

Issue

September 2022

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

MINISTER'S HOURS

Rev. Michelle keeps office hours
Tues - Thurs. Contact her directly to
set up an appointment.
Fridays are her study & sermon
writing day and she is off on
Mondays.

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 SEPTEMBER AT 10:30 AM

Mask wearing indoors is recommended., but not required. Sunday Services are continuing as dual platform—both in-person and livestreamed. 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! Remember that coffee hour follows with beverages, only; no food!

September 4 Love's Labor Lost (and Found) Rev. Michelle
What is it you love to do? Have you lost sight of that which makes your heart sing?

September 11th Gathered Here Rev. Michelle
At this annual Ingathering service, we reaffirm our deep connection to one another and to the Earth we love. Bring water from your summer adventures or pour from the common source as we reaffirm our covenantal relationship. Today is also the closing of the Living Green Festival.

September 18th The Fears That Bind Us Rev. Michelle
What are you afraid of? I spent the summer listening to Gareth Higgins narrate his book, *How Not To Be Afraid* - and it's been a game changer. This is the beginning of a larger conversation.

September 25th The Upcoming Schism in Unitarian Universalism
(And What We Can Do to Prevent It) - Emily Garrick
There are two visions for the future of Unitarian Universalism being circulated right now- The Gadfly Papers, and the 8th Principle. Let's talk about both and how they each envision our faith tradition going forward. Emily is a member and past president of the UU Congregation of Jamestown, NY.



MINISTER'S CORNER

Hello Friends,

The wheel is turning and I am ready to rejoin you in the bold story that is the UU Church of Amherst. These four months apart have been a time for recovery, rest, and renewal. I am grateful for the gift of unencumbered time. Sabbatical and Sabbath share a root, and this time has been both healing and challenging.

The first two months were spent recovering from total knee replacement surgery. I am no stranger to surgical interventions, but I have to say, this one takes the cake. I'm grateful to the wise advice offered by those who have undergone this procedure - you were right about the first couple of weeks. And I'm super grateful that my other knee is healthy!

The rest and renewal parts of the sabbatical were equally challenging. I learned important things about myself. I don't rest well. I also had the opportunity to ask hard and important questions: Who am I outside of my role as minister? How do we cultivate friends and meaning-making beyond church? And as I return, how can I nurture the shared ministry that has blossomed while I've been gone?

I hope the past four months have been rich for you as you found new ways to be engaged. I wonder what you have discerned about yourself and our gathered community during this second trimester of Church in 3-D. And I look forward to the third trimester as we purposefully design a path to our best life together. Oh, how I have missed our conversations!

I am grateful to the Sabbatical Team for so ably tending to the heart and soul of this church we love. Every creative solution, every dotted 'i' and crossed 't', every box checked and email sent - and so very much more - Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Warmly,
Rev. Michelle



 UUJA.ORG/IMAGES

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

The BOT met early in August. Linda Groat made a presentation regarding how we should label ourselves on the new sign to be as welcoming as possible. The BOT authorized her to set up a task force to research that. She has found some volunteers and begun the task.

We also received a presentation from the Finance Committee regarding a possible future budget as well as recommendations on how to improve the financial health of the church. The BOT will be discussing and deciding on these proposals .

Don Tucker was voted in as church treasurer after we had accepted Hella Jacob's resignation after long years of service in that position. We appreciate Hella's service and I know she will continue to be very active in the life of the church.

We get closer to having a new sign with the large rock, and invasive and scrubby trees removed. The request for a variance to allow us to put the sign closer to road, and therefore more visible, is being handled with the Town of Amherst by the sign company we have contracted with. The process with the town has several steps in it but we are optimistic that a decision will be made by early autumn.

Chris Barry, our caretaker and long time pillar of the church has let us know that he will be leaving us to care for his mother. He is in the process of moving as I write this. We will celebrate all his many contributions to the church in late September and, yes, we will be looking at finding a new caretaker.

I am looking forward to the Living Green Festival and hope we can make it a well attended success. Please be sure to let people know about it.

