

Issue

May 2021

The Foreword



UU AMHERST

*Fostering Justice
and Compassion*

The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst
6320 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221
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Office Hours Tues.—Fri. 9am to 2pm www.uuamherst.org

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Minister Emerita

Rev. Maureen Q. Thitchener

MINISTER'S HOURS

Rev. Michelle continues to work primarily from home. She is just a call or email away, except for Mondays (off) and Fridays (writing & study).

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.*

SUNDAY SERVICES MAY 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 *Story*.

May 2 Lo, the Earth Awakes Again! Rev. Michelle
May Day, Beltane, whatever the celebration, we affirm that spring is finally upon us with all Her glory. We celebrate the turning of the Wheel!

May 9 Julia Ward Howe: Let Us Celebrate Mothers (Day)
Guest Speaker Kristin Chambers
19th century writer, lecturer, abolitionist, suffragist, and Unitarian, Julia Ward Howe was an early advocate for a special day to celebrate and commemorate mothers. She achieved fame as the author of the Civil War anthem "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and she co-founded the American Woman Suffrage Association. Kristin Chambers, a long-time UU and retired professor of Social Work, culled through Ms. Ward's writings to create this soliloquy.

May 16 Becoming an Embodied Faith Rev. Michelle
East meets West as we seek insights from the 8-fold path of Buddhism and the expanded 8 principles of Unitarian Universalism. What are the connections? How do we engage head, heart, and hands?

May 23 In Their Own Words Rev. Michelle & Angela
We celebrate the beauty and inspiration of the natural world with poetry, music, and reflections of naturalists, transcendentalists, and other earth-spirited folk!

May 30 Letters Home Rev. Michelle & Les Buhite
A poignant service that weaves the words of those who have served in the U.S. military from the American Revolutionary War to the present.



MINISTER'S CORNER

“With so little to be sure of, if there’s anything at all... I’m sure of here and now and us together.” Those lyrics come from a little-known Sondheim musical, *Anyone Can Whistle* - a show I’ve never seen, but have loved the music and story line. Although in the context of the show, it’s a song of bittersweet goodbyes, today I find myself singing it as I acknowledge the uncertainty of the moment we are in and how we will forge the next chapter of our story together. There is so much we simply can’t know at this moment with regard to how and when we will come back together - yet what we can be sure of is who we are together.

With so little to be sure of, let us put our attention to that which we can influence. Make your pledge of financial support to UU Amherst; and if you have the resources, increase your pledge to help bridge the gap for those who are experiencing uncertainty and lack. Practice saying “Yes” in the mirror each morning, so you’ll be ready to enthusiastically join in activities and opportunities for growth and service. Send that card, make that phone call... reach out. It will make someone’s day, and it will fill your own heart. We are all in this together, and we are in it for the long haul. Pace yourself. Let uncertainty lead you to compassionate action, rather than fear. You are never, ever alone.

With care,
Rev. Michelle

Living Green Festival

We are super excited to announce that the NYS Convention of Universalists (NYSCU) has affirmed our vision of a festival promoting Green Living this coming fall with a generous grant to cover half of the expenses. A generous member of UU Amherst has come forward with the other half of the projected expenses through their contribution to the Green area of focus of the three ‘foci’. This is HUGE! This means GOATS! And music, and educational speakers and seminars, and vendors, and... and...!

Circle the first weekend of October on your calendar and be ready to lend a hand as we offer the community an opportunity to learn about living Green. We will be ready for in-person and/or online activities. UU Amherst will take our place as innovative leaders in the community as we forge relationships with other groups that are working for environmental justice at a local level.

The work is beginning now as we prepare our grounds and secure speakers and other elements of the festival. NOW is the time to get involved!!! Contact Angela Warren (dfd@uuamherst.org) or Rev. Michelle (minister@uuamherst.org) to put your talents to work for the life and health of our community.

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.

BOARD REPORT

During a pandemic, what can we accomplish? UU Amherst is amazing! Thank you for the support you are showing and looking forward to how things can be.

In June, Wendy Scott and Scott Harrigan will complete their terms as trustees. As chair, I am so grateful for their leadership and talents. We are most fortunate to have had them serve our congregation. Continuing on will be: Don Tucker, Emily Garrett, Laurie Kasnicki, Jeanine Moyer and myself. At the June 2nd congregational meeting, we will be voting on the Nominating Committee's panel of candidates for the Board of Trustees, the Endowment Trust and the Nominating Committee.



