

Issue

March 2021

The Foreword



UU AMHERST

*Fostering Justice
and Compassion*

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

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Minister Emerita

Rev. Maureen Q. Thitchener

SUNDAY SERVICES MARCH AT 10:30 AM

Our Sunday services continue to be available online. A link is also available on our website. You can view the recorded service anytime on our YouTube channel. A Watch Party/Service/Coffee Hour takes place on Zoom at 10:30 am. Meeting information is sent out by email prior to each Sunday service to join.

Like many congregations in our movement, we follow a shared monthly theme. This month we consider what it means to be a people of *Commitment*. Our exploration includes a commitment to invite more love into the world, a commitment to our own self care and acknowledgment of grief, being committed to the vitality of Unitarian Universalism as our church home, and a commitment to explore new truths in old stories.

March 7 “Universalism for the 21st Century” Rev. Michelle
Universalism’s message of universal salvation, where all souls are ultimately restored to God, may need a new marketing message in the 21st century.

March 14 “Holding Space for Grief: A Healing Service” Rev. Michelle
This has been a year of indescribable loss. Let’s make space for the grief we carry as the impact of the pandemic continues to keep us from so much that has defined us. May we find hope and healing in one another and the Love that binds us.

March 21 “Loved Into Being” UU Association
Faith in Unitarian Universalism isn't an intellectual exercise: it's "heart" work. This full-length worship experience features a sermon by UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, as well as vibrant music, storytelling, and other worship elements that will help us to grow in spirit, in courage, and in generosity. Join us for this Stewardship Adventure.

March 28 “The Christianity We Haven’t Tried Yet” Rev. Michelle
Christianity has never been a monolith - a singularity of belief and doctrine. What if the real message of Christianity has been suppressed for over 2,000 years?

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.*



MINISTER'S CORNER

As we cross the one-year threshold with the pandemic, I find myself reflecting on the path we've trod and the direction we are going. As I have worked closely with Angela, our director of faith development, we have thrown a lot of pasta at the wall - all in the name of helping church folk connect in ways meaningful, silly, and creative. We established the Villages initiative, encouraged folks to participate in covenant groups, offered new programs with: Saturday morning prayer and sharing, "while we wait, let's create" multigenerational crafts, vespers, story hour for adults, 8th principle conversation, Thursday lunch, Spirit Play, youth group, "a meal for your mind" audio gatherings, 30 days of love/sunrise sessions... in addition to regular church meetings, creating/curating and recording worship services, and the thousands of administrative tasks associated with these endeavors - and I've undoubtedly left something out. It's been an inventive and exhausting year.

Despite our desire and efforts to engage the whole church community and to keep everyone connected, there are some realities that make that impossible. Some folks don't have the technology to engage in a virtual world, while others are overwhelmed with endless hours of screen time for work and school and simply can't imagine another 90 minutes, even with people they care about. Some folks just don't like the virtual setting and are waiting out the pandemic until we can be together in person. I think we are all surprised at how long the isolation has stretched on - with months still to go. And then there are the 10-15 folks who attend just about everything - working their social calendar around church offerings. I worry that this approach is not any more sustainable than staying away completely.

We need each other. We need to connect. And we don't need to knock ourselves out doing it. My motto going forward is: *Simplicity and streamlining creates spaciousness*. I require spaciousness in my own life, unencumbered time and the space to listen to the still, small voice within. I invite you to a new commitment - to release expectations for a full menu of activities from which to pick and choose (but which are always available); to be open to taking on leadership for activities or opportunities for connection that you yearn for; and to be intentional about creating pockets of spaciousness in your own life - opportunities for reflection and discovering the sacred at work in the world.

