

Issue
JUNE 2023

The Foreword



UU AMHERST

*Fostering Justice
and Compassion*

The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst
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JUNE SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10:30 AM

*June 4 Justice is What Love Looks Like in Public

This quote from Cornel West is at the heart of Unitarian Universalism. We are known as the “Love People” because we show up to live our values out loud. As Buffalo celebrates Pride, we commit ourselves anew to the work of love and justice in our community and the world. *Activities for kids.

June 11 Flower Communion - 100 Years Celebrating Community

Each June we enact the Flower Communion ceremony that was created in 1923 by Rev. Norbert Čapek at the Unitarian Church in Prague. Each person is invited to bring a flower to church and add it to the bouquet that symbolizes the worth and beauty of each individual and the lovely community that is created when we gather. Come and celebrate the 100th anniversary of this uniquely UU rite.

**Participants are encouraged to bring a flower. Extras are appreciated so that newcomers and those who may have forgotten can also participate fully. **

June 18 Everyone is Welcome Here - 7 Principles for Kids by Composer, Guitarist, UU Activist Jim Scott

Jim Scott’s set of seven songs (with some words left over) celebrate our UU Seven Principles – a song for each principle. Jim’s words are inspiring and reaffirming to all ages. We really stand for something, and we can be ready to explain it to anyone who asks. Boiling down some big philosophy to simple and straightforward words, Jim leads us in singing, and lifting up these ideas to the world.

June 25 General Assembly Worship - Streamed LIVE 11:00 am

Note the time change! We’ll have snacks available for the earlybirds.

There is nothing like GA worship - when a few thousand UUs come together to celebrate! We’ll live stream the service online and in our chapel. It’s always a very full service, with amazing music, awe inspiring preaching, and the feel-good energy of a LOT of UUs! (It usually runs about 90 minutes... ergo, the snacks.) Enjoy the service from home or with friends in the chapel.

Our Covenant

*Together we promise:
To gather in compassionate
community,
To celebrate diversity of thought and
unity of spirit;
And to seek wholeness for ourselves,
our children, and our world.*



MINISTER'S CORNER

Prayer for Living in Tension
By Joseph M. Cherry

If we have any hope of transforming the world and changing ourselves, we must be bold enough to step into our discomfort, brave enough to be clumsy there, loving enough to forgive ourselves and others.

May we, as a people of faith, be granted the strength to be so bold,
so brave,
and so loving.

This is another one of my favorites from the dangerous little UUA anthology of meditations, *Voices from the Margins*. The dedication of the anthology states its intention as a vision for Unitarian Universalism in a multicultural world.

Joe Cherry and I were in seminary together. I learned a lot from Joe. I learned that one cannot merely look at someone and assume we know their story. With a typical 'white guy' name and a lack of accent, I had no idea that his heritage is Hispanic - that his experience of the world is that of a person of color. Joe also taught me that it is possible to tell a hard truth without it being fatal to the relationship. And it was Joe that challenged me to name my theology in three words. His was "There's always hope." Mine continues to be, "Love changes everything."

Joe's *Prayer for Living in Tension* names our deepest fears (discomfort, being clumsy, not being able to forgive) and gives us a reason to be bold, brave, and loving enough to confront those fears in community. All of the language is "we". Of course, we benefit from working on ourselves, but the true power comes from working in beloved community. May we be so bold, so brave, and so loving.

With hope,
Rev. Michelle

JUNE SUNDAY SERVICES GENERAL INFORMATION

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.

June often marks the transition from regular services to an interstice - a time when the minister is traditionally away for weeks or months at a time - with 'regular' services resuming in the fall. That will not be the case this year. Although we might take some time off to enjoy the fine weather with family and friends, other weeks will find us returning to the beloved community we are creating together, here at UU Amherst.

BOARD REPORT

May saw another successful event from the FUN-raising Group as there were 50 people at their Kentucky Derby Party on Saturday, May 6th in the Emerson Room. It was a very enjoyable event and many positive comments were made about it on the following Sunday as well.