Randy Kent, Board Chair



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/chalicelighter/cerclsignup



ENDOWMENT TRUST

When the Endowment Trustees met in July, we had to come face to face with the impact the current economic turbulence has had on our fund. Mike Angelucci, our financial advisor, reported that our portfolio value had fallen to \$991,860.08. This prompted a lengthy discussion/analysis of the current 60 percent fixed income/40 equity allocation versus a 70/30 allocation – when will the church actually need money; how much is gained by such a change in allocation; how will we be able to track impact of having switched to socially responsible funds a few months ago.

As a result, the decision was made to stay with the 60/40 allocation. The fund was again over \$1million as of July 31st. Since the meeting, the Trust has written a check for \$2,600 to cover tree removal. This is part of the \$25,000 that remained to be distributed for the new sign.

As mentioned in the July newsletter, the Endowment Officers for the coming year are Lauraine Marcus, Chair; Elaine Cusker, Recording Secretary; John Thompson, Corresponding Secretary; Joe Rautenstrauch, Treasurer; Dorothy Reade, Assistant Treasurer; and Tom Langan, Church Board Liaison.

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 18, at 6:00 pm in the Emerson Room. Church members are welcome to attend (please contact a Trustee in advance if you have a specific topic/question).

Remember that you can contribute effortlessly to UU Amherst's Endowment Trust when you shop online at Amazon Smile (<https://smile.amazon.com/>). Choose Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst Endowment Trust as the organization you want to support, then just order as you usually would. It costs you nothing extra, but generates a donation for us, of 0.5% of your purchases. That doesn't seem like much, but it adds up!

–Lauraine Marcus, on behalf of the Endowment Trustees

Liturgy = The Work of the People

Perhaps you recall a few years ago when a thematic altar would be set up at the back of the chapel as you entered. This was an attempt to bring more creative energy, as well as symbolic and non-verbal layers to the ideas being presented in worship. I've recently been inspired by the lovely, non-permanent altars created by Day Schildkret, as seen in his book *Morning Altars*, and would like for us to engage in a practice of shared beauty and reverence.

Beginning this month there will be a table at the back of the chapel where we can, together, create a moment of beauty. You'll find elements to add, and you can bring in things from your yard and outdoor adventures as well.

There are just a few rules about the altars:

1. Elements must be natural items (flower petals, pine cones, stones, etc).
2. Respect what others have begun creating; you may add, but please do not diminish.

Remember - all is impermanent. Enjoy the act of creation and beholding the beauty we make together, in relationship with the Earth, and then be prepared to let it go and begin again the next week. I'll leave my copy of *Morning Altars* in the chapel to help inspire you!

Rev. Michelle



FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Dear UU Amherst Members and Friends,

It has truly been a pleasure to create community outdoors with you this season. The collaborative efforts of many have resulted in increasing our food justice



Cheryl Tomasulo, Diane Bofinger and Ron Palmere from our Pantry and Grounds Teams.

mission, and the continued interest in all the plants on our campus is thriving! Our Pantry and Grounds Teams have succeeded in our mission to offer fresh food to pantry users and members and friends, including the teachers and students of our long term renters at Main Street Children's Academy! What a joy it has become to be face to face with our neighbors, especially the littles!



Faith Development will have a big impact at the Living Green Festival as we offer activities for all ages under the newly installed tent. Ecology with Eve and Betty will continue to raise awareness about our mission to replace invasive plants with natives, including medicinal and food plants. Who will be introduced? Part of that is up to YOU! Have seeds to share? Let's discover what we can grow and how these efforts will continue to create beloved community!

Thanks to Green Justice Team member Wendy Scott, we can better answer the questions for the Rationale for our Living Green Festival: "Why this, why us, why now?"

What is more timely than environmental awareness? And what is more frustrating in terms of living up to it? The environment encompasses everything, natural and man-made, seemingly endless. Where to start, how to help? A range of information from dire warnings to overly simple advice has been bombarding humanity for decades. In order to take action, people need specific ideas about what to do and to be informed of what others are doing as individuals and as groups, and then to integrate. Therefore, UU Amherst has been researching and acting on projects that use its space in environmentally friendly ways. We have installed solar panels on the roof, earned a Green Sanctuary certification, reduced the use of lighting and disposable products, planted crops and trees, organized a food pantry and planned renovations to our facility and campus, with the best practices in renewable design and building always in mind and in practice as much as we possibly can. This is all in accordance with UU's seventh principle of Respect for the Interdependent Web of which we are a part.