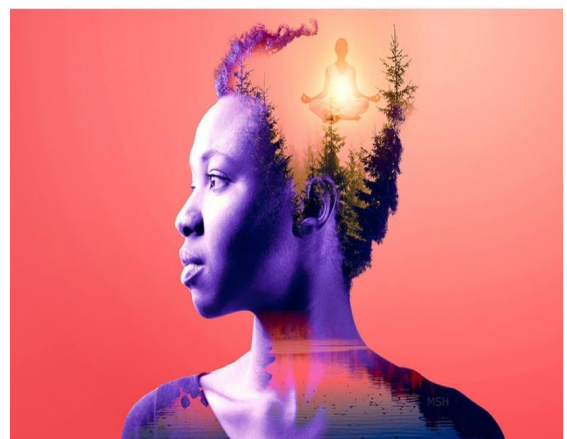
With care,

Rev. Michelle

The Spiritual Brain: Science and Religious Experience

12 sessions of 2 lectures each - to be scheduled based on interest

Human beings appear to have spiritual brains - brains that are capable of feeling deeply connected to something greater than ourselves and that can develop intense beliefs about religion and God. The human brain can engage in practices such as prayer or meditation that result in powerful spiritual experiences that have been described in every tradition and society. This set of 24 lectures from the Great Courses examines the fascinating relationship between the human brain and spirituality. The lecturer is Dr. Andrew Newberg, Myrna Brind Center of Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. If this sounds good to you and you would like to participate in a 12-session series (days/times TBD) **RSVP to minister@uuamherst.org. Minimum of 8 committed participants required.**



BOARD REPORT

This is Niagara Falls taken on February 9, 2021. Sometimes it is hard to find the wonder and magic in the middle of challenging times. I have been finding this church a place of comfort during the pandemic. The people in our church community are truly wonderful. The Board of Trustees has been busier and more productive than we thought possible without physically meeting. I am very proud to be a part of this board and am inspired by the shared commitment.

So, what does that mean? What has been accomplished? We kicked off the appeal last week for the 3 foci: sign, facilities and green sanctuary. So far, we have produced \$6,285 which matched by the Endowment is \$12,570. We are on our way to making the new sign a reality. Stay tuned as your input will be needed in terms of design and alignment with the church mission.

We have gotten feedback from three architectural firms and will be interviewing them soon. The facilities task force is meeting February 17th and then will follow up in the next couple of weeks.

Green Sanctuary re-certification is moving forward and at the same time some creative ventures are evolving. The team applied for a NYSCU grant to hold a Living Green Festival in October featuring the goats to help control the invasive species, guest speakers on sustainable living, gardening and a variety of other topics related to being green. Stay tuned in the weeks ahead.

Other news, the BoT has enlisted the help of Les Buhite to market and sell our rummage on-line. Rummage will be an ongoing fundraiser. Joce Kofke will take over should Les become too busy with other church tech challenges. There will be a commission paid to support their ongoing efforts.

In other news, the Board approved the creation of a new tech support position that will be hired in the near future. The idea is to help congregants with computer issues that challenge and keep them from connecting to the Villages or other church events. Once hired, it may expand to helping people to get vaccines etc. In reading my teacher retirement newsletter, one of the things that may shift post-pandemic is more telehealth via computer. Hopefully, with support we can help our seniors to be confident enough in their computer skills to have their health care needs met. This will be a six-month pilot program. It will be a 10hr/wk. position so people will need to make appointments with whomever is hired.

Lastly, your church Finance Committee will be kicking off the annual Generosity Drive (formerly called pledge drive). Know that your gifts of time, treasure and commitment are deeply appreciated and have allowed us to thrive during a time when many churches are in deep struggle. You are a gift!

Thank you all for your donations to the 3 Foci! I feel we will have a lot to be excited about when we are able to return to community. It is wonderful to have things to look forward to sharing together!

In shared faith,

Karen K Thompson

Karen K Thompson
UU Amherst Board Chair

Board members: Don Tucker, Scott Harrigan, Emily Garrett, Wendy Scott, Jeanine Moyer, Laurie Kasnicki



LOOKING AHEAD TO SUMMER SERVICES: PREACHING BY PARISHIONERS

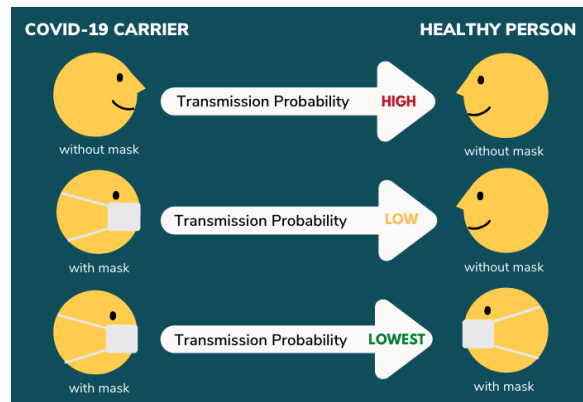
The Preaching by Parishioners (PxP) program was established over 20 years ago by Rev. Carl Thitchener and a few dedicated congregants to provide meaningful worship services during the summer months. Last summer participants offered their services online, and with the future of the pandemic and our ability to gather remaining uncertain, we will prepare for virtual services again this year.

