

Issue

March 2022

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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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 MARCH AT 10:30 AM

We are transitioning back to hybrid services: in-person and virtual. Masks (KN95 or better) are required. The livestream service will continue. A link to our YouTube channel is available on our website. You can view the recorded service anytime on the channel. Invite friends and family to church!

This month we lift up and engage the topic of renewing faith. "Renewing" can be a verb, actions we take to renew our commitment to live our Principles; and it can be an adjective that describes Unitarian Universalism as a faith that renews. Let's explore the fullness of our faith and our capacity for renewal.

March 6 "UU: The Faith that Renews" Rev. Michelle
Unitarian Universalism offers a 'choose your own adventure' pathway to spiritual life. How are you being renewed?

March 13 Cinema Sunday: Fools and Dreamers Rev. Michelle
We'll spend a portion of the service watching a short documentary about regenerating native forest. Conversation opportunities will be made available immediately following the service at the Zoom watch party, as well as a separate conversation on Tuesday 3/15 at 7:00 pm (<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81091033788>).

Watch the *Weekly Update* for a potential Faith Development For All Ages alternate activity during Cinema Sunday.

March 20 Renewing our Faith in the Beauty & Goodness of Life
Rev. Michelle

It's Ostara, the Vernal Equinox, the next point on the Wheel of the Year. Winter's grasp is loosening and the promise of Spring is all around us. Come celebrate! (*Be sure to attend the bonfire the night before! See listing on page 2.*)

March 27 Church in 3-D: Discovery Rev. Michelle
Everything has its time and season. We have begun the process of Discovery, Discernment, and Design with regard to our future as a beloved community. We know where we've been, but where are we going? How will we get there? What will we carry forward? What belongs to another time? Let's see what we've discovered in the first part of Church in 3-D.



MINISTER'S CORNER

In just nine weeks I will begin my sabbatical leave from May through August. As I conclude this seventh year in shared ministry with you, I am ready for a time of rest and renewal. I have a couple of exciting projects in mind and look forward to the freedom to be creative and set aside my usual rhythms and structure for a season.

The sabbatical time is also an opportunity for the congregation to reclaim areas of ministry and church life that may need new energy. I will be away from church life for the Discernment portion of Church in 3-D. Our reunion in September will be a time to share what we all have learned and to let that period of

Discernment inform the third aspect of Church in 3-D, Design.

Meanwhile, we have nine weeks to make plans, gather in worship, and continue the Discovery process of our various points of entry to the UU Church of Amherst. As the days grow longer and the sun stronger, may we embrace the joys and responsibilities of faithful membership.

Warmly,
Rev. Michelle

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.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The Turning of the Wheel - Ostara Bonfire
Saturday March 19,
7:00 pm



Join us for a time of fellowship at the bonfire site in the Waterhouse Ecology Center. We'll save the more elaborate ritual elements for Sunday morning and simply enjoy the beauty of the season and the warmth of friendship (and fire). Hot chocolate and mulled cider provided!

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

BOARD REPORT

Hi, Everyone!

It's hard to believe that spring is around the corner... have faith! It's coming! In essence the church year closes at the end of June, time is both dragging and flying! There is so much that is in flux:



1. Having people step up to be nominated for the Board of Trustees: Folks, we need you! Don Tucker, Laurie Kasnicki and I come off the board this year. Although we would like to finish some of the amazing projects that were started on our watch, the By Laws don't allow for it. To date, the nominating committee has not had one person say yes to stepping up to this level of leadership. We need three (3). If you have thought about being an integral part of church leadership at a time when exciting things are unfolding, please consider stepping up. If you need more information, ask any board member.
2. We thought the sign would be the easiest of our projects. It turns out, we have some challenges that were unknown when we began. The sign team is moving forward and we will have a vote on expenditure of money for the project in annual meeting (stay tuned). Some of the challenges are tree and rock removal, electricity to the location, variances with the town, trenching through bed rock, etc. It isn't just a simple project (as I thought it would be).
3. Next would be sign presentations to the congregation.
4. Although we are voting on the change back to the calendar year, we still have a gratitude drive to implement. We will be preparing a six (6) month budget and then follow up with a year budget after the annual meeting. There are many advantages to the calendar year. We have presented a deficit budget the last two years. It is imperative that we become more financially stable. Now is the time to increase your pledge. We have lost members over the last two years which greatly impact our financial stability. Without grants and the PPP (payroll Protection Program) loan program. We would have been in the red again. Although we are not a "business," we cannot survive by creating deficits each year.
5. The gratitude drive needs you. Please contact Karen Thompson if you are willing to: make calls, write thank you notes, stuff envelopes or do something I haven't thought of. We need people. Many hands make light work for each. Chatting with friends should be an easy reach. I appreciate whatever help you are willing to give.
6. Next up would be the facilities presentation to the congregation regarding the architects' findings and suggestions. A capital campaign would need to follow.
7. Timing of our full reopening. We are letting the medical team lead on this. They are in the trenches and know our church community. Safety is our primary concern.
8. The tech team has moved forward with what we need to be adept at hybrid and online services.
9. The Green Justice Team and FD are creating new projects to help feed our pantry clients fresh produce over the summer months. They are busily planning the Living Green festival.