The next All Church event will be the new Sign Dedication and Board Picnic after the service on June 11th, Please see the *Weekly Update* for details. We hope to see everyone there.

May also saw two successful "work parties " on successive Fridays. At the first, the old sign was taken down and overhanging branches and brush that was interfering with the use of some of the paved parking spots on the Western side of the parking lot was cleared. At the second, work was begun to restore the lawn on the trench that was dug for the electrical connection to the new sign. We appreciate the efforts of all who participated.

The BOT has also approved necessary work on both our Fire Alarm System—more costly than we had expected— and on the replacement of the deteriorating wood on the outside of the Emerson Room—less costly than we had expected.

Please remember to lock your car doors as a precaution as we have various non-members that traverse our property.

Two more very positive developments also seen in May: Greater attendance at Sunday Services and more new people at the services.

Please do your best to cordially welcome those new people so we can add them to our church community.

Randy Kent, Board Chair linrkent@yahoo.com



ENDOWMENT TRUST

Our next scheduled meeting is July 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.

On April 30th, the first installment of \$11,250 was made for our commitment to the church 2023 -24 operating budget. The final payment of approximately \$6,000 on our wonderful new sign is yet to made. The messaging on the sign is going to be a game changer.

Elaine Cusker and I have been digging in the archives of the Endowment and the church. One of the bits of information we retrieved was a list of people who are including the Endowment Trust in their wills. This has resulted in renewed interest in creating a Legacy Society/Circle – a more formal way encouraging and recognizing bequests for the Endowment. Expect to hear more about this in the future – because: *“We pick fruit from trees we did not plant. We drink water from wells we did not dig. This is as it should be, so long as we dig and plant for those who come after us”*

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

LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Many thanks to Congregation Shir Shalom who is continuing to collect food for the PANTRY throughout the month of May.

Kim Diana Connelly and her UB law students have been working diligently in filing a Certificate of Incorporation for the Pantry as a not - for - profit organization in NY State. This is very exciting, and will allow us to obtain grant money to keep the Pantry in “business”.

The officers for the Amherst Little Free Pantry Ltd. will be: Marie Evans President; Meg Sabella, Treasurer; and Doreen Park Secretary

Thank you to all involved in this endeavor.

Cheryl Tomasulo; Meg Sabella, Pantry Chair, megsabella712@gmail.com

THEATER LOVERS

Thank you to everyone who came out during the 2022-23 theater season to support Jewish Repertory Theatre. We enjoyed the plays "The Chosen," "Tuesdays with Morrie," and "Barefoot in the Park," as well as dinner together afterward. The new season has not yet been announced, but expect shows in October/November, February, and April/May.

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

Sign Dedication & Church Picnic June 11th 12 noon

Join us on the front lawn to celebrate the long-awaited completion of the new sign! After the dedication ceremony we will have an All-Church Picnic. Hot dogs, hamburgers, veggie burgers, and beverages will be provided. Please bring salads or desserts. Contact Dian Tucker to let her know what you will be bringing. We look forward to seeing you there!



GREEN JUSTICE TEAM

The Living Green Festival will be Saturday, September 23! The website for the festival can be found at <https://uuamherst.org/wp2/about-2/living-our-values/green-sanctuary-3/living-green-festival-2023/>. Or, on the UU Amherst website, under ABOUT, click on LIVING OUR VALUES, GREEN JUSTICE, and then LIVING GREEN FESTIVAL. Keep an eye on the page as the planning continues.

We are in need of people and organizations to give talks and lead activities. Are you or someone you know willing and able to give a talk or lead an activity? Please fill out this form or share the link! <https://forms.gle/RTtgiAvXsxQyLL2m9>. Consider these possible spaces for activities:

- Ecology Center - Walking trails, open greenspace with a small pavilion, and meditation labyrinths.
- Living Room - Quiet room with comfortable seating. Ideal for small group discussions.
- Activities Tent - Tables and chairs outdoors under a large tent canopy. Ideal for arts and crafts.