As we began to emerge from the COVID pandemic, our UU Amherst congregation felt a need to rededicate themselves to our mission to challenge ourselves and the community to foster more compassion and justice in the world. and reach out to the community to offer meaningful ways to connect and be environmentally proactive, both locally and beyond. The Living Green Festival offers a chance for all of our members and friends to live into our 7th Principle, and to invite others to do so.

We hope to introduce the community near and far to our principles and projects, to other like-minded groups and organizations, and to inspire those enthused to join us in action to make the world a better place. We welcome all friends known and new to our Green Sanctuary.

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

SEPTEMBER 2022 CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: In person meetings are now able to resume. Some will continue to be virtual-only; others will be dual platform (Zoom and in-person); and some in-person only. See the notation after the meeting. 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.

Sunday, Sept 4th: (monthly 1st Sun)
11:45 am: Little Free Pantry Meeting LR & Zoom

Wednesday, Sept 7th (monthly 1st Weds)
7:30 pm: Green Justice Team Meeting Zoom

Friday, Sept 9th
5:00 pm: Living Green Festival-Labyrinth Walk
6:00 pm: Living Green Festival-Petra Page speaker

Saturday, Sept 10th
10:00 am-10:00 pm: Living Green Festival
See page 11 for schedule
7:00-10:00 pm: Music—The Skiffle Minstrels

Sunday, Sept 11th: (2nd Sun)
9:00 am: Living Green Festival-Nature Meditation
10:30 am: Sunday service-Water Ingathering Service
12:00 pm: Poetry as Practice

Wednesday, Sept 14th (monthly 2nd Weds)
11:00 am: Staff Meeting
1:30 pm: Caring Team Zoom

Thursday, Sept 15th (monthly 3rd Thu)
1:00 pm: Ministry Council Zoom

Sunday, Sept 18th: (3rd Sun)
11:30 am: FD Team Meeting

Tuesday, Sept 20th (*typically monthly 3rd Wed)
7:00 pm: Board Meeting EM

Wednesday, Sept 21st (monthly 3rd Wed)
1:00 pm: 3rd Wednesday Covenant Group Zoom
5:00 pm: Finance Committee EM
7:00 pm: Bofinger Covenant Group Zoom
7:30 pm: Green Justice Team Meeting Zoom

Thursday, Sept. 22nd (monthly 4th Thu)
7:00 pm: Covenant Group EM

Sunday, Sept 25th: (4th Sun)
12:00 pm: UU Amherst Book Group LR & Zoom

Continued

RECURRING:

UU Universe-ity Sunrise Sessions continue
M, W & R, 8:30 am.; Thr: Book Study, *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet*

Saturdays, Sept 3rd-30th
9:30 am: Shared Caring Circle Zoom Zrev
7:00 pm: Birch Bunch Zoom Zadmin

Sundays, Sept 4th-25th
10:30: Church service—in-person and livestream
Coffee Hour following

Mondays, Sept 6th-26th
7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapple Zadmin (weekly)
L. Marcus
7:00 pm: Lighthearted Larches (9/12 & 9/26)
D. Tucker
7:30 pm: Marvelous Maples (9/12 & 9/26)
D. Bofinger

Tuesdays, Sept 7th-27th
12:30 pm: Women's Study Group Zoom

Wednesdays, Sept 7th-28th
10:30 am: Willow Village Zadmin (2nd & 4th Weds: 9/14 & 9/28) J. Senders
7:00 pm: Northtowns Village (9/21)

Thursdays, Sept 8th-29th
12:30 pm: Women's Study Group Zoom

MINISTRY COUNCIL

The Ministry Council meets via Zoom on the 3rd Thursday of each month. If you'd like to attend the meeting, contact Lauraine Marcus (cornell_marcus@yahoo.com) for the Zoom link. All new ministries and events go through Ministry Council for approval and support.