Here's where we are:

\$25,000 from the Endowment Trust has been received. With our match we are at \$61,201. The 3 foci fund is restricted and can only be spent on the 3 foci. It cannot be used to balance the budget.

In August, at our Board retreat, the inspired comment came from Scott Harrigan: "I want to accomplish something!" Hence, the challenge and so we began! Behind the scenes, much has been done!

We are moving well on these 3 projects. It is planned to have a **congregational meeting at noon on May 2nd**. We will need a quorum, so please plan to attend if you are a voting member. We will be voting on spending up to \$35,000 on hiring an architect to do a space and usage assessment. This is no longer a want to do. It is a need. Our sacred space is challenged by aging structure and a lack of maintenance.

The Green Task Force is actively discerning our role as Green leaders in the community, with an emphasis on community networking, education, and innovation. They applied for a grant to have a festival in October. The grant came through and the generosity of a member matched the grant to make it closer to reality. Stay tuned!

The sign team is getting closer to presenting to the congregation and the board. They have some challenges to meet with meeting town codes. They are being meticulous in their approach and we hope to be ready in the fall!

Our **Generosity (Pledge Drive)**: After 3 weeks, we are at \$102,482. For those who have pledged, thank you for your timeliness. It will definitely help in budget preparation.

Last year we presented a budget that was at \$50,000 deficit. What has kept us afloat is the PPP loans along with the stewardship of previous boards who were mindful of spending.

Admittedly, I am concerned as some of our members are no longer in a position to pledge. Looking at members who will become emeritus or sadly, those who have passed, it will take five (5) \$1,000 pledges to make up for one of these generous people. They so believed in the church and its mission; they gave generously throughout their life time. They led by example and are more appreciated than they know.

If the pace of the generosity campaign continues as it currently is, we will be in a position to present a deficit budget AND the float we had carried will be nearly gone. This is our safety net in case monies do not come in on a regular basis to cover monthly costs. You may want to consider giving on line on a monthly basis.

On average, it cost us \$819.00 per day to keep the doors open, the staff employed and the lights on. There is no frill. Although this sounds dire, I am hopeful that people will either add to their pledge or if they haven't yet pledged to consider an increase over last year.

Our goal is to increase our tech budget so we can do both in-person and live-stream church services. Our current equipment is the personal property of Les and Michelle Buhite. Thank you for your unwavering support, Les and Michelle. I am applying for a grant, but it will not cover the entire cost.

Continued on page 4

Board report continued

We need to increase Angela Warren's FD position to focus on all ages. Currently, she is putting in full time hours, but is being paid a part time salary. Hers is a gift of love for this community. Everyone that has talked with me is so pleased with Angela's role in FD. She has touched many lives throughout the congregation. We may not be the children's FD church as we once had been, but we can be the best Life Span FD church around with your support and participation!

Music has been by guest performance which means no choir. FD and music are cornerstones of church success. The reality is, they are not free and if we want them to be here for us in the future, we need to invest in them now. Currently, we are looking to continue as we have been with per diem music and to not seek a music director for 21-22. We need to be financially responsible and keep our costs in check.

I would like to paint a rosier picture. On so many levels we have done well during the challenges of the pandemic. We just need to invest a little more heavily to flourish when we come back to in-person church. Remember, we get no help financially beyond the church members themselves. It is up to us to create a healthy, vibrant, welcoming church to sustain us for the long haul. The rosy part of the picture is you! We can do it together!

In shared faith,
Karen Thompson, Chair
On behalf of the Board of Trustees
UU Church of Amherst

COMMITTEE ON MISSION

We are excited about and enjoying our continued work with the Faith Development Team (FD). They have reviewed and revised their Mission Statement to read as follows: "To develop and promote opportunities for all ages that lead toward spiritual wholeness while creating an inclusive, beloved community both within and beyond our congregation." FD has also established one goal and we will be gathering in May to finalize more using the SMART system: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely.

June would be when one member rotates off our committee and a new person comes on. However, since our newest member resigned, Diane Bofinger and Suzanne Christ, original members, have both agreed to stay on another year. We say good-bye with gratitude to Marcia Scott who worked with us through the past year. Her contribution of introducing us to the "Circle Way" for communicating at meetings has proved very valuable. We wish Marcia fruition in her other church endeavors. We are very happy to announce that the Board of Trustees has approved our newest member, Marjorie Marcille. Marge will begin her work with us at our April meeting. Welcome, Marge!

