  
To celebrate diversity of thought and  
unity of spirit;  
And to seek wholeness for ourselves,  
our children, and our world.*

## AUGUST SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 AM

**8/3 Congregational Conversation** Rev. Michelle  
What brings us and keeps us here? What are our needs and gifts?

**8/10 People Against the Trafficking of Humans (PATH)**  
Julie Palmer, Executive Director; Sally Hamlin service coordinator  
People Against the Trafficking Humans is a not for profit (501c3) organization with the mission to end human trafficking through education, prevention and restoration. PATH WNY provides direct service to victims of exploitation. Outreach and the education and engagement of the wider community to prevent exploitation are central to the mission of PATH.

PATH is our August Share the Plate recipient.

**8/17 Issues of Trust** Rev. Michelle  
With insights from Brené Brown, Woody Allen, Mary Oliver, and Jesus, we'll explore the often thorny ground of TRUST.

**8/24 Singing for Our Lives** Rev. Michelle  
A music-filled service of celebration and renewal

**8/ 31 "Our Family"** Rev. Barry Abraham Zavah  
Second generation, born of Russian and Turkish Jewish roots, lived in Buffalo before retiring and relocating. Barry's insights of his family's immigrant history and living in a majority Hispanic population in post-retirement Alpine, TX presents insights to the common experiences of newcomers to our shores.

*Rev. Barry Abraham Zavah, ordained through the Sanctuary of the Beloved, is a Priest of the Order of Melchizedek, <https://www.danielchesbro.com/the-sanctuary-of-the-beloved> and a Reiki Master-Teacher practitioner.*

### HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

Email: [administrator@uuamherst.org](mailto:administrator@uuamherst.org)  
For Newsletter: by 10:00 am on the 16th  
For Website: two weeks prior to event  
For All Church listserv: daily during the week.  
For Weekly Update: Fridays by 10:00 am

**Administrator/Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday through Friday—9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

### CONTRIBUTING TO UU AMHERST

1. The **Giving** option on the church website ([uuamherst.org](http://uuamherst.org))
2. A NEW phone app "**GivePlus+**" for your phone
3. Texting a donation to phone # **833 987 1968**
4. Mailing a check [remember to fill in the Memo]
5. There is the traditional Sunday Plate
6. Don't forget Legacy Giving – in your will

## BOARD REPORT

August brings the return of Reverend Michelle to the pulpit, something we all look forward to, and we hope it will also see the playground reopen. The BOT has authorized the expenditure of funds for the work on the playground that requires outside contractors as was done for the renovation of the Faith Development/Admin Wing. Like that project, the playground project needs the labor of our members to complete it. Our Faith Development Director, Katie Cosgrove, will be organizing volunteers to get the rest of the work done after the contractors have finished. If you're interested in lending a hand, please see Katie as we would like to get the playground reopened in August.



You may have read or heard of another project that has been announced—the establishment of a handicapped accessible bathroom on the first floor of the Faith Development/Admin Wing. The plan requires modifications to the current bathroom labeled "girls" as well as removal of the asbestos floor tiles in both first-floor bathrooms. Fortunately, Task Force Leader, Barbara Gauger Kent, has obtained a grant that will cover the cost of the asbestos abatement contractor.

The rest of the work will be done by contractors and will be financed with donations from our congregation just as the new chapel hearing system project was. (See page 11 for details.)

Please be generous so we can provide a useful bathroom for those with physical challenges.

—Randy Kent, Board Chair

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### Contributing Stocks & Securities

We are now able to accept stocks and securities.  
If interested, contact Bruce Becker.

#### Coordination of Caretaker Duties — August

Sunday, July 27 - Saturday, August 2 - Randy Kent  
Sunday, August 3 - Saturday, August 9 - Barry Kent  
Sunday, August 10 - Saturday, August 16 - Bob Johnson  
Sunday, August 17 - Saturday, August 23 - Bruce Becker  
Sunday, August 24 - Saturday, August 30 - Dian & Don Tucker  
Sunday, August 31 - Saturday, September 6 - Randy Kent

## AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Most needed item: can openers (\$1.25 each at Dollar Tree)

Next meeting: September 7th at noon in the UU Amherst Library/Living Room

Thank you for your continued donations, both financial and material! I especially appreciate our dedicated volunteers who restock the pantry daily.

We are watching to see how our usage increases as a result of political actions. Many of the most harmful provisions of OBBBA (the so-called One Big Beautiful Bill Act) won't take effect until 2026 or 2027, conveniently after the next midterm elections, but the current economy is volatile with inconsistent use of tariffs while food prices keep rising.