If you have new or like-new items at home that you do not have a need for, please contact Dian Tucker about donating them for this year's "Reduce and Reuse" basket raffle.

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

CONNECTIONS IS THE NEW FAITH DEVELOPMENT!

The Connections and Faith Development Teams have merged under one name, with Linda Groat leading and Laurie Kasnicki assisting. Our brand new mission statement is:

To intentionally develop a welcoming and inclusive community where all ages can explore a personal path to spirituality and to provide opportunities that nourish deep connections, individual growth, and wholeness.

Our top focus areas are:

1. To welcome newcomers warmly and quickly connect them to meaningful relationships and interests.
2. To develop programming and activities for youth while their parents are in service.
3. To increase membership both on the Connections team and in the congregation.

Making connections for all ages and stages is a vital ministry, core to the growth of UU Amherst and there are many ways to help. Stay tuned for more information on Connections and consider how you can help, as well as be enriched. Please email Linda Groat, lmgeag@gmail.com, if you are interested in joining the team!

Thank you to Marge Marcille, for designing and leading activities to the youth for the last several months. We are grateful and appreciative of all you have done.

Linda Groat, Team Lead LMGEAG@gmail.com

JUNE 2023 CALENDAR

PLEASE NOTE: Some meetings 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.

Room abbreviations: EM (Emerson Room); LR Living Room); Bull (Bulfinch-FD Wing)

Saturday, June 3rd

3:00 pm: Private Party – Rental EM/KIT

Sunday, June 4th (monthly 1st Sun)

11:45 am: Little Free Pantry Team Meeting

Thursday, June 8th (monthly 2nd Thr)

7:30 pm: Green Justice Team Meeting

Friday, June 9th

9:00 am: Rental—Don Tucker

Saturday, June 10th

9:00 am: Ministry Council

Sunday, June 11th (monthly 2nd Sun)

12:00 pm: Sign Dedication/Church Picnic

Wednesday, June 14th (monthly 2nd Weds)

1:30 pm: Caring Team Zoom

5:30 pm: Finance Committee EM

7:00 pm: Marlana's Covenant Group LR

Saturday, June 17th

7:00 pm: Jim Scott Concert—Chapel /Ecology Ctr

Wednesday, June 21st (monthly 3rd Wed)

1:00 pm: 3rd Wednesday Covenant Group Zoom

7:00 pm: Board Meeting EM

7:00 pm: Bofinger Covenant Group Zoom

Reminder: Groups please restore rooms before leaving. Return chairs to their places and take any papers (etc) with you or dispose of them properly.

Kitchen Storage: All opened packages must be enclosed in plastic containers or Ziplock bags before placing in cupboards.

Thank you.

Continued

RECURRING:

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

All "tree" names are for Village groups

Saturdays, June 3rd-24th

9:30 am: Shared Caring Circle Zoom Zrev

7:00 pm: Birch Bunch Zoom

Sundays, June 4th-25th

9:30 am: Church of the Wild Experience Ecology Ctr

10:30 am: Church service—in-person and livestream
Coffee Hour following

Mondays, June 5th-26th

7:00 pm: Tulip Crabapple Zadmin (weekly)

L. Marcus

7:30 pm: Marvelous Maples (6/12 & 6/26)

D. Bofinger

Tuesdays, June 6th-27th

12:30 pm: Women's Study Group Zoom

Wednesdays, June 7th-28th

10:30 am: Willow Village Zadmin (2nd & 4th Weds: 6/14 & 6/28) J. Senders

7:00 pm: Marlana's Covenant Group (2nd Weds 6/14) LR

7:00 pm: Northtowns Village (6/21)

Ministry Council

The expanded* Ministry Council will meet in person on **Saturday, June 10** (9am-12n), 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 is on summer hiatus except for a weekday potluck luncheon at church on July 27th. For that gathering, we've chosen to read the book *The Light Pirate* by Lily Brooks-Dalton. Please contact Grace Little or Wendy Scott to coordinate food.