Rev. Michelle will again bring her decades of experience in public speaking and worship arts to guide participants through a process that begins with identifying your “burning coal” and developing that into a full blown worship service with a sermon and all the trimmings. Guidance for virtual services as well as tech support are provided.

Even if you missed the orientation session on January 25th, you can still participate. Future sessions run 2nd & 4th Mondays thru April 26; 7:00-8:30 pm. Contact minister@uuamherst.org for the Zoom link. Participants are encouraged to commit to all sessions of instruction and feedback.

Visitor Sign-In

UU Amherst has adopted a new visitor sign-in procedure to aid in contact tracing should the need arise. Everyone entering the building is asked to sign-in with the date and time (excluding staff). There is a binder for signing in located at each entrance. Please be sure to read the COVID questionnaire that is contained in the binder (do not write on it). If you have any of the symptoms on the questionnaire, we request that you not enter the building at this time. Then sign in the log book. In the event of COVID exposure to anyone who uses the church, we will be able to assist with contact tracing. It is a matter of health and safety.



MINISTER'S REVISED HOURS*

*Rev. Michelle continues to work primarily from home. She is just a call or email away, except for Fridays (writing & study) and Mondays (off).
Tuesday-Thursday
Monday: Off
Friday: Writing

HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

Email: administrator@uuamherst.org
For Newsletter: by 10:00 am on the 16th
For Website: two weeks prior to event
For All Church list serve: 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

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Dear beloved members and friends,

This month our Soul Matters theme is, "What does it mean to be a people of Commitment?" The curators reframe the monthly themes as spiritual practices each month:

The practice of being loyal to something larger than yourself.

The practice of loving even when it is hard.

The practice of making, breaking and re-making our promises. (Most generally, breaking promises is not intentional, but the recommitment is essential to continuing to be in relationship.)

You might wonder how commitment and relationship end up in the realm of the spiritual. I remember our former settled minister, Tim Ashton, speaking about how exciting it was for Unitarian Universalism to be becoming more and more alive during a time when people were becoming less religious, but more spiritual. Fewer going to church, but more adopting spiritual practices.

Here we are, ten years after those expressions, and we are learning more and more how to center our human relationships and how to learn to move through life with intention and attention. Intention to continue to grow and learn. Attention to one another, and to what we say and do. To recognize the impact of our actions and words on those we intend to remain in right relationship with, and when we fall short of our covenants to one another, to be willing to stay at the table. This is hard work. This is spiritual work.

Our morning practice of 30 Days of Love had between 7 and 14 participants each day, with a total of 16 people "tuning in." After the allotted time period, after developing the practice of being and learning together, of beginning the day together, those participants decided to stay at that virtual table, and to share leadership. What an exciting development!

- These exercises will continue each morning through Good Friday, April 2nd. Join any morning you wish at 8:30 am. Coming up: First week of March, Rev. Michelle will curate. It is Angela's week off. The week after participants will continue taking turns.

- While We Wait, Let's Create, Saturdays at 11:00 am every 2nd and 4th Saturday, this is a gathering space for Needle Arts practitioners. (3/13, 3/27) Our next Saturday All Church FD Activity will be Saturday, April 3. The FD team will decide what that entails in the next couple of weeks. **"Lead creators" desired for 3/6, 3/20, and 4/17 in order for this to continue on a weekly basis.**

Our "Meal for Your Mind" program will continue each Wednesday from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. This is an exercise in listening, food, and fellowship. We greet one another, then listen to an informative podcast or lecture for 45 minutes to an hour while muted and cameras resting. Then we rejoin one another and share our impressions of the selection. Topics include people and planet longevity, theology, and social justice. You will find Zoom information in our Weekly Update. Not on the list? Contact our administrator, Elaine Harrigan at administrator@uuamherst.org.