There are comment cards in the pantry for our users to leave us feedback. Here's one recent note: "You are doing the Lords work! With all the closings (stores, businesses) people need this more than ever. Thank you so much for letting us access food and clothing with no judgement. Bless you guys! and gals. P.S. I also bring items whenever I can and have a bin in my car just to collect stuff for this wonderful place."

—Marie Evans, Chair (Meg Sabella, Treasurer; Doreen Park, Administrative Officer)

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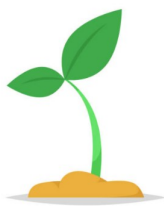
## JUSTICE ADVOCACY TEAM

The JAT had a great time celebrating its 1st anniversary. Thanks to all who came out in support. In reflecting back, we have been a presence in the community resisting current harmful policies. We have visited Senate and Congress offices to speak with staff. We have provided education and material support to community members. We have attended rallies and protests. We have created and performed acts of guerilla protest. We have held evenings of work and fun. We have built a strong coalition with other community groups to carry out our mission.

The next year holds many exciting opportunities for growth and community engagement. We hope you will join us as we try to build a loving, caring community in this rapidly changing environment. Happy 1st Anniversary to us.

—Peggy/Mark Cook

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## ENDOWMENT TRUST

US and worldwide markets have fluctuated widely in the first half of 2025. Our Endowment's value as of June 30 is \$1,214,507, which achieved a rate of return of +6.9% year to date.

Mike Angelucci, our financial advisor, recently shared some interesting benchmark data for returns on institutional investments. In the last year, US college endowments averaged an 11.2% return on investment. In the same period our UUCA Endowment investment averaged an 11.6% return. Our rate of return has been fairly close to this average college endowment return over the last 10 years. Our takeaway is that even though UUCA does not have as large of an endowment as most universities or as "highly resourced" Wall Street investment team (no offense to Mike!), our straightforward diversification strategy has served us well to date.

The next quarterly meeting is October 21st at 6:00 pm. UUCA members are welcome to attend. Please contact me or another trustee in advance if you have a specific topic/question.

—Eric Groat, on behalf of the Endowment Trustees Barry Kent, Tamara Kofke, John Thompson, Dian Tucker



## RAINBOW COALITION

**RAINBOW CAFÉ**  
**UU Amherst 6320 Main St.**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of Month, 1-3 pm**

**Relax, enjoy, be comfortable in this safe, sacred space made for you. A place for conversation, a game or just to sit. Beverages & snacks freely offered (donations not refused 😊).**

**Let's create a kind, caring community to help us all through the events in our country. Remember, we are all just walking each other home.**

<https://uuamherst.org/wp2/rainbow-cafe/>

The poster features an inverted rainbow triangle logo in a green circle at the top left. Below the text is a stylized illustration of a bookshelf with books of various colors. At the bottom left is a QR code, and at the bottom right is the event's website URL.

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## Lending Library

New books have been added to the Lending Library Annex, located on the free-standing wood bookshelf in the Library/Living Room.

There are two books by Deepa Iyer, who leads a project on solidarity and social movements at the Building Movement Project. I was introduced to her work during UUA's "Green Sanctuary 2030" Community Meeting in September 2024, when her topic was "What do I have to offer?" and the Social Change Ecosystem Framework. One book is an adult leadership workbook, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection*. The other is a children's book, *We Are the Builders*, a rhyming story about finding your place and changing your community, inspired by the social change ecosystem framework.

*We Can Do Hard Things: Answers to Life's 20 Questions* by Glennon Doyle, Abby Wambach, and Amanda Doyle, was just released May 6. It's a curated collection of wisdom from "118 of the world's most brilliant wayfinders" who have been guests on their award-winning podcast of the same name.

*Immigration Realities: Challenging Common Misperceptions* by Ernesto Castenada, director of the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies, Immigration Lab, at American University in Washington, DC is an evidence-based examination of myths and false claims about immigrants. Barnes & Noble calls it "the reality check everyone in the country should read." You can view UUSJ's post-election conversation with him at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hU3c\\_YgqdO4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hU3c_YgqdO4).