continued on next page 4

I'm certain, I am forgetting much; but these are the things that surface and hold my attention. We are so fortunate to have Michelle as our minister and a wonderful church community. When you consider your church membership, think about how much this church community means to you. I know that I am grateful to each and every one of you. Together we are coming through the pandemic with hopes and aspirations of what we can be. Stay well and be safe,

As always,

Karen Thompson
On behalf of the
UU Amherst Board of Trustees



Karen Thompson



Don Tucker



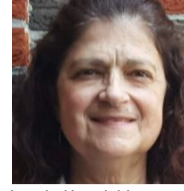
Bruce Becker



Linda Gardner



Emily Garrett



Laurie Kasnicki



Jeanine Moyer

Contribution Advisories

Sending checks for your contributions:

When mailing in your checks to the church, please write on the check memo line or a note inside the envelope regarding what the check is for (if needed) and not on the front of the envelope. This is a safety precaution so that you are not calling attention to the envelope containing a check.

Contributions that do not apply to your church pledge:

Funds that are contributed to share-the-plate and/or Endowment Trust do not apply to your annual pledge and are not included on year-end statements. Funds that are contributed to the Minister's Discretionary Fund, Little Free Pantry, 3 FOCI, etc., are listed on year end statements.

For tax purposes, we highly recommend keeping your own records of share-the-plate and Endowment Trust contributions.

Contributing to UU Amherst

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**
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



New Tech Talk Thursdays

Joce Kofke*, UU Amherst's technical support person, will be hosting a "Tech Talk" on Zoom every Thursday (except March 3rd) from 11:00 am-12:00 pm to answer any questions you might have. See the *Weekly Update* for

Zoom link. In-home service will **only be available on Thursday afternoons** due to job commitments. Contact Joce at tech@uuamherst.org. If you don't have email, call Elaine in the Business office at 634-3010 and she will provide Joce with your contact information.

*Joce's pronouns are they/them

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Dear UU Amherst Members and Friends,

You will be reading this during this time off - a mini sabbatical that I am truly grateful for. Your Board of Trustees and Minister continue to see the big picture of caring for this congregation and I am truly blessed to be in their hands, and in yours. As spring emerges, we have the fondest and most stubborn hope that this season will be the one that will bring us all back together, and bring us all deeper into this beloved community that we all are a part of and that we all treasure. May you sow the seeds of love and care for one another during this time of emergence. See you in church on March 20th. Until then, stay warm, safe, and thoughtful.



In Service,
Angela Warren, UU Amherst Director of Faith Development

P.S. Speaking of seeds, the seeds we planted during our Solstice rituals have started to sprout!

Church in 3-Ds: Discovery, Discernment, Design: UU Amherst Faith Development for All 2022

“Institutions in our society need reinventing. Time has come for a new dream.
That’s what being a revolutionary is.” - Grace Lee Boggs

The first trimester of this year-long process is Discovery. Many of your team and small group leaders have been given a “bug in the ear” about what this entails, and it really is about thinking and about having conversations. It is about Discovering your own WHY? and then US Discovering what OUR WHYs have in common, about Discovery of our Core Values. You may say, well, of course we have values in common. And we are certain that we do. But how practiced are we in sharing those values with others, with articulating in some valuable way what their essence is? We can always list our Principles and Sources, but how can our common values inform how our church community moves forward, Discerning and Designing our future in the larger community? Let’s Discover together! There will be many opportunities to share with one another throughout 2022.

Church in 3-D: DISCOVERY

You are invited to chime in regarding your discovery of UU Amherst (see questions above). These sessions will all be offered via Zoom and will be recorded for archival use: Thursday, March 3rd, 7:00 pm; Tuesday, March 8th, 10:00 am; and Thursday, March 10th, 7:00 pm.

Topic: Church in 3-D: Discovery

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89898796078?pwd=WWorTEpJONX3d2FBSkpbktaUUITQT09>

Meeting ID: 898 9879 6078

Passcode: Discovery

Green Justice Team

Your UU Amherst Green Justice Team meets regularly on the second Wednesday of the month from 7:30 to 9:00 pm. Jeanine Moyer is the Team lead, and is seeking a co-leader. We are particularly seeking someone who has experience in communications / marketing / event planning during the next few seasons. Planning for our newly re-scheduled Green Living Festival will be a priority. Our new dates are September 9 to 11, 2022. We also have been in communication with our own leadership about expanding our efforts to grow and provide more healthy foods to those in need. Contact Jeanine at jeanine.moyer@gmail.com to volunteer!

MARCH 2022 CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: All church activity is now temporarily back to virtual. Zoom links for general church groups are published in the Weekly Update unless they are hosted on a private account. Zoom events taking place in the Zadmin, Zfd, or Zrev rooms are identified with the abbreviation. ***require passcode**

Tuesday, Mar 1st (monthly 1st Tues)

7:00 pm: Talk Back with Board

Thursday, Mar 3rd

7:00 pm: Church in 3-D: Discovery

Sunday, Mar 6th (monthly 1st Sun)

12:00 pm: Little Free Pantry Meeting* Zadmin

Tuesday, Mar 8th

10:00 am: Church in 3-D: Discovery

7:00 pm: Board Meeting (monthly 2nd Tues)

Wednesday, Mar 9th (monthly 2nd Weds)

1:30 pm: Caring Team

7:30 pm: Green Justice Team* Zfd

Thursday, Mar 10th

7:00 pm: Kent Covenant Group (monthly 2nd Thu) Zadmin

7:00 pm: Church in 3-D: Discovery

Sunday, Mar 13th (monthly 2nd Sun)

12:00 pm: Poetry as Practice D. Bofinger

Wednesday, Mar 16th (monthly 3rd Wed)

1:00 pm: 3rd Wednesday Covenant Group

5:00 pm: Finance Committee

7:00 pm: Bofinger Covenant Group D. Bofinger

Thursday, Mar 17th (monthly 3rd Thu)

7:00 pm: Ministry Council Zrev

Saturday, Mar 19th (monthly 3rd Thu)

7:00 pm: Turning of the Wheel Bonfire

Sunday, Mar 20th (monthly 3rd Sun)

11:30 am: FD Team Meeting

Sunday, Mar 27th (monthly last Sun)

12:00 pm : UU Amherst Book Group—
in-person DR & Zoom

Continued

RECURRING:

UU Universe-ity Sunrise Sessions continue

M-F, 8:30 am Zfd Link provided in Weekly Update

Sundays, Mar 6-27

10:30: Church service—in-person an livestream

Mondays, Mar 7-28

7:00 pm: Lighthearted Larches (3/14, 3/28)

D. Tucker

7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapple* Zadmin (weekly)

L. Marcus

7:30 pm: Marvelous Maples (3/14,3/28)

D. Bofinger

Tuesdays, Mar 1-22

12:30 pm: Women's Group Lunch — Zoom

Wednesdays, Mar 2-23

10:30 am: Willow Village* Zadmin (2nd & 4th Weds: 3/9 & 3/23) J. Senders

7:00 pm: Sage Circle* Zfd (2nd & 4th Weds: 3/9 & 3/23) S. Christ

7:00 pm: Northtowns Village (3/16)

Thursdays, Mar 3-24

11:00 am: Tech Talk (except Mar 3rd) Zadmin

12:00 pm: Lunch with Friends* Zadmin

Fridays, Mar 4-Apr 1st

7:00 pm: Lenten Shared Reading Zrev

Saturdays, Mar 5-26

9:30 am: Shared Caring Circle Zrev

7:00 pm: Birch Bunch* Zadmin

V. Snider

Adult Story Hour

Adult Story Hour is being postponed until Friday, April 8 at 7:30 pm to make way for the Lenten reading & discussions starting March 4. (see next page). The April 8 story hour will be the last in this series.

Ministry Council

The Ministry Council meets via Zoom on the 3rd Thursday of each month. If you'd like to attend the meeting, contact Rev. Michelle for the Zoom link. Any proposals for activities should be sent to Rev. Michelle (minister@uuamherst.org) at least one week prior to the next Council meeting, and a representative from the proposing group must attend the meeting to answer questions and help the Council say 'yes' to your idea.

LENTEN OBSERVANCE SHARED READING OPPORTUNITY

Gather virtually with friends on Friday evenings (**March 4 thru April 1 at 7:00 pm**) to read and discuss Victoria Loorz's brand new book, *Church of the Wild*, facilitated by Rev. Michelle's colleague and friend, Rev. Mark Chaffin. To join, RSVP to minister@uuamherst.org for the Zoom link. The book is available on Amazon (paperback \$14.99, Kindle \$12.99). Contact Rev. Michelle if you need a copy paid with Discretionary funds.

Here's Mirabai Starr's description of the book from the Forward:

With an eco-spiritual lens on biblical narratives and a fresh look at a community larger than our own species, *Church of the Wild* uncovers the wild roots of faith and helps us deepen our commitment to a suffering earth by falling in love with it—and calling it church. Through mystical encounters with wild deer, whispers from a scrubby oak tree, wordless conversation with a cougar, and more, Loorz helps us connect to a love that literally holds the world together—a love that calls us into communion with all creatures.



Rev. Mark Chaffin is an outdoors and extreme weather enthusiast. Growing up in South Windsor, CT, he attended two kinds of churches. With his family, he worshiped in the sanctuary of his local congregation and would then spend long hours in the sacred precincts of the woods, wetlands, and fields near his home. Rev. Mark holds a M.Div. from Andover Seminary at Yale Divinity School. He is a certified spiritual companion (Haden Institute). He makes the focus of his practice working with those who find their experience of the Holy in the realm of the Creation and want to enrich their lives with eco-spiritual practices.



UU AMHERST BOOK GROUP

February TOPIC: Read a book by a Hispanic author. Sunday, February 27, 12:00 pm. **We'll meet in-person in the Dining Room and on Zoom. See the Weekly Update for link.**

March Common Read: *The Lincoln Highway* by Amor Towles. Sunday, March 27, 12:00 pm. In-person and on Zoom.

Lending Library

Check out the Lending Library in the glass curio cabinet at the north end of the Emerson Room (when building is open). Sign out whatever you'd like in the spiral notebook.

(Secular novels and books about social justice issues can be found in the church Living Room on the bookshelves.)



CERSI—CENTRAL EAST SUMMER INSTITUTE 2022 July 10-16, California University of Pennsylvania

2022 theme speaker will be Kazim Ali, focuses on “Questioning the Unquestionable, Answering the Unanswerable.”

Registration starts March 1st; 50% deposit is required at the time of registration—the remainder of fees are due on the first day of the SI registration. There are partial week and full week options with a choice of workshop and seminars. Some programs will be available online. UU Amherst's own Kim Diana Connolly will be presenting the topic: “Circling Together: Using the Practice to Enrich and Restore Your Home, Your Church, Your Community, and Our World.”

Scholarships available. For more information and to register, go to: CERSIUU.org

THEATER LOVERS –Marie Evans

Save the date! Our next outing to Jewish Repertory Theatre will be Sunday, May 22, for the 2:00 pm matinee of "Modern Orthodox."

In the meantime, Jacque Babka highly recommends the Niagara Regional Theatre Guild who present at The Ellicott Creek Playhouse in Tonawanda. It's affordable community theater with free parking! Visit their website at <https://niagaratheatre.com/> for information about their March show "Harvey," an April-May run of "Spamalot," and June production "Brigadoon."

Also in March will be a production of "Young Frankenstein" at the Historic Palace Theatre, Lockport, March 10-20th.

- Marie Evans

ENDOWMENT TRUST

At our January 18, 2022, meeting, your Endowment Trustees voted to move ALL of our investments (both stocks and bonds) into ESG's, sometimes called "ethically responsible investments." ESG stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance. This means that fund managers screen out companies that have questionable environmental policies or labor practices, or produce products such as tobacco or guns. Most are also ETF's (Exchange-Traded Funds, which are most cost-effective than traditional mutual funds.) EFT's have lower transaction and broker fees when holdings are bought or sold. We hold a limited number of funds, but frequently buy more shares as we receive donations.

For a number of years, we have held one fund that was considered socially responsible, and it accounted for 5% of our overall portfolio. We will be moving our stock holdings from that Parnassus Core Equity fund to Vanguard ESG US Stock ETF. Parnassus has generally out-performed the S&P 500, and Vanguard has done even better, with total growth of 77.96% (compared to 74.71% and 66.47% for Parnassus and S&P, respectively). Vanguard also has more diversified holdings, attempting to emulate the total stock market while maintaining ethical parameters. The screening process is done by a third-party vendor to eliminate bias.

We thank our Certified Financial Planner, Mike Angelucci, for investigating three different ESG stock fund options and creating charts and graphs to help us compare them to each other and the market at large. He is also guiding us with review of our fiduciary responsibilities to make sure the Trustees are operating in UU Amherst's best interest.

-Marie Evans, Chair, for Endowment Trustees Joe Rautenstrauch, Elaine Cusker, Lauraine Marcus and John Thompson



BECOME A CHALICE LIGHTER

A chalice lighter responds to three calls a year for contributions that are pooled to fund special grants for UU churches in the Central East Region (CER).

Contributions can be in any amount-\$20 or more per call

is recommended, but whatever you can afford will be thankfully accepted. As our congregation is receiving a grant of \$20,000 to upgrade our technology, you can see how your contributions are valuable. Helping neighboring congregations to realize their dreams is a splendid way to cooperatively grow the faith. To sign up just go on line to: www.uua.org/central:east/programs/chalichelighters/cerclsignup





COVID CORNER

Yeah!!! The Covid infection rates are going down in NYS and Erie County! Most of the “experts” are trying to figure out how we can go from a state of pandemic to one of endemic Covid. What does this mean? Well, the virus is not going away like H1N1 (swine flu) did...oh wait, that vaccine is now included in all annual flu shots! The common cold, annual flu, and even HIV(no vaccine yet) are endemic viruses. If we wash our hands, don't touch our face, avoid body fluids and people who are ill we will be less likely to catch those viral illnesses. I don't know about you, but I have not gotten a cold or flu since I started wearing masks and sick people have started staying home. The same may happen with Covid. There may be new variants we may need to protect against. We may have annual Covid vaccinations. We may wear masks in public, some of us forever. This is not new behavior, we are just more aware of it. Just as AIDS changed behavior in the late 20th century, I believe COVID will cause universal changes. It is my hope that people will be able to stay home when they don't feel well. If they can't stay home, they will wear masks to protect others. Remember, our church leaders are doing everything they can to protect us and reopen safely as soon as possible.

—Barbara Gauger Kent

COMMITTEE ON MISSION

We enthusiastically met with the Amherst Little Free Pantry on February 6th to finalize their Mission Statement. Doreen Park had provided a good basis for this and using the Circle Way of sharing information and ideas the team agreed on this final version. **Amherst Little Free Pantry Mission Statement: "We strive toward Food Justice by sharing nutritious food with those in our community who experience food insecurity, affirming the worth and dignity of all."** After this positive experience, we look forward to our next meeting with the Amherst Little Free Pantry team on March 6th when they will begin to develop their meaningful, measurable goals. On February 22nd the various committee chairs met with the Board of Trustees for a conversation of how each can better be supported by the Board. CoM was represented by Jeanine Moyer.

—Suzanne Christ, CoM Chair

CLOTHING MINISTRY

The members of the clothing ministry team have been very busy lately. We have been receiving donations, sorting, and filling the rack with winter clothing. At this time, we are looking towards spring and summer. We plan (Covid willing) on having a mini warm weather clothing drive in April, probably the Sunday before Easter. We hope you can find the compassion in your hearts to donate clean, lightly used or like new warm weather clothing and/or pant/skirt hangers so we can restock our supplies and keep our ministry going. When the church reopens, you will find donation bins in the lobby coat room and on the second floor of the RE wing. You can also arrange Covid friendly donations by contacting one of our team members (Dian and Don Tucker, Pam and Jerry Kent, or Barbara and Barry Kent). In January we got together and cleaned part of the church basement, sorting donations from the pre Covid rummage sale. Some will go to Goodwill, some to refugees, some we hope to use in future fundraisers. We maintain Covid safety measures. We are looking forward to warm weather, open windows, and (hopefully) a return to an open church environment.

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. 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 flavorful fish recipe from David Kinch in *The Week*.

Salmon en papillote

2 tsp salt packed capers	2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
8 button mushrooms	4 Tbsp dry white wine
1 fennel bulb, trimmed, thinly sliced	a handful of basil leaves
1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved	1 lemon, thinly sliced
12 green olives thinly sliced	salt and freshly ground pepper
1 1/2 lbs salmon, skin removed, cut into four portions	Chopped fresh flat leaf parsley for garnish



Preheat oven to 400 degrees

Rinse capers in cold water, place in a bowl, cover with cold water for 10 minutes, to remove salt. Drain and set aside. Brush off any dirt on mushrooms, remove and discard stems and thinly slice caps.

Divide vegetables into four portions. Cut four sheets of parchment paper a bit more than double the size of one fish portion and fold each sheet in half. Unfold one sheet and lay two slices of fennel on one half of the paper as the base. Layer mushrooms on the fennel and lay a piece of fish on top. Sprinkle on capers, tomatoes and olives. Douse with 1/2 Tbsp olive oil and 1 Tbsp white wine. Top with basil leaves, lemon slices a healthy pinch each of salt and pepper.

Refold parchment paper to cover fish, fold edge of parchment up in shallow triangles, working your way around until the packet is sealed on all sides. Fold final triangle down to force the pillow you’ve created to lie flat. Repeat with the other three pieces of fish.

Place packets on a large baking sheet and bake 14 minutes. Remove from oven.

With scissors carefully open each packet. Discard lemon slices and push each fish portion and its accoutrements onto a plate, sliding the paper out from beneath. Garnish with parsley and serve. Serves 4.

The recipe has all the wonderful Mediterranean flavors and it is quick to cook.

AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY

"Category of the Month" :

Chef Boyardee Products with Meat and Pasta Sauce in Cans or Plastic Jars

The Pantry does not distribute OTC medication or first aid supplies for liability reasons. Pantry 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.



The collection bins have been put away for the winter. However, Bob & Kathy Wack's granddaughter, Mariel Gousios, will continue to pick up members' CLEAN bottles & cans from their residences. If interested, contact her at refundthepantry@gmail.com.

REV. MICHELLE'S SABBATICAL

What is a Sabbatical?

You may be familiar with the term sabbatical leave as a semester or year free from teaching responsibilities that can be devoted to research, professional development, and writing. Traditionally, faculty members must have completed seven years of service at an institution prior to receiving a sabbatical. Sabbaticals are increasingly being included as part of minister's compensations packages.

As per Rev. Michelle's contract, her sabbatical leave has been accruing at the rate of one month per year of service. She is eligible for and the board approved a sabbatical from May through August this year. She will use this time for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth. We have been preparing for this time by annually sequestering funds for use in funding any additional expenses during the Rev. Michelle's sabbatical. To learn more about the mutual benefits of sabbaticals, check out https://media.focusonthefamily.com/pastoral/pdf/PAS_Sabbaticals.pdf

Why a Sabbatical

During the months of May, June, July and August, Rev. Michelle will be totally disengaging from her ministerial role. She has been serving us as developmental and then settled minister for 7 years. We have both expended great amounts of energy and emotion on behalf of our beloved community as we have transitioned from where we were to who we are now. This has been complicated by personal losses as well as COVID. And now we are on the cusp of defining our actions for the future.

Rev. Michelle (and the congregation) needs a pause to rebalance – thus the Sabbatical (while this may be the first our church has experienced, this is a normal practice in other congregations and denominations). A sabbatical is NOT a vacation it is an opportunity for:

Reflection- Rev. Michelle will be taking time away from the responsibilities of the church as she studies, writes, and learns new skills which she will then bring back and use to enhance the overall church experience

Renewal- Creativity flows when synchronicity of the body, mind and spirit are in balance.

Recharging/ Reconnecting- Balance happens best when one is connected to that which gives ultimate meaning and purpose to life.

Restoration- As Rev. Michelle "*recharges her battery*" she will also restore a sense of healthy balance which will, in turn flow into the life of the congregation.

Rejuvenation/ Revitalization- Lowering stress levels offer opportunity to increase one's overall well-being and make space for change of perspective, growth, new stories and new skills.

Reclaiming- The health of UU Amherst depends on our ability to take more ownership for decision making and the ministry of the church.

Responsibility – While Rev. Michelle is away the congregation needs to come together and take on leadership. The congregational benefits of a sabbatical can be opportunities for growth and overall learning experiences for everyone. This can be a time of discernment for decisions regarding the physical plant, programming, outreach and mission of the church as we grow forward.

The positives of Sabbatical remain long after the 4 months and will help the church blossom in new ways...beyond what we can image especially when we work together to cultivate love and leadership.

A Sabbatical Team will be guiding us through May, June, July and August: Angela Warren, Nancy Faery, Hella Jacob, Lauraine Marcus who be responsible for worship along with tech crew.

Rev. Lisa Peterangelo will be available for pastoral care. More details will be forthcoming



Rev. Lisa Peterangelo



Lauraine Marcus



Hella Jacob



Angela Warren



Nancy Faery



UU AMHERST

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF AMHERST

Fostering Justice and Compassion

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