Look for reorganization of Village groups, perhaps more sledding outings (we had 22 people at Clarence Park on Sunday 2/21!!), other programming pasta at the walls. What can you say yes to?

As we move through this continued isolation, this cocoon that we may be getting used to even without realizing it, be careful with yourself during the re-entry. Change keeps changing. Stay together in covenant within this beloved community. Contribute to the building and rebuilding of this relational community.

Truly,

Angela Warren, DFD

GOOGLE CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: Zoom links for general church groups are usually published in the Weekly Update. **If you want to join a Zoom meeting and haven't received a link, please contact the meeting host. *require passcode**

Tuesday, March 2 (monthly 1st Tue)

7:00 pm: Talk Back with Board of Trustees

7:00 pm: Green Task Force Zfd

Friday, March 5 (monthly 1st Fri)

7:00 pm: First Friday Soulful Sundown Vespers* Zfd

Sunday, March 7 (monthly 1st Sun)

9:00 am: FD Team Meeting* Zfd

12:00 pm: Little Free Panty Meeting * Zadmin

Thursday, March 11 (monthly 2nd Thu)

7:00 pm: Kent Covenant Group* Zadmin

7:00 pm Board Meeting

Friday, March 12 (monthly 2nd Fri)

8:30 pm: Second Friday Story Hour for Adults* Zrev

Sunday, March 14 (monthly 2nd Sun)

12:00 pm: Poetry as Practice D. Bofinger

Tuesday, March 16 (monthly 3rd Tues)

1:30 pm: Caring Committee R. Palmere

Wednesday, March 17 (monthly 3rd Wed)

5:00 pm: Finance Committee

7:00 pm: Bofinger Covenant Group D. Bofinger

Thursday, March 18 (monthly 3rd Thu)

7:00 pm: Ministry Council Zrev

Friday, March 19 (monthly 3rd Sun)

7:00 pm: Third Friday 8th Principle Chat* Zrev

Sunday, March 28 (monthly last Sun)

12:15 pm: UU Amherst Book Group* Zadmin

RECURRING:

Monday-Friday, March 1-April 2

8:30 am: UU Universe-ity Sunrise Sessions Zfd

Saturdays, March 6-27

9:30 am: Shared Caring Circle* (weekly) Zrev Rev. Michelle

11:00 am: While We Wait, Let's Create (3/17 & 3/27) Zfd

7:00 pm: Birch Bunch* Zadmin (weekly) Virginia Snider

Calendar continued:

Sundays, March 7-28 weekly

10:30: Online Church service

(join via UUAmherst website link or UU Amherst YouTube channel)

10:30 am: Watch Party/Service/Coffee Hour - Zoom

2:00 pm: Red Bud 5 (3/14) K. Thompson

6:30 pm: Young Adult D. Bofinger

Mondays, March 1-29

7:00 pm: PXP Session (3/8 & 3/22) Zrev

7:00 pm: Lighthearted Larches (3/1, 3/15, 3/29) D. Tucker

7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapple* Zadmin (weekly) L. Marcus

7:30 pm: Marvelous Maples (3/1, 3/15, 3/29) D. Bofinger

Tuesdays, March 2-30

12:30 pm: Women's Group* Zadmin (weekly)

Wednesdays, March 3-24

10:30 am: Willow Village* Zadmin (2nd & 4th Weds: 3/10 & 3/24) J. Senders

4:30 pm: Meal For Your Mind* (weekly) Zfd

6:30 pm: Cucumber Magnolia* Zadmin (1st & 3rd Weds: 3/3 & 3/17) J. Rautenstrauch

7:00 pm: Sage Circle* Zfd (2nd & 4th Weds: 3/10 & 3/24)

7:00 pm: Red Bud (3/24) K. Thompson

7:00 pm: Northtowns Village Zadmin (3/17) Y. Stocker

Thursdays, March 4-25

12:00 pm: Lunch with Friends* Zadmin (weekly)

Google Members' Directory

The UU Amherst Directory can be found in a shared folder on Google. You do not need a Google account to access! If you discover an error, or need to update your information, send an email to administrator@uuamherst.org or call the office at 634-3010. If you would prefer not to have your contact information visible in the Google shared directory, please let Elaine know and it can be removed.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

In recognition of parents and school age kids being highly stressed with asynchronous and synchronous learning, I have touched base with former teachers to elicit support. One of the new challenges is that there needs to be a second adult on zoom per UUA guidelines for child and adult safety. In the short term, if you need support, please contact those below and we will work on creating a second adult or perhaps the parent or other adult could just hang out in the background with a good book.