—Marie Evans

## AUGUST 2025 CALENDAR

**PLEASE NOTE:** Some meetings are virtual-only; others are dual platform (Zoom and in-person); and some in-person only. See the notation after the meeting. Zoom links are provided by the group hosts or by request from the Office Administrator. Zoom meetings taking place in the Zadmin room are identified with the abbreviation. **Zoom, only, indicates a private account; log in must be provided by the host.**

**Room abbreviations:** EM (Emerson Room); LR Living Room); Bul (Bulfinch-FD Wing); EC (Ecology Center); Murray Meeting Room (MMR)

### Sunday, August 3rd

12:00 pm: New 2UU Brown Bag Lunch EM

### Tuesday, August 5th

10:00 am: Leadership Dev & Nominating Comm EM

12:00 pm: Women's Group Lunch EM

### Wednesday, August 6th

6:00 pm: Justice Advocacy Group-Rock Painting EM

### Saturday, August 16th

9:00 am: Firewall Meeting EM

1:00 pm: Rainbow Café MMR

### Sunday, August 17th

12:00 pm: Justice Advocacy Meeting LR

12:00 pm: Staycation party for Families

### Tuesday, August 19th

6:30 pm: Lace Guild (rental) MMR

### Wednesday, August 20th

6:00 pm: Finance Meeting MMR

7:30 pm: Board Meeting MMR

### Thursday, August 21st

1:00 pm: Ministry Steering Committee MMR

### Saturday, August 23rd

9:30 am: Ministry Train EM

## RECURRING: SUNDAYS

### Sundays, August 3rd-31st

9:30 am: Church of the Wild

10:30 am: Sunday service—in-person and livestream; coffee hour following

## RECURRING MEETINGS:

### UU Universe-ity Sunrise Sessions

M-F 8:30 am on Zadmin

All "tree" names are for Village groups

### Saturdays, August 2nd-30th

9:30 am: Sharing Circle Zadmin

7:00 pm: Birch Bunch Zadmin

### Mondays, August 3rd-25th

7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapples Zadmin (weekly)

### Tuesdays, August 4th-26th

12:30 pm: Women's Group Lunch EM (8/5)

Women's Group Zadmin (8/12, 8/19, 8/26)

### 8/12 (2nd Tue)

7:00 pm: Marlana's Covenant Group LR

### Wednesdays, August 5th-27th

8/20 (3rd Wed)

1:30 pm: 3rd Wednesday Covenant Group Zoom

7:00 pm: Northtowns Village Zoom

### Thursdays, August 6th-28th

8/21 (3rd Thu)

10:00 am: Current Events Zadmin

**Reminder:** Groups, please restore rooms before leaving. Return chairs to their places and take any papers (etc) with you or dispose of them properly.

**Kitchen Storage:** All opened packages must be enclosed in plastic containers or Ziplock bags before placing in cupboards.

**Kitchen Etiquette:** To all groups and individuals that meet at church outside regular Sunday morning hours: Please tidy up and wash any dishes/cups you may have used. We need to keep our kitchen tidy and ready for use. Thanks for your help with this.

## Ministry Train

Save the Date: Saturday, August 23rd

9:30 am—12:00 pm

The Ministry Train is a gathering of ministry team Leads and anyone who is interested in the ministries and activities of the congregation. We have good conversation while we build connections among those who are helping UU Amherst to fulfill our mission of challenging ourselves and the community to foster more justice and compassion in the world. It's a big task and coming together helps us to decide where to put our energies.

## MINISTRY & MORE

### Music at UU Amherst

#### Choir Call-Out & Rehearsals

If you are a singer in search of a song, join the choir! Questions? Contact Linda Delorey.

#### Instrumentalists Wanted

Do you play an instrument? Would you like to be part of a pick-up ensemble or even a soloist? Great! Contact Rev. Michelle (minister@uuamherst.org).

### Tech Help Needed!

Are you someone for whom computers and technology are, if not easy-peasy, at least understandable? Have you been wondering how you can be part of the magic that is the wider (online) community of UU Amherst? Yay! This notice is for you!

**Needed:** Technical Assistant(s) to work with Les in the loft as we live stream and record our services on Sunday mornings. You still get to experience the service - just from an elevated point of view!

**Respond to minister@uuamherst.org if you are interested.**

**Private, gender-neutral restrooms** are available in the Administration Wing (through the doors in the main lobby) and on the second level of the house portion of our building. If you're offering a tour to a newcomer, be sure to mention that we have these accommodations.



### Church of the Wild

Join us each Sunday at 9:30 am in the Debbie Waterhouse Ecology Center. Bring a chair, a poem, your wonder of nature. Lauraine Marcus will meet you at

the edge of the Ecology Center at 9:25 am, near the basketball court at the back of the parking lot. Church of the Wild is an all weather event (except a torrential downpour).

### Tuesday Women's Group

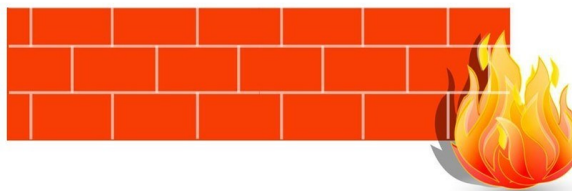
This month our in-person meeting will be Tuesday, August 5th. We will meet in the Emerson Room at 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch and a beverage. Other meeting dates via Zoom are: August 12th, 19th, and 26th. Zoom link provided by host Marge Marcille or Office Administrator.

### Current Events Zoom

The Current Events Zoom takes place the third Thursday of each month. This month's meeting will be on August 21st at 10:00 am on Zoom. Link provided by host Peggy/Mark Cook or request from the Office Administrator.

### Firewall Meeting

Saturday, August 16 @ 9:00 am  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst



Firewall is a coalition of Concerned Citizens who support Democracy and the Rule of Law.

**Please donate to the Amherst Little Free Pantry! Let's help our neighbors in need**

*Firewall is a Political Action Group that is not affiliated with the UU Church of Amherst.*

## FAITH DEVELOPMENT

### This Month's Blessing:

I sing to the Mother Gaia.

I sing to the Father Sun.

I sing to the living in the garden

where the Mother and the Father are one.

- Pagan chant



### Who Needs a Vacation?!

Join us after service on Sunday, August 17, for a laid-back, family

Staycation Day at UU Amherst! After a coffee in the Emerson Room, stick around for a fun, tropical-inspired afternoon with something for everyone in your family.

We'll have spaces to for kids and adults to relax, socialize, enjoy light refreshments and keep cool—plus playful outdoor activities with a beachy vibe for kids. Whether you're in the mood to lounge or play, there will be plenty of ways to enjoy the day. More details to come soon. RSVP's encouraged; Katie Cosgrove: [dfd@uuamherst.org](mailto:dfd@uuamherst.org).



### Simply Family Series – Registration Open!

We'll be offering a free 8-week program for families, designed to provide tools, community and compassion in the journey of raising children. Guided by the book, *The Gifts of Imperfect Parenting* by Brené Brown, we'll offer a safe space for parents and caregivers to explore the topics the book offers and more.

Sessions will run September 23<sup>rd</sup> through November 11<sup>th</sup> every Tuesday from 5:00-7:30 pm. An inclusive meal and secular childcare will be provided. Please scan the following QR code to sign up for the program:



In community,  
Katie Cosgrove she/her  
Director of Faith Development

### HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

This is a reminder that if you are experiencing financial hardship, you can reach out to Rev. Michelle, [minister@uuamherst.org](mailto:minister@uuamherst.org), for assistance from the Minister's Discretionary Fund. This Fund is made possible by the generosity of fellow congregants, and just one more way we demonstrate that no one is alone. We care for one another.



## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT & NOMINATING COMMITTEE (LD&NC)

The Leadership Development & Nominating Committee met on Tuesday, July 1st. The slate of nominees for next February is continuing to come together. The agenda for the September Leadership Lab is being finalized, with details to be worked out over the next few weeks.

—Julie Marquis, on behalf of Committee Members : Suzanne Christ, Chair; Jacqueline Babka; Ellen Moomaw; Ruth Bowen, BOT Liaison

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## CLOTHING MINISTRY

Summer clothing is flying off the pantry rack! There is such need in WNY. We will soon put out clothing for back to school as well as any supplies or accessories we have. If you have any school supplies, shoes or sneakers, boots, socks, bags or backpacks laying around, bring them in now so we can make them available. Not all children are eligible to receive the supplies that are donated to TOPS or Wegman's. We are grateful for your donations and the people we serve are so glad we can help them.

—Barbara Gauger Kent

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## Follow-up to “The Work That Reconnects” Immersive Workshop

As I write this, Joanna Macy is taking her final journey in hospice care at home, surrounded by family as many across the globe sit vigil via Caring Bridge.\* My friend, Rachel Allen, was here in April to introduce us to Joanna's work by facilitating a Truth Mandala and the Spiral of the Work That Reconnects. Joanna spent her 96 years teaching environmental activism and emotional resilience while doing the work of The Great Turning.

I received a card from Rachel recently: With a full and grateful heart - I thank you. "Dear Marie and UU Amherst, Deep gratitude for your hosting and hospitality. The experience with all of you was so very meaningful - sharing the teachings and practices of The Work That Reconnects. It is my hope that this will support and fortify you for these times. Peace & Blessings, Rachel Allen."