When we return to regular meetings in September, our TOPIC will be UU History. Our meeting is scheduled for Sunday, September 24, at noon in the church Living Room. Suggested books include *American Bloomsbury: Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry David Thoreau: Their Lives, Their Loves, Their Work* by Susan Cheever, or *The Great Agnostic: Robert Ingersoll and American Free-thought* by Susan Jacoby. There should be a copy of Bloomsbury in the Lending Library in the glass cabinet in the Emerson Room, along with other books that would fit the topic.

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!



JIM SCOTT CONCERT, JUNE 17 & 18

UU singer & songwriter, Jim Scott will be with us for a concert on Saturday, June 17, in addition to the Sunday morning service, June 18. Circle the dates in your calendar and invite friends to attend as Jim shares a hopeful UU message through story and song.

Jim Scott has made it his business to create music celebrating the earth. With a warmth and authenticity he invites all to get involved through lyrical melodies and memorable verses. Jim played with the Paul Winter Consort for years and was co-composer of their *Missa Gaia/Earth Mass*. His guitar skill and enchanting manner led Pete Seeger to call him "Some kind of a magician." He's gone on to record 9 albums, and his choral music and guitar method are published by Hal Leonard Corp. A tireless activist, Jim often lends his talents to benefit concerts for progressive causes.

Jim has brought his contemporary and multicultural music to more than 700 UU Churches over three decades. His much loved "Gather the Spirit" and a number of others are included in the UU hymnbooks. Though often brought in as the "speaker," Jim's services are always very musical. Jim speaks with passion on ecology, justice and peace. His lyrical poetry and stories are calls to action, full of hope and gentle wit. With degrees from Eastman School of Music and Berklee College, Jim often works with choirs on his compositions and arrangements, inspiring singers to new levels of expression. As song-leader he lifts joyous participation from congregations. Former Co-chair of the UU Ministry for the Earth, Jim was involved in creating the "Green Sanctuary" program. Awarded a grant from the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, Jim compiled and arranged the "Earth and Spirit Songbook" 110 songs of ecology and peace.

“FUN” DRAISING TEAM IN ACTION

The Kentucky Derby Party in May was a success! We will be helping the Board of Trustees with the June 11th picnic and sign dedication. We hope to sponsor a potluck picnic after service during July, and we are helping church member, Marlana Rice, to organize and sponsor a fundraising party in August at the church. We will be making baskets and food for the Living Green Festival, as well as planning other fall events.

Our dream has come true! By the time you read this, we should have a Blackstone Griddle/Grill in use at the church. We have received generous donations from the Cusker's, the Tuckers, Marie Evans, the Marcille's, John and Karen Thompson, and Barbara and Barry Kent. Randy Kent has donated a full propane tank. There is still time to contribute to this awesome addition to the church as we still need some accoutrements to complete the set up.

Would you like to gather together to see a movie? How about a football or hockey game? These are just a few ideas we have for future fun-raisers. If you have any suggestions we would be happy to help you bring your ideas to fruition.

The Fundraising Task Force consists of Karen Thompson, Dian Tucker, Pam Kent, Barbara Kent Gauger and we force our spouses to help.

Barbara Kent Gauger bgturbo944@hotmail.com

CLOTHING MINISTRY

The seasonal change-over is complete! Shop the rack for summer frocks of all sizes. We have replaced the old wooden rack, rummage sale vintage, with a modern, chrome rolling rack. Hopefully it will withstand the Western New York weather and be easier to fill and shop from.

Do you want to shop “Out of the Closet”? Let us know and you can come up to see our entire selection, we have suits and prom type dresses if they are needed. All clothing sizes from infant to extra large adult are available.

We will be making gift baskets for the Living Green Festival soon. We need items to make baskets with. Do you have any unused, new or like new items at home that we can use? It amazes us what we are able to make when we have enough to choose from. Donations can be placed in the blue tubs found in the lobby coat room and outside our door on the second floor of the Faith Development wing. Contact us if you have a talent for making gift baskets. We expect to spend August in basket making mode.

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

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

COMMITTEE ON MISSION (CoM)

The Committee on Mission (CoM) has been working with the Connections Team since the end of April to develop a mission statement. We have really enjoyed working with this team and have had great brainstorming sessions! Read the write-up by the Connections Team in this *Foreword* for more information about their mission statement

The Connections Team will now be working on their S.M.A.R.T. goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound). We will meet with them again after they have had more time to work together on their goals.

The purpose of our work is to align the mission and goals of all of the ministry teams and Board Committees with the mission of the church. This written information will inform the rest of our church community about the work of each team/committee and enable these groups to continue their work as leadership changes over the years. If any other teams or committees would like to meet with us next fall, please contact Diane Bofinger (dpbofingerg@gmail.com).

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

The UB Campus Ministry Advisors, Bob Johnson (main campus contact), Diane Bofinger, and Scott Harrigan, look forward to meeting over the summer to brainstorm ideas for the fall. If you have ideas of things that we can do on campus and would like to join our discussion, please contact me.

Our church's UU Young Adult Group (generally ages 18-35ish) 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)



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 refreshing vegetable recipe that we had the pleasure of enjoying at Ming Teh restaurant in Fort Erie.

Vegetable Mix

1/2 pound white mushrooms,
cut in half
1 pound sugar snap peas or
snow peas
1 pound asparagus, cut into bite
sized pieces
1 tsp vegetable bullion,
Better than Bullion brand
2 Tbsp corn starch
1/4 cup rice wine or any white wine
Canola oil



Sauté the halved mushrooms gently in canola oil until just done. Set aside. Steam the peas and asparagus until cooked but still crunchy. Add to sautéed mushrooms.

In a medium sauce pan add the bullion, 1 cup of water, the rice wine and thoroughly stir in the cornstarch. Cook over medium heat until the mixture boils. Cook for 5 more minutes, adding more water if the mixture is too thick. Add the vegetables to the liquid and heat them through. Serve as a side to your main dish or serve with rice or noodles as a meal in itself. Enjoy!

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.

HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

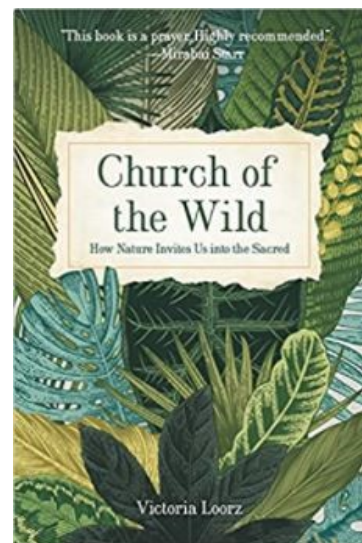
Email: administrator@uuamherst.org
For Newsletter: by 10:00 am on the 16th
For Website: two weeks prior to event
For All Church list serve: daily during the week.
For Weekly Update: Fridays by 10:00 am

Administrator/Office Hours:
Tuesday through Friday—9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Church of the Wild Sunday Experience in June

A year ago, several of us read and discussed Victoria Loorz's book, *Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us into the Sacred*. It was an inspiring book and planted the seed of having our own church of the wild in the Ecology Center (beyond the parking lot).

Many ideas were lifted up in the May 21st interest meeting, with a Sunday morning outdoor meditation being the first step. Join Connections team member, Lauraine Marcus, in the Ecology Center at 9:30 am, Sunday mornings in June for a 45-minute *Church of the Wild* experience. The entrance to the Ecology Center is next to the basketball court at the edge of the parking lot.



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.





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CHURCH OF AMