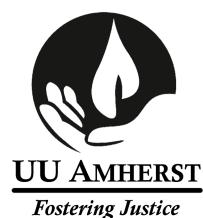
March 2023

The Foreword

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst 6320 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221 634-3010 (x101 for office)

Office Hours Tues.—Fri. 9am to 2pm www.uuamherst.org



Fostering Justice and Compassion

Our Staff:

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Minister Emerita

Rev. Maureen Q. Thitchener

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 MARCH 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.

The Soul Matters theme for February is **Vulnerability.** Are you willing to be vulnerable? This month we'll turn our gaze inward and discover where/ when we are able to risk being vulnerable (or not).

Dates marked with an (*) indicate when children and youth will be excused part-way through the service to participate in activities.

March 5* Holy Cow john Snodgrass

A look at sacred cows in Viking myth, Hindu Religion, and the American midwest

john Snodgrass teaches Religious Studies at Canisius College, and he is the author of numerous books including "Sun Dance: Plains Life in Balance" and "Jolly Holidays." He lives in Buffalo with his bride and their four children.

Don't forget to "Spring Forward"!

March 12 Beauty School Dropout Rev. Michelle

On August 16, 2015 I gave my very first sermon at UU Amherst - a sermon that was met with consternation and even a bit of hostility. Let's revisit the Beauty School, together.

March 19* More Than a Selfie Rev. Michelle

As we turn the Wheel of the Year to Ostara, the Vernal Equinox, we gaze into the sacred mirror to see and mend what is broken and to prepare for what will come.

March 26 What's Wrong With Me/Us? Rev. Michelle

Do you ever wonder why you just can't fit into prescribed boxes? Whether it is our spiritual path, personal identity, or some other aspect of Self, sometimes we have to break away from others' expectations to fully realize and experience our own lives.



MINISTER'S CORNER

I always feel like I need to tiptoe around March. It's the "Gotcha!" month for me. After February's quick four weeks, the full 31 days of March seem endless. By now we've been through several cycles of "false spring" - and we're just plain tired of the snow and cold. Even people who love winter activities look a little cross when we get the inevitable mid-March snow (I hope I'm not jinxing us).

It's March's temperamental nature that makes it the perfect time to consider the Soul Matters theme of *vulnerability*. Like those harbingers of Spring, the crocuses and daffodils, we learn to bring our whole selves to the process of emergence - even if it means we are temporarily buried by a new layer of snow.

March is liminal - no longer winter and not yet spring. March calls to us to re-engage with spiritual practices and to find ways to balance our lives. My hope for you is that, like the crocuses and daffodils, you persist in bringing more loveliness to the world. Perhaps we will discover that it is in vulnerability that we find our greatest strength.

With hope, Rev. Michelle

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.

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

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.

BOARD REPORT

As I write this, we are one and a half weeks away from the Annual Meeting for 2023 where we will vote on our contribution to the UUA, our balanced operating budget for 2023, and on a candidate to serve on the Endowment Trust (ET). Speaking of the Endowment Trust, they have agreed to contribute to our operating budget, and we are very grateful for their contribution. That contribution makes more things possible in the budget than we could fund through our usual sources of income such as pledges, rents and fundraising.

The ET was set up decades ago with the idea that the donations would reach a point where the income generated by the principle could be used to support the operations of the church, and the ET has successfully reached that point. The ET has a fiduciary duty to protect the principle in order to continue to be able to support the church.

The FUNdaising Group had another successful event on Saturday, February 11th. The attendees enjoyed themselves and about \$800 was raised for the church. Look for more events to come including a Kentucky Derby party.

We can look forward to improvements in our internet capabilities as thanks to Don Tucker we now have a professional IT person that will be working on that, and setting up the equipment and devices that were purchased a while back.

On a personal note I will begin medical treatment in March that will continue into May, among the temporary side effects it has is a weakened immune system which means that you will see much less of me for a time. However, we are in the 21st Century and we have many ways to keep communication going, so it's my intention to continue my responsibilities as Board Chair.

Randy Kent, Board Chair linrkent@yahoo.com



ENDOWMENT TRUST

Our next scheduled meeting is April 18, 2023 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). One topic going forward will be determining the Endowment's future role in church budgets beyond this fiscal year.

As of January 31, 2023 the total value of Endowment Trust accounts (Schwab account + checking account) as was \$1,024,582.10. During the month of January a \$13,675 check was sent to UUCA for contracted electrical work for new sign. We still have an outstanding balance of about \$6,000 to meet our commitment towards new church sign. In addition, we are also working on a joint church/Endowment gift giving policy.

As we enter the phase of the Endowment contributing to the church budget, growing the principal is more important than ever. You can help the Endowment by remembering friends and loved ones by making a donation in their name. The family of the person being remembered receives a letter from the Endowment Trust Board saying that Trust received a gift in the name of the deceased person. You receive a letter from the ET Board thanking you for your gift. This can be used as documentation for tax purposes. Consider adding the Endowment in your will either by a designated amount or percentage of your estate. If you have questions about this, an Endowment Trustee would be pleased to talk to you.

Joe Rautenstrauch is completing his term on the Endowment as of the annual meeting on February 26th. His work as treasurer has been deeply appreciated.

Lauraine Marcus (cornell_marcus@yahoo.com) on behalf of the Endowment Trustees Elaine Cusker, Recording Secretary; John Thompson, Corresponding Secretary; Joe Rautenstrauch, Treasurer; Dorothy Reade, Assistant Treasurer

LITTLE FREE PANTRY

The next meeting of the Amherst Little Free Pantry will be on Sunday, March 5th from 10:00 - 11:00 am.

The Pantry continues to look for cold weather items including the following: Oatmeal packages, powdered milk and hot cocoa mixes, cereal, soups, milks in aseptic boxes, juice, canned fruit, tuna in oil (does not freeze), meal starters, pasta and pasta sauce, Chef Boyardee with meat and granola bars.

We are always looking for volunteers, as well. **Thank you** to all of our Pantry Team members that work so hard to keep our Pantry open 24/7 for those in need.

Cheryl Tomasulo, Team Lead cftomasulo@gmail.com

CLOTHING MINISTRY

We have moved! The Clothing Ministry had overflowed the original classroom we were assigned and have now set up shop in the former choir room on the second floor of the FD wing. In a few weeks we will invite the congregation upstairs after the Sunday service so you can shop "Out of the Closet." We welcome donations of new, like new, or gently used clean clothing and accessories. We also supply gift baskets for some of the church's gift basket raffles so if you have any new or like new objects lying around gathering dust give us a call or email. We have a gift basket corner in our new to us space.

Your Clothing Ministry Team, Dian (dianltucker@gmail.com) and Don Tucker, Pam and Jerry Kent, Barry Kent and Barbara Kent Gauger

THEATER LOVERS

We have a break between outings for March and April. If you're looking for a show to attend, consider Niagara Regional Theatre Guild, presenting **Something Rotten!**, March 11-26, at the Ellicott Creek Playhouse, 550 Ellicott Creek Road, Tonawanda. NRTG tickets range in price from \$12 - \$17, and are available online at www.niagaratheatre.com.

Jewish Repertory Theatre, inside the Jewish Community Center in Getzville, 2640 North Forest Road, has a special event coming up, three performances only, March



11-12: I'm Not A Comedian . . . I'm Lenny Bruce, written by and starring Ronnie Marmo. Tickets are \$48 (JCC members) or \$64 (general public). If you're interested, contact Adam Yellen at (716) 688-4114 ext 309.

JRT's 20th Anniversary season will close with **BAREFOOT IN THE PARK** by Neil Simon, running April 27 through May 21. I will send an all-church email when the discount ticket order forms become available. Save the date Sunday, May 14, for our group outing with dinner afterward.

Marie Evans 716-636-5770, evans.marie@gmail.com

GREEN JUSTICE TEAM

Recycling: Please take note and make use of the recycling bins for plastic and cans in the Emerson Room and in the hallway near the Living Room. Please be sure to rinse your items before placing them in the bins. If you notice that the bins are full, you may either personally empty them into the blue bins near the dumpster or alert our caretaker, Andy. Also remember that we have a paper recycling bin near the main entrance. Lastly, we began recycling batteries this past summer. Please feel free to bring in your used batteries and place them in the box in the foyer. Lithium batteries (such as from a cell phone) should be placed in plastic bags before being placed in the box; there are plastic bags with the box for your convenience.

Living Green Festival: Planning has begun for the next festival! Please reach out to Jeanine Moyer (jeanine.moyer@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping with the planning process.

Jeanine Moyer, Team Lead jeanine.moyer@gmail.com

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

We will be continuing our twice-monthly (during the service) activities. On March 5th, we will be making foil people and March 19th, we will be making "treasure" boxes out of calendar pages. Small tokens will be distributed for the boxes.

We are distributing registration forms to parents and asking permission for their child's pictures and names to be included in various congregational information outlets.

Many thanks to the members of the church who have contributed their efforts to the children.

The FD Team

"FUN" DRAISING TEAM IN ACTION

On Saturday, February 11, the "It's 5:00 Somewhere, Where Will UU Be?" Happy Hour was a great success! If you missed it, we are planning another, similar event, in early May. Plan to attend. Our next endeavor will be an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday. Bring your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren for Easter service and let them enjoy a candy-free Easter Egg Hunt!

Barbara Gauger Kent bgtubo944@hotmail.com



MARCH 2023 CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: Some meetings will continue to be virtual-only; others will be dual platform (Zoom and inperson); 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.

Saturday, Mar 4th

11:00 am: Joan Staple Memorial Service

Sunday, Mar 5th (monthly 1st Sun)

11:45 am: Little Free Pantry Team Meeting

Tuesday, Mar 7th

12:30 pm: Women's Study Group Lunch EM

Wednesday, Mar 8th (monthly 2nd Weds)

11:00 am: Staff Meeting
1:30 pm: Caring Team Zoom
5:30 pm: Finance Committee EM

7:00 pm: Marlana's Covenant Group LR

Thursday, Mar 9th (monthly 2nd Thu) **7:00 pm:** Green Justice Team Meeting

Saturday, Mar 11th

10:00 am: Havurah Service Chapel

Sunday, Mar 12th (monthly 2nd Sun) 12:00 pm: Poetry as Practice LR & Zoom

Wednesday, Mar 15th (monthly 3rd Wed)

1:00 pm: 3rd Wednesday Covenant Group Zoom

7:00 pm: Board Meeting EM

7:00 pm: Bofinger Covenant Group Zoom

Sunday, Mar 19th (monthly 3rd Sun) 11:30 am: FD Team Meeting Atrium

Sunday, Mar 26th (monthly last Sun)

12:00 pm: UU Amherst Book Group LR & Zoom

Continued

RECURRING:

UU Universe-ity Sunrise Sessions continues M-F 8:30 am.

Saturdays, Mar 4th-25th

9:30 am: Shared Caring Circle Zoom Zrev

7:00 pm: Birch Bunch Zoom

Sundays, Mar 5th-26th

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

Coffee Hour following

Mondays, Mar 6th-27th

7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapple Zadmin (weekly)

L. Marcus

7:30 pm: Marvelous Maples (3/6 & 3/20)

D. Bofinger

Tuesdays, Mar 14th-28th

12:30 pm: Women's Study Group Zoom

Wednesdays, Mar 8th-22nd

10:30 am: Willow Village Zadmin (2nd &

4th Weds: 3/8 & 3/22) J. Senders **7:00 pm:** Northtowns Village (3/15)

7:00 pm: Marlana's Covenant Group (2nd Weds

3/8) LR

REMINDER

Memorial Service for Joan Staple Saturday, March 4th 11:00 am

Reception in the Emerson Room to follow.

Ministry Council

The expanded* Ministry Council will meet in person on **Saturday, April 22nd** (9:00 am-12:00 pm), with individual team meetings as needed in the weeks between. Bring any items to the attention of Rev. Michelle (minister@uuamherst.org). All new ministry proposals and events go through Ministry Council.

(* The expanded Ministry Council includes not only ministry team leaders, but all who are interested in mission-driven programming for UU Amherst. All are welcome.)



UU AMHERST BOOK GROUP

Book Club will meet next on **Sunday, March 26**. Our common read book for the month is **A CARPENTER'S LIFE as Told by Houses**, by Larry Haun.

We alternate monthly between picking a general TOPIC (for which participants can choose any relevant book they'd like to read), and designating one "COMMON READ" book. We generally meet on the last Sunday of the month from September through May at 12 noon in the church Living Room. We've been doing hybrid meetings - some assemble in person and some join via Zoom. All are welcome to attend our gatherings, even if you haven't "done the reading." Contact Marie Evans or Grace Little if you need the Zoom link information.

The TOPIC for April is "Dinosaurs."

Marie Evans, evans.marie@gmail.com

Lending Library

Check out the Lending Library in the glass curio cabinet at the north end of the Emerson Room (when building is open). Books in this collection include world religions and spiritual topics, both fiction and non-fiction. Sign out whatever you'd like in the spiral notebook, with an approximate return date.

Secular novels and books about social justice issues can be found in the church Living Room on the bookshelves. These are for sale—cost is a free will donation that benefits the Amherst Little Free Pantry.

Many thanks to the Book Lovers who organized and labeled the books in the Living Room!



Upcoming Dreamwork Group(s) - March Through May

Rev. Michelle is currently engaged in a two-year course of study in Jungian-based dream work through the Haden Institute. Part of the curriculum is to lead groups in a methodology of listening and projection.

Do you dream a lot? Do you remember your dreams? Would you like to better understand what your unconscious is trying to communicate while you sleep? You can do all of that AND help Rev. Michelle become more versed in leading the group process of dream interpretation and projection. Indicate interest to minister@uuamherst.org. New groups can be formed when at least 5 people indicate interest.

Contributing to UU Amherst

- 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

DID "UU" KNOW?

James Reeb and the Call to Selma

James Reeb's calling emerged slowly, but steadily. A devout and conservative Christian, after college James began preparation for the Presbyterian ministry. While in seminary, he began to question his faith. In 1957, he converted to Unitarianism. He became a Unitarian minister and was called to serve the All Souls Congregation in a racially mixed neighborhood in Washington, DC.

In July, 1964, he left All Souls to accept a position with the American Friends Service Committee, and moved to Dorchester, Massachusetts where he began working to better living conditions in largely black, economically depressed neighborhoods of Boston.



Reeb was a member of the Unitarian Arlington Street Church in Boston, but he frequently preached as a guest minister in nearby suburban congregations. He used these opportunities to urge people in largely white congregations and communities to pay attention to and work to change racial injustice. He spoke against the racial disparities enforced by laws in the South and by economic and social segregation in the North.

In 1965, following the events surrounding the first attempted Civil Rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, Reeb joined around 100 ministers from the Boston area in response to a call from Dr. Martin Luther King to march with him.

While in Selma, waiting for a second attempt at a march, Reeb and two fellow ministers were attacked by a group of white men, resulting I severe head injuries. He was ultimately transferred to a hospital in Birmingham.

The media reports on Reeb's attack came swiftly, drawing the attention of then President Lyndon B. Johnson. Two days after his arrival in Selma, Reeb died.

His death so shocked the country and the U.S. Congress that President Johnson sent the Voting Rights Act to Congress within days. Dr. King, invited to Washington to support the Voting Rights Act, declined. Instead, he delivered the eulogy at Reeb's funeral, saying:

So in his death, James Reeb says something to each of us, black and white alike—says that we must substitute courage for caution, says to us that we must be concerned not merely about who murdered him, but about the system, the way of life, the philosophy that produced the murder. His death says to us that we must work passionately, unrelentingly, to make the American dream a reality, so he did not die in vain.



COMMITTEE ON MISSION (CoM)

The Committee on Mission recently met with the Green Justice Team to establish a mission and S.M.A.R.T. goals (Specific / Measurable / Achievable / Realistic / Time-Bound). The mission of the Green Justice Team is to promote the well-being of the earth and its inhabitants by encouraging our congregation to engage in green justice practices and activities, and by partnering with the larger WNY community.

While the mission is more permanent, goals can be changed at the end of each team meeting as the work of the team evolves. A number of the current goals for the Green Justice Team revolve around planning for the next Living Green Festival, so they will change as the planning process progresses to the final event. Our work with the Green Justice Team was very enjoyable and fulfilling.

The CoM will be meeting again at the end of February to decide who it will meet with next. Over this church year, we hope to meet with the Connections Team and the Leadership, Development, and Nominating Committee to help them establish their mission and goals. We also hope to meet again with the Caring for One Another Team and Amherst Little Free Pantry Team to see how they are doing with their mission and goals that they established during the last church year. We will also revisit meeting with the Faith Development Team which is going through a transition now since not having a paid Director of Faith Development. The purpose of our work is to align the mission and goals of all of the ministry teams and BOT Committees 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 committee and invite other members of our congregation to join these teams and committees and be able to continue their work as leadership changes over the years. If any other teams or committees would like to meet with us during this church year, please contact Diane Bofinger (dbofinge@buffalo.edu).

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

Bob Johnson recently became a new Religious Advisor with the UB Campus Ministry Association. He will be the main contact and will attend the once-a-month Friday meetings of the CMA. Scott and I will continue as Religious Advisors and plan to work with Bob to come up with 1-2 programs to offer on campus each semester. Thank you, Bob!

Our church UU Young Adult Group (generally ages 19-35ish) has been inactive at this time. If you are interested in participating and would like to be added to our text and E-mail lists and join our Discord Group, send your E-mail and cell phone number to me. We try to keep the group informed about church activities and emerging young adult events. The group can engage in discussion on the Discord group. 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. If you have any ideas or would like to initiate an activity, 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) (716-418-3272) Advisor, UU Young Adult & Campus Ministry

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.

Green Lentil Curry with Greens

From Allrecipes

- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp garam masala
- 1 Tbsp curry powder
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup low sodium vegetable broth
- 4 cups chopped kale (without stems)
- 1 (15 oz) can cooked green lentils.
- If using dried lentils, cook beforehand.
- 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups hot cooked basmati rice, for serving

Fresh cilantro for garnish; lemon wedges, for serving.



Heat oil in a large, deep skillet. Add pepper, onion and garlic and cook until veggies are tender, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in garam masala, curry powder, cumin, turmeric and salt and cook until they are fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes.

Add tomatoes and broth, bring to a simmer and cook, covered, 5 minutes. Stir in kale and lentils. Gently simmer, covered, until kale is tender, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice. Serve over rice. Garnish with cilantro and serve with lemon wedges.

Note: Any greens will work with this recipe such as collards, mustard, spinach. Serve with red pepper flakes if you want a bit of heat.

A simple, hearty dish that is a potluck favorite.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023



Join us June 21 - 25, 2023 online or in-person in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. General Assembly 2023 will be a multiplatform event, with registration options for in-person and/or virtual participation. In-person registration includes access to events scheduled to take place in Pittsburgh, as well as everything available to virtual registrants. Full virtual registration includes access to the GA app, as well as all on-demand programming, live webinars, and live-streamed events. For complete registration details, go to: ua.org/ga/registration.

2023 Ware Lecturer: Imani Perry

Imani Perry is the Hughes-Rogers Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University and a faculty associate with Gender and Sexuality Studies and Jazz Studies. In the summer of 2023 she will join the faculty at Harvard University as a Radcliffe Professor. Perry is also a contributing writer for *The Atlantic* and the author of seven books, most recently South to America: A Journey Below the Mason-Dixon to Understand the Soul of a Nation (Ecco Books, 2022), which received the 2022 National Book Award for Nonfiction and was an



instant New York Times bestseller and Indie bestseller. South to America was named one of President Obama's favorite books of 2022, and included in numerous end-of-year best-of lists. Her book Breathe: A Letter to My Sons (Beacon Press, 2019) was a finalist for the 2020 Chautauqua Prize and a finalist for the NAACP Image Award for Excellence in Nonfiction.



UU Amherst's "altar" gets attention from MORNING ALTARS author.....

UU Amherst's Office Administrator, Elaine Harrigan, hosts a community page on Instagram called @earthforagedart which is a showcase for work created by earth and land artists (herself included!). Her interest in creating nature altars was inspired by the book, *Morning Altars*, which is in the chapel where our "altars" materials are displayed. After creating an altar on our chapel table and posting it on her Instagram page, author/artist Day Schildkret, who is one of her 700+ followers, posted the photo on his page (@morningaltars) as an Instagram "Story." Schildkret's page has 65K followers! Imagine how many people around the world have seen our UU Amherst altar! (If you have Instagram, follow her page @earthforagedart. All are welcome!)







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