The Board of Trustees has asked that we meet with them to both introduce and experience use of the "Circle Way". We are in process of setting a date for this gathering. —Suzanne Christ, Committee on Mission Chair

WHEN DONATING TO THE 3 FOCI:

Please make your check payable to UUCA with a note in the memo line: 3 foci. If donating online, select "Gift" and enter 3 foci in the box. Thank you for supporting this important work!

Contributing to UU Amherst Through E-Giving

The church has implemented **THREE** ways to give electronically:

1. The **Giving** option on the church website (uamherst.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

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Dear UU Amherst Members and Friends,

This month our Soul Matters theme is, “What does it mean to be a people of Story?” When reframed as spiritual practice, this month’s packet offers two statements of what that looks like: The practice of living by narratives of our own making. The practice of reclaiming memory and re-remembering ourselves. What is UU Amherst’s story? How are we both the legacy and the future of this particular place?



Our first UU Amherst congregants left the city, then left Los Robles in the Village of Williamsville to move to this large parcel of land on Main Street. That land along the way grew a beautiful chapel and a Country Day School, numerous gardens and an Ecology Center. This narrated their priority of stewarding the land to grow spaces for worship and education. This is part of our legacy. We are fortunate to still have members among us who remember this time. You are our legacy. Thank you.

This spirit of growing and educating is still with us. It is still our narrative. Green Initiatives have been a constant part of this growing awareness of being responsible members of the Earth Community. We are fortunate to have an outdoor space to learn in and grow, and to use widely. We must be grateful to those who chose this place for us to grow, and also recognize the legacy of those who occupied and nurtured this land prior to our being here.

What does this have to do with Faith Development? Our UU Faith is about Sacred Activism. In our morning UU Universe-ity group, we have been engaging in social justice education, including increasing our understanding of white supremacy culture, voting rights, the need to heal the earth, and the intersectionality of all of it. One of the most meaningful takeaways for me has been the idea of Place, which really has come from diving deeper into Farmer Poet Wendell Berry. This from his *Poem on Hope*: The young ask the old to hope. / What will you tell them? / Tell them at least what you say to yourself. / Because we have not made our lives to fit / Our places, the forests are ruined, the fields eroded, / The streams polluted, the mountains overturned. Hope / Then to belong to your place by your own knowledge / Of what it is that no other place is, and by / Your caring for it as you care for no other place, this / Place that you belong to though it is not yours. . . Initiating the Three Foci this year was a critical move to continue to be good stewards of this place. The Green Focus is the umbrella of the rest, always bringing us into focus as we turn our gaze towards the healing of this beautiful planet of which we are a part, as we do the dance between safely gathering again at the same time as reaching out to the greater community.

Beginning on Saturday April 24th from 1:00 to 4:00 pm, Ms. Green Jeans and I invite you to our campus for “Green Thumb Saturdays.” She will be out of town most weekends, but she can be pretty pushy, and I know she is going to ask me all the time how it is going. Through a combination of instruction and work, you will learn how to care for our grounds —AND yours!—in an environmentally friendly way. This greening of our church property will also prepare us for our fall Homecoming and Living Green Festival coming in October. Please lend a hand to this important Green initiative and gain valuable knowledge along the way! Let us care for our Place and care for the creatures, including us, who surround it with Love and Hope.

Angela Warren, Director of Faith Development

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**

Sunday, May 2 (monthly 1st Sun)

9:00 am: FD Team Meeting* Zfd

12:00 pm: Special Meeting to Approve Motion

Tuesday, May 4 (monthly 1st Tue)

7:00 pm: Talk Back with Board of Trustees

Thursday, May 6 (monthly 2nd Thu)

7:00 pm: Kent Covenant Group* Zadmin

7:00 pm Board Meeting

Friday, May 7 (monthly 1st Fri)

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

Sunday, May 9 (monthly 2nd Sun)

12:00 pm: Poetry as Practice D. Bofinger

Thursday, May 13

7:00 pm: Board Meeting

7:00 pm: Kent Covenant Group Zadmin

Friday, May 14 (monthly 2nd Fri)

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

Tuesday, May 18 (monthly 3rd Tues)

1:30 pm: Caring Committee R. Palmere

Wednesday, May 19 (monthly 3rd Wed)

5:00 pm: Finance Committee

7:00 pm: Bofinger Covenant Group D. Bofinger

Thursday, May 20 (monthly 3rd Thu)

7:00 pm: Ministry Council Zrev

Friday, May 21 (monthly 3rd Sun)

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

Sunday, May 30 (monthly last Sun)

12:15 pm: UU Amherst Book Group* Zadmin

RECURRING:

Saturdays, May 1-29

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

11:00 am: While We Wait, Let's Create (5/8 & 5/22)* Zfd

1:00 pm: Green Living—Gardening (church grounds)

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

Sundays, May 2-30 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 (5/9) K. Thompson

6:30 pm: Young Adult D. Bofinger

Mondays, May 3-31

7:00 pm: Lighthearted Larches (5/10 & 5/24)
D. Tucker

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

7:30 pm: Marvelous Maples (5/10 & 5/24)
D. Bofinger

Tuesdays, May 4-24

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

Wednesdays, May 5-25

10:30 am: Willow Village* Zadmin (2nd & 4th
Weds: 5/12 & 5/26) J. Senders

7:00 pm: Sage Circle* Zfd (2nd & 4th Weds:
5/12 & 5/26)

7:00 pm: Red Bud (5/26) K. Thompson

7:00 pm: Northtowns Village (5/19) Y. Stocker

Thursdays, May 6-27

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

Google Members' Directory

The UU Amherst Directory can be found in a shared folder on Google. If you discover an error, need to update your information, which to have your information removed, or need the link, contact the Office Administrator, at administrator@uuamherst.org or call the office at 634-3010.

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

ENDOWMENT TRUST

The Endowment Trustees are thrilled that the congregation has made donations to the 3 Foci to match all \$25,000 that Endowment offered. We had written a check to the church Board in January for half the amount, drawing from cash accounts. For the remainder, which was transferred in late March, our financial advisor sold some underperforming funds and rebalanced our holdings. Our portfolio remains in good shape with the balance continuing to be over \$1 million.

Our next scheduled meeting will be in July, after the close of the second financial quarter of 2021 and after the Annual Meeting that will elect a replacement for outgoing Endowment Treasurer, Jerry Kent. We're grateful to Jerry for his faithful service and deep knowledge of UU Amherst history.

Remember that you can contribute to the Endowment at no cost to you, when you shop online through smile.amazon.com and designate Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst Endowment Trust as the charity to support. You shop. Amazon gives 0.5% of the price of your purchase to the charitable organization of your choice. Same products and prices as "regular" Amazon. The March quarterly donation from Amazon was \$39.50. THANK YOU to all who have selected the Endowment as their beneficiary with Amazon Smile!

-Marie Evans, for Lauraine Marcus, Elaine Cusker, Joe Rautenstrauch, and Jerry Kent

Monthly Chats & Zoom Gatherings with Rev. Michelle

First Friday Soulful Sundown Vespers Friday, May 7 7:00 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 Grown-ups Friday, May 14 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 dive into a story from "The Education of God" by my mentor, David Bumbaugh. This month we will get an inside look at the character of Abraham. Drop in when you can. See Zoom link in the Weekly Update.

Third Friday 8th Principle Chat May 21, 7:00-8:30 pm via Zoom

Join us as we continue 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."

This is the last in this series of drop-in conversations. 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.

UU AMHERST THEATER LOVERS

—Marie Evans

New York State has allowed re-opening of live performance spaces as of April 2, but capacity restrictions will preclude most indoor theaters from welcoming audiences until fall (because it just isn't financially feasible to mount full productions). Meanwhile, there are many ways to enjoy theater on the internet.

O'Connell & Company is producing virtual shows. Tickets available at oconnellandcompany.com including May 14-23: **ART**.



UB Department of Theater and Dance (THD)

April 23-25 - **Pipeline** by Dominique Morisseau. Tickets for UB shows: www.showtix4u.com/events/18238

MusicalFare is producing/presenting ticketed Live Streams or previously recorded events on demand and FREE Zoom Roundtables. See their website, musicalfare.com, for current offerings. Use the Live Streams tab at the top right to access On Demand shows.