Here is where we are so far and thank you for your willingness to be in service!

Marlana Rice	Math Gr 7 – Precalculus	Zoom, face time
Maggie Andrews	HS Eng. SS, French and counselling	Zoom, in person, phone
Sue Dubill	N-5 any subject	Email help desk
Betty Crump	Stress reduction, life skills/counselling	Zoom
John Thompson	Chemistry/Biology	Zoom
Wendy Scott	English and writing all levels	Zoom, in-person
Karen Thompson	N-5 any subject, HS Bio, MS Gen Sci.	In person, zoom
Les Buhite	MS, HS Social Studies, English	In person, zoom

++++If I missed you and you would like to help the community, please let me know and I am happy to add you. Karen Thompson

Monthly Chats & Zoom Gatherings with Rev. Michelle

First Friday Soulful Sundown Vespers **Friday, March 5, :00 pm on Zoom** **(30 minutes)**

Gather for a time of quiet restoration and reflection as we share joys, concerns, and sorrows in this 30-minute service on the first Friday of the month. Drop in when you can. See Zoom link in the Weekly Update.

Second Friday Story Hour for Adults **Friday, March 12, 8:30 pm on Zoom** **(60 minutes)**

Get the kids settled, bring your favorite beverage, and settle in for some adult conversation. This month we'll depart from Edwin Friedman's fables and dive into a story from "The Education of God" by my mentor, David Bumbaugh. We'll start at the beginning, with "Adam & Eve." Drop in when you can. See Zoom link in the Weekly Update.

Third Friday 8th Principle Chat **Hosted by Rev. Michelle** **March 19, 7:00-8:30 pm via Zoom**

As a follow-up to the worship service on 2/7, we will have an opportunity (Feb-May) to reflect on the proposed 8th Principle: "We 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." Drop in when you can. See Zoom link in the Weekly Update.

Saturday Morning Shared Caring Circle **Every Saturday at 9:30 am on Zoom** **(30 minutes)**

Join this ongoing drop-in group to reflect together and restore your spirit. See Zoom link in the Weekly Update.

MusicalFare

"Same Girl, Same Guy, Same Piano: ALL NEW STUFF!" Livestream Feb. 26 @ 7:30 pm , \$10 + \$3 facility fee (allows viewing live on Feb. 26 and as a recording through March 26)

<https://ci.ovationtix.com/35675/production/1037607>

"Social Media Fun!": February 27 @ 11:00 pm through April 2 @ 9:00 am - on MusicalFare's Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts

"Broadway Love": Available through March 16, and other streaming video available On Demand:

<https://musicalfare.com/live-streams/on-demand/>

Jewish Repertory Theatre: Ticketed access to video - staged reading of "Beau Jest" by James Sherman, March 11-31. What's a nice Jewish girl to do when her parents expect her to marry a nice Jewish doctor even though she's already in love with another man? Hiring an actor to play her imaginary beau in front of the family seemed like a good idea until the charade is a little too successful and the "hired" boyfriend begins to capture her heart. <https://jewishrepertorytheatre.com/tickets>

Irish Classical Theatre Company: "The Year of Magical Thinking" by Joan Didion - pay per view on-demand streaming April 9-25, tickets priced between \$15 and \$40, with live Zoom events for Opening nights, Talk Backs, and more. <https://irishclassical.com/the-year-of-magical-thinking/> There's also a video library on ICTC's YouTube.

Alleyway: Winter Encore Productions "watch again, or for the first time" - Currents 716, Screaming into the Void (and Other Poems); Pay What You Can, sliding ticket prices. <https://www.alleyway.com/>

Road Less Traveled Productions: Podcast hosted by Peter Palmisano (new episodes bi-weekly): <https://www.roadlesstraveledproductions.org/podcast-off-road-with-peter-palmisano>

The Kavinoky: Has digital content for ticketed viewing: <http://www.kavinokytheatre.com/>
LIVE: FROM THE KAV! This new music/chat series is RECORDED LIVE and welcomes actors & musicians to play ON STAGE at the beautifully renovated Kavinoky Theatre! LET CHI ENTERTAIN YOU! Kavinoky Favorites Charmagne Chi and Joseph Donohue bring their musical comedic Cabaret

Don't forget to listen to **Theater Talk** on WBFO on Friday mornings, or during the Friday WBFO brief podcast: <https://news.wbfo.org/post/wbfo-brief-podcast-launches-recaps-morning-reports-your-schedule>
Also check out Anthony Chase's blog posts on the website - <https://www.theatertalkbuffalo.com>

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, 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.

Don't forget to call your minister!

With health privacy laws, hospitals no longer call churches to let us know when someone has been hospitalized – so it is up to you to contact us if you or someone you know is experiencing health challenges and may want to be contacted. When in doubt, call! Rev. Michelle can be reached on her cell at 716-499-8343.

Contributing to UU Amherst Through E-Giving

The church has implemented THREE ways to give electronically:

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

PLEASE NOTE: If you have not sent in a pledge card because you are not leaving the house to mail one, or you're not comfortable emailing, you can call the Office at 716-634-3010.

AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Here is what the Pantry especially needs:

BREAKFAST ITEMS including full size cereal boxes, granola bars and pancake mix

DRINKS especially shelf stable milk, nondairy milk apple juice, kids juice boxes, hot chocolate and coffee

SOUPS especially chunky soups with meat like chicken noodle and rice and beef vegetable

BAKING ITEMS including flour and sugar as well as cookie and cake mixes

CANNED MEAT including tuna, beef, chicken, ham and corned beef hash

CANNED FRUITS

PERSONAL CARE ITEMS including bar soap, chap stick, shampoo, deodorant, tampons, panty liners, toothbrushes, toothpaste

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS including laundry pods dish soap

PASTA AND SAUCE in cans or plastic jars (no glass)

PET FOOD, canned only

DIAPERS sizes 2, 4 & 5

A current list of items needed is provided in the Weekly Update on Fridays.

Food donations can be placed in the two large clear bins in the back of the church outside the main entrance. Financial contributions can be made online at the church website, uuamherst.org, by clicking the Donate button and selecting the Pantry option. Checks can also be sent to UUCA, 6320 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221. Please write "Pantry" in the Memo line.

For questions or comments please email amherstlittlefreepantry@uuamherst.org. Like us on Facebook: [amherstlittlefreepantry](https://www.facebook.com/amherstlittlefreepantry).



COVID CORNER

Another month has gone by and it is almost a full year since lockdown. The Covid19 virus is still with us and it has been changing so it is more easily transmitted. It is more important than ever that we keep up our vigilance and social distance, wash and sanitize our hands, and wear our masks. Research has shown that we don't need to wipe down our groceries but we do need to wear our masks, in fact, the CDC now recommends we double up on masks for better protection. The closer fitting we can get the mask the better protected everyone is. On another note about masks, I read this morning the fact that the masks increase humidity in our airways is also protective. When the heat is on in our homes, the humidity goes way down. Wearing the mask increases our personal humidity, maintaining the protective mucous barrier in our airways and keeping the virus out! So, keep up the good work of distancing, sanitizing, and masking. And as soon as you can, get vaccinated! We will soon be able to get outside again to gather in safety.



—Barbara Gauger Kent

UU AMHERST BOOK CLUB

Meetings are last Sundays at 12:15 pm on Zoom.

Feb. 28: TOPIC - Black History Month/racial justice Book suggestions from group members: *Just Mercy* a memoir by Bryan Stevenson (that became a film starring Michael B. Jordan and Jamie Foxx); *Someone Knows My Name*, a novel by Lawrence Hill (original Canadian title: *The Book of Negroes*); *Breathe: A Letter to My Sons*, non-fiction by Imani Perry, which is the UUA Common Read for 2021

March 28: Common read - *The Water Dancer* debut novel by Ta-Nehisi Coates, who is Just Buffalo Literary Center's BABEL speaker for April 22

April 25: TOPIC - reader's choice (read whatever you want)

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 church members on an as-needed basis. With the meal they generally include a “goodie bag” and a card on behalf of the Caring Group. They often submit healthy recipes for the monthly *Foreword*. The recipes are easy and usually use fresh vegetables.

Sloppy Joes

8 servings 40 minutes

2 lbs ground beef or turkey or cooked navy beans, lentils or crumbled tofu

1/2 cup chopped onion

1/4 cup chopped celery

1/4 cup green pepper, chopped

1/2 tsp chopped garlic (1 clove)

4 to 7 ozs ketchup

1 Tbsp brown sugar

1 1/2 tsps Worcestershire sauce

1 tsp vinegar

1/4 tsp dry mustard powder

1/4 tsp lemon juice

1 small can chopped tomatoes

Salt and pepper to taste

8 hamburger buns



In a large skillet over medium high heat crumble beef and add onion, celery and green pepper. Cook until beef is browned 7-10 minutes. If you are using beans instead of meat, sauté vegetables in 1 Tbsp olive oil on medium heat until soft. Then add the beans and cook 1-2 minutes more. Add remaining ingredients, reduce heat to medium low and cook at a simmer until thick, about 20 minutes. Serve on buns with hot sauce on the side. It's a quick dish that can be served with a salad or coleslaw for a filling, warm meal.

ENDOWMENT TRUST

UUCA's Endowment Trust is an independent 501(c)3 non-profit with assets which belong to the church congregation. By law, the Endowment Trust is a separate entity from the church's day-to-day operations and treasury, and is managed by a group of elected trustees, not the church board. The Trustees have specific fiduciary responsibilities to maintain, meaning we are bound ethically to act in the church's best interests. Our investment decisions are guided by Mike Angelucci, a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) with Level Financial Advisors, who is trained, tested, and, unlike a run-of-the-mill "financial advisor," held to ethical standards requiring serving the client's best interests.

In addition to traditional financial instruments which began the Trust funds, a past bequest specified that purchase of a "socially responsible" investment fund. That \$30,000 was used in 2014 to purchase UU Common Endowment Fund, a UUA-managed fund that over time didn't perform well. Several years ago, our advisor recommended switching to Parnassus Core Equity Investment, which meets higher benchmarks. It's a low cost index fund that considers BOTH what products/services companies provide—screening out tobacco, firearms, and alcohol—AND how their employees are treated. (Interestingly, socially responsible products do not screen out gambling.) As I write this on February 17, our investment in Parnassus represents 4.6% of our holdings (with a market value of \$50,111.14). Percentages fluctuate due to stock market performance and our semi-annual rebalancing of investments.

What's rebalancing? We hold 19 mutual funds. The funds are a mix of equities (stocks in small, medium, and large companies) and bonds with short and long-term maturities, representing both domestic and international markets. As the economy changes, some investments do better than others and when looking at their market value at the end of a month or quarter, they will account different percentages of our total portfolio balance than they'd begun with. At least once per year, we buy or sell to reestablish the 50-50 balance outlined in our investment strategy.

This year we have set up internet access so that the Chair and Treasurer may view our checking account at Citizens Bank and our portfolio with Level Financial Advisors at any time. Going electronic at Citizens saves us a \$3/month fee they charge for mailing printed statements. We also set up Money Link electronic transfers between Charles Schwab, the financial clearinghouse that holds Level's accounts, and Citizens, so that we can move money quickly and safely in either direction.

With money market account interest rates being very low, the stock market performing well, and the ease of shifting funds when needed, we chose to maximize how much money is actively invested. We used to keep \$20,000 of the portfolio money in "cash." Beginning last fall, we switched to maintaining a half percent in cash or its equivalent in the SchwabCash account and investing all the remaining funds. With a portfolio value over one million dollars, that's about \$5,000. Similarly, we have set up a procedure to minimize accumulating excess funds in our checking account, which doesn't earn any interest, to keep that balance about \$5,000 month-to-month.

—Marie Evans, Chair, for Trustees Jerry Kent, Joe Rautenstrauch, Elaine Cusker, and Lauraine Marcus

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