UU AMHERST BOOK GROUP

UU Amherst Book Club next meets at church in the Living Room on Sunday, September 25, at noon. We will be discussing the book *Paradise Falls: The True Story of an Environmental Catastrophe*, by Keith O'Brien. It's described by Goodreads as "The staggering story of an unlikely band of mothers in the 1970s who discovered Hooker Chemical's deadly secret of Love Canal—exposing one of America's most devastating toxic waste disasters and sparking the modern environmental movement as we know it today." Love Canal, for those who aren't familiar, is in Niagara Falls, NY.

If you have any questions, please contact Marie Evans or Grace Little.

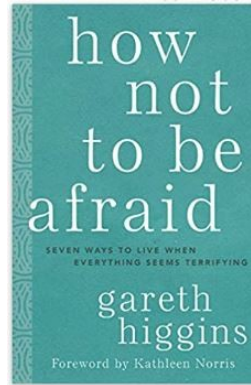
Lending Library

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.)

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



Book Study Opportunity

On Sunday, September 18th, we will briefly examine Gareth Higgins' book, *How Not to Be Afraid: Seven Ways to Live When Everything Seems Terrifying*. A more in-depth exploration will be offered on Friday evenings in October as Rev. Michelle offers a hybrid (Zoom & in-person) book study. Sessions will run from 7-8:30 pm on Fridays (10/7, 14, 21, 28).

Participants are expected to have read Part One (80 pages) in preparation for the first session. The book is available on Amazon in hardcover, Kindle, and audio. A few copies are available at church for loan or purchase. Email minister@uuamherst.org for information, to indicate interest (Zoom or in-person), and to request a book, if needed.



LIVING GREEN FESTIVAL
Kick-off Friday. September 9th!
5:00-7:00 pm

Food trucks

Speaker: Petra Page, Fruition Seeds
Labyrinth walk, bonfire & music!

See full weekend schedule on page 11.

AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY

The next meeting of the Amherst Little Free Pantry will be September 4th at 11:45 am in the Living Room.

The recycling center where Judy is bringing our cans and bottles for **Refund The Pantry** is supplying the liners for our collection bins! They **do not** want the cans/bottles in smaller bags. Please continue to rinse them out, and then empty your cans/bottles right in the collection cans. Thank you for your contributions.

Many, many thanks to **Angela Warren** and the hard working gardening crew. The Pantry now has fresh vegetables to share with our customers! What a dream come true! As soon as the vegetables are put out, they disappear! When one considers all the steps to get the veggies: planning, cultivating the soil and planting, followed by the continual watering, caring, and weeding of the plants, and finally, properly harvesting the crops, this is truly a work of LOVE. Thank you to infinity and beyond.....Hugs from the Pantry Team!



Fresh produce from the UU Amherst gardens

Our garden greens are in strong supply! The garden and pantry teams would love to have you share your kale, collard, and chard recipes with our pantry visitors. You may print your own and leave them on the produce table in the portico next to the pantry, or ask for help! We are continually re-supplying our produce table with the abundance of our campus garden! Want to help? Contact Angela.

Summer Happenings on the UU Amherst Grounds



Garden beds before planting and after.



Monarch butterfly on Ageratum in the entrance garden.



FD All Ages Activity: Ecology with Eve

COMMITTEE ON MISSION

After taking July off to relax and recharge, the CoM will resumed meeting on August 25th to continue planning for the coming church year. During this time, we continue to support the planning of the Living Green Festival, which is scheduled for September 9th-11th. Shortly after the festival on September 18th, we plan to meet with the Faith Development Team to see how their efforts are going in reaching their mission and goals and to offer support. Later in the church year, we will also plan to similarly meet with the Caring for One Another and Amherst Little Free Pantry Teams whom we met with last church year to establish their initial mission and goals. We are also looking to meet with two new Ministry Teams to help them establish their initial mission and goals. The purpose of our work is to align the mission & goals of all of the ministry teams with the mission of the church. This written information will also help to inform the rest of our church community about the work of each team and invite other members of our congregation to join these teams and be able to continue their work as leadership changes over the years. It should be an exciting church year!

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Bofinger, CoM Chair and Committee Members

Marge Marcille (Scribe), Jeanine Moyer (Board Liaison), and Barbara Brooks (Our Newest Member)

UU YOUNG ADULT AND CAMPUS MINISTRY

After a lag in activity during the pandemic, I am looking to revitalize the UU Young Adult Group (generally ages 18-35ish). If you are interested in participating and would like to be added to our text and E-mail lists, send your E-mail and cell phone number to me. I try to keep the group informed about church activities. If there is enough interest, we can try to find times to meet again. If you have contact with UU Young Adults at other colleges or in your work environments, let them know about us, too. All young adults (UU or Exploring) are invited to be added to our lists. We would like to see a young adult led activity for the Living Green Festival, September 9th-11th, so if you have any ideas or would like to initiate something, let me know and I will promote it and help to gather a team. I look forward to seeing you soon!

Diane Bofinger (she/her/hers)

Religious Advisor, UU Young Adult & Campus Ministry

CLOTHING MINISTRY

Our Clothing Ministry Team will be contributing to our Living Green Festival by running a basket raffle fundraiser in our accessible indoor space as well as a "free room" that will be upstairs in the FD wing, both on Saturday, September 10th. Thanks so much to this dedicated team!

With so many generous donors, in addition to the daily stocking of clothing in the portico outside, the free room will include racks of clothing items that have not been shared as well as many other useful household items.

Instead of donating clothing prior to the "ask" for winter items AFTER the festival, help UU Amherst's mission to cultivate compassion and justice by contributing items for our vegetable harvest: **empty produce containers and rubber bands** are needed and may be placed in the old AA coffee closet. Don't know where that is? Ask a pantry or garden team member.

FD and the Garden and Grounds teams also need **two to three picnic tables** to help create a small plant nursery that will be accessible to those who no longer wish to work on the ground.

We also could really use **outdoor chairs**! Most of ours have been disposed of for safety reasons. Call or text Angela at (716) 380-0416 and we will find a way to move your items to campus!

-Respectfully submitted for the Clothing Ministry by Dian Tucker and Angela Warren

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 recipe that takes advantage of the marvelously flavorful local fresh fruit and is still a relatively light summer recipe. Enjoy!

Fresh Fruit Parfait

About 1 hour preparation

Serves 4

- 1 cup of local fresh fruit, peeled if needed and mashed
- 2–3 Tbsp sugar
- 1 cup creme fraiche
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole or sliced and peeled, as needed, fresh fruit

To the cup of mashed fruit add 2 to 3 Tbsp sugar and cook in a small pot over a low flame for 30 to 40 minutes until thickened. Set aside to cool. Once cooled stir in the cup of creme fraiche.

Peel if needed and slice one cup of fresh fruit and set aside.

Whip the cream, adding one tsp sugar and 1/2 tsp vanilla, until soft.

To assemble, add one spoonful of the cooked fruit/creme fraiche mixture into a parfait glass, top with the fresh cut fruit and finish with a dollop of whipped cream. The flavor is the essence of fruit.





Living Green Festival

Sept. 9-11, 2022

UU Church of Amherst
6320 Main St. Williamsville

Fun for everyone! "Let's Goat Buffalo" will be here the entire weekend eating invasive vegetation.

Friday: 5 to 7pm: Cheesy Chick Food Truck, Chilly Billy Ice Cream
Speaker at 6pm: Petra Page-Mann (Fruition Seeds)
Followed by: Labyrinth Walk, Bonfire, Music

Saturday:

- 10 am to 4pm: Vendor row featuring many local businesses and organizations who can help you to live green
- Lunch by Cheesy Chick
- Reduce & Reuse Basket Raffle / Free Room
- Nature Meditation and Intro to Sit Spot Practice with Mark Chaffin 10 am, 12:30 and 2:30 pm
- 2:30 pm: Folk dancing with Martha Malkiewicz
- 4 pm: Onondaga Storyteller Perry Ground
- 5 to 7pm Cheesy Chick Food Truck and Chilly Billy Ice Cream
- 7 to 10 pm: Music by local Americana / Western swing band The Skiffle Minstrels

Sunday Morning:

9 am Nature Meditation,
Annual Water Ingathering Service
at 10:30 am





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CHURCH OF AMHERST

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