On Demand: **In Our Own Voices**. (Only \$10 per household) *This event will be available to watch through June 30. You will be emailed the link to watch immediately after purchase. You may watch anytime and as many times as you wish before 6/30.* With selections from the Golden Age to modern songs, this powerful night of beautiful voices is sure to uplift and inspire you. FREE videos are also offered on their YouTube channel.

Road Less Traveled Productions' podcast, **Off Road with Peter Palmisano**, continues, with new episodes about every 2 weeks, on the Podbean hosting service (also available to listen from the website: www.roadlesstraveledproductions.org/podcast-off-road-with-peter-palmisano).

Ujima Company, Inc is presenting a One-Act Festival of three plays.

Free videos: **SPOKEN: In Her Own Words**, parts 1 and 2, **Hair On Fire**, parts 1, 2 & 3, and **#ArtThatHeals** (6 parts) are available on-demand on their YouTube channel.

Second Generation Theatre has a blog on their website and hosts FREE readings DIGITALLY! Each reading will be followed by a discussion with the director, actors, and led by SGT Literary Director, Katherine Boswell. **Upcoming:** Monday 5/3 @ 7 pm - **Do You Feel Anger?** by Mara Nelson-Greenberg

AlleywayTheatre - encore productions are available on-demand - visit website for details

The Kavinoky hopes to return to live in-theater productions in September. In the meantime, digital offerings are available through their website, www.kavinokytheatre.com, at \$15 per event.

Lancaster Opera House presents new episodes of **Broadway Brunch** on WEBR radio, 1440 AM, at noon on Sundays. Past episodes are available for listening on their website.

Torn Space Theater presented a live, outdoor show, **Silence**, last summer. Access a recording of it FREE (donations welcome) on their website.

For the latest developments in Buffalo theater and to hear interviews with producers, listen to **Theater Talk** on WBFO FM 88.7 on Friday mornings, or on the web at news.wbfo.org/term/theater-talk.

SOCIAL JUSTICE UPDATE: VOICE BUFFALO

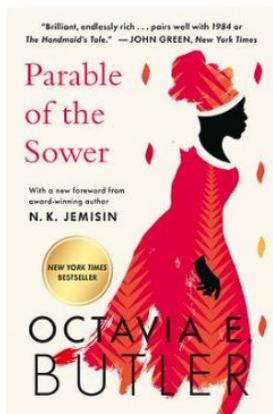
VOICE-Buffalo continues to uphold its decision to keep the Holding Center open. Closing the facilities will hurt detainees and families with high commissary and phone fees along with keeping families away from offering support to their loved ones.

- Plans to offer some in person and virtual Town Meetings with potential persons seeking to be elected as next county sheriff. Dates are May 24 or May 27, 6-8 pm. Place to be determined. Channel 7 & 4 will be in attendance.
 - In the planning stages are coffee houses to educate voters, especially in the suburbs regarding the importance of their vote and the qualities necessary to be an effective and good sheriff for our community. April 28 and May 19 will be live and virtual with conversation and games to be offered along with prizes. Time 12:30 pm.
 - Any questions call Pat Burke 684-0119 or Whitney Walker
- Pat Burke

UU AMHERST BOOK CLUB

We meet via Zoom the last Sunday of the month, at 12:15 pm. All are welcome! There is no requirement to have read the book prior to the discussion. Contact Grace Little or Marie Evans for the link.

April 25: TOPIC - reader's choice (read whatever you want). At this gathering, we'll also be choosing the topic for June.



May 30: Common read - *The Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler, our first foray into Science Fiction (written in 1993, it's set "in the 2020s, when society has largely collapsed due to climate change, growing wealth inequality, and corporate greed").

COVID CORNER

As I write this, the US has suspended the use of the J&J vaccine while investigating several incidents of post vaccination blood clots. Scary times. In reality, this is not unusual and “The Experts”



expect the CDC and the FDA to approve continued use of this vaccine. What does this mean for the UUCA? This does not change anything in the plan to reopen. We still recommend everyone who is eligible to sign up to be vaccinated against COVID-19, continue to follow the guidelines of social distancing, mask wearing, and hand sanitizing...even after vaccination...to help protect those who are not vaccinated. By the time this *Foreword* is printed, I will have received my second vaccine dose and will feel more comfortable gathering in person. I look forward to outside events in the nice weather. I am grateful to the UUCA leadership who have helped provide community during this past year of pandemic uncertainty. I am hopeful that we are on the path to a safe, controlled reopening of our beloved (physical) church.

—Barbara Gauger Kent

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.

If you like the flavor of almond you will love these yummy cookies.

ITALIAN ALMOND COOKIES

Makes 2 dozen. 350 degrees. 2 hours

2 cups blanched almonds (Trader Joe’s has a 15 oz package that is perfect)

2/3 cup sugar

2 egg whites

1/2 tsp almond extract

Powdered sugar, for dusting

Amarena cherries or any dried cherries or raisins or whole almonds for garnish



Put half the almonds and half the sugar in a food processor and process to obtain a coarse meal. Repeat with the rest of the almonds and sugar. Put egg whites in a medium bowl with the almond extract. Using a wire whisk, beat the whites until soft peaks form. Add the almond sugar mixture to the whites and use a rubber spatula to incorporate the egg whites until you obtain a dough like consistency. Use a spoon to make 24 small blobs. Roll each by hand to make smooth balls, then flatten them slightly. Roll each in powdered sugar to coat well and place 1 inch apart on a parchment lined pan. Press a dried cherry, raisin or almond in the center of each or leave plain if you prefer. Leave the tray of unbaked cookies at room temperature, uncovered for 1 hour. Bake at 350 until lightly browned, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

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

AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Our newest team member is Mariel, a junior at Williamsville East (and Bob & Kathy Wack's granddaughter). She has started an initiative called "Refund the Pantry," collecting bottles and cans for return, then donating the proceeds to the pantry. Email refundthepantry@gmail.com if you'd like her to pick up cans and bottles at your residence. She's interested in collaborating with others to create a crew of volunteers to geographically expand the process. We are considering adding a drop-off bin at church for donations.



Amherst Little Free Pantry has been awarded a 2021 grant from the Riefler Memorial Enablement Fund, administered by the Buffalo area Network of Religious Communities. This is our second award from NRC; the first helped us initially establish the pantry in September 2018 (through the tireless efforts of Maria Ceraulo). Thank you to Cheryl Tomasulo for writing up this application, and to Congregation Havurah for partnering with us in this ongoing venture. We knew there was a need when we started 2-1/2 years ago, but usage of our emergency food resource has exploded since the beginning of the pandemic.

We are grateful for other funding over the past year from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Foundation for Jewish Philanthropies, Jolly Boys of Williamsville, and the Muslim Public Affairs Council, as well as individual financial donations by check, gift card, and online giving. Thanks are also due to our dedicated cadre of volunteers who check the pantry **every day** and restock it.

The pantry has taken over the donation room off the church entrance lobby. Dian and Don Tucker generously donated professional-grade grocery shelving, and a dedicated crew of volunteers emptied the room, thoroughly cleaned, assembled the units, and restocked over the weekend of March 27-28. The space is newly dubbed the "Pantry Distribution Center" by Rev. Michelle. Used books were moved to the underutilized shelves in the church Living Room, creating a more welcoming space for browsing. Take a look at photos of the transformation on the church website or the Amherst Little Free Pantry Facebook page.



PANTRY NEEDS: [PAPER or PLASTIC PACKAGING ONLY, no glass, no fresh food]

Diapers in size 2, 4, or 5, **baby wipes**, **baby or toddler food**,
Gluten free items

Shaped pastas (elbows, penne, radiatore, shells, wagon wheels, lasagna),

Pasta sauce in plastic bottles or cans, Chef Boyardee **canned pastas**

Coffee, **breakfast foods** like granola or cereal bars, **juice** boxes or small bottles or cans (8-12 oz),

Canned **fruit**, baking mixes (pancake [+syrup!], muffins, cookies, cake, brownies),

taco kits, family-size condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayo, salad dressing, BBQ sauce),

Single-serve condiment packets (those above + sweeteners like sugar, Splenda, etc.),

Shelf-stable proteins (chicken, corned beef, salmon, tofu, refried beans, baked beans),

Shelf-stable beverages (milk, Almond Breeze, soy milk, or protein drinks like Boost)

Basic pantry supplies like oil, flour, sugar, baking soda, honey

Cleaning and personal care items (dish detergent, deodorant, shampoo, toothbrushes)

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.

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