Rachel is a self-employed practitioner of healing arts. That means she doesn't have paid time off for recovery after her upcoming hip replacement surgery. See me if you'd like to know how to support her as she herself is healing.

\*Joanna passed July 19 at 3:56 pm Pacific time.

—Marie Evans



### UU Directory & Link List

The UU directory is available in digital version and hard copy to all UU members. If you need the link or an updated paper copy, call or email Elaine in the Administration Office, There is also a link list available with Zoom links for UU village and covenant groups on the Admin Zoom account and contacts for those groups using personal Zoom accounts. Request a link or PDF of the list from the UU Admin.

## CONNECTIONS

### Help Us Help You—Share Your Emergency Contact Information

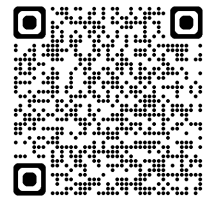
Your well-being is important to us, and having emergency contact details on file ensures we can provide swift assistance in urgent medical situations. We encourage all members of our congregation to consider submitting emergency contact information—while optional, it can be invaluable in times of need.

You can easily share your information by clicking this link <https://forms.gle/HhWFvgkTP6FwHJeU9>, typing it in your browser, or scanning the QR code, below, with your phone's camera app. Paper forms are also available at the Welcome Center, if preferred. Rest assured, your details will be kept strictly confidential. Contact Linda Joy Groat, [uuamherstconnections@gmail.com](mailto:uuamherstconnections@gmail.com) or Laurie Kasnicki to learn more.



### Looking for Caring Team Helpers

The Caring Team is looking for helpers to support new people, reach out to those who are homebound, and engage in other simple ways of support. You can easily share your information by using this URL: <https://forms.gle/N5E8X3cAdKBP3ZTKA> or scanning the QR code on the right with your phone's camera app. Paper forms are also available at the Welcome Center, if preferred.



**UU AMHERST ONLINE STORE**

Print Your Cause UU Amherst Merch Online Store

**SHOP HERE**

## CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER RECIPES

Provided by Christine Boczarska and Faith Pham

Christine Boczarska and Faith Pham are sisters and dedicated members of our Caring For One Another group. They provide occasional meals to UU Amherst members on an as-needed basis. With the meal they generally include a “goodie bag” and a card on behalf of the Caring Group. Each month you’ll find one of their healthy recipes here in *The Foreword* often incorporating fresh vegetables and even gluten-free. This is a very tasty recipe for light, flavorful pancakes from The New York Times that I received from a friend.

Enjoy! Christine

### Lemon Ricotta Pancakes

8-10 small pancakes

3/4 cup all purpose flour  
1 1/2 tsp baking powder  
3/4 tsp salt  
1/4 cup sugar  
1 lemon, zested  
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
3 large eggs  
3/4 cup whole milk ricotta  
1/4 cup whole buttermilk  
2 Tbsp unsalted butter, melted plus  
some for cooking  
Syrup and other toppings of your choice



Whisk flour, baking powder and salt in a small bowl. Heat the griddle/pan to medium low. Add sugar to a large bowl and the lemon zest. With your fingers rub the zest into the sugar. Add vanilla and whisk to moisten evenly. Add eggs and whisk until foamy on top. Add ricotta, buttermilk and melted butter and whisk together until blended. Add flour mixture and gently stir until there is no trace of flour.

Generously butter griddle/pan and drop 1/4 cup circles of batter 1 inch apart. Cook until bottoms are golden and tops bubbly, 2-3 minutes. Flip and cook 2 minutes more.

Good with blueberry syrup and fresh fruit.

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## FUNDRAISING TASK GROUP

We are ready to accept donations for our refurbished universal, gender neutral restroom on the first floor of the admin/FD wing. Dian has designed a poster that you will find in the lobby. It will help us track the progress of our project.

The asbestos abatement will begin this summer and we will continue when we have the necessary funding. The restroom will be available after the abatement until the construction begins (the floor will be bare concrete). Other restrooms will be available in the church while construction is underway. Checks made out to UU Amherst (memo line: restroom renovation); cash, and credit card donations will be also be accepted With your help we can make this happen.

We hope to have a recognition ceremony when the project is completed (any reason to party). Please be generous.

—Fundraising Task Group

FUND RAISER		Universal Gender Neutral Bathroom	PLEASE HELP	
Decor	Paint & Labor	Electrical	Changing Table	\$20k
Grab Bars	Lighting	Mirror	New Sink	\$15k
New Floor	Cap Plumbing	Enlarge Doorway	Demolition	\$10k
Asbestos Abatement				\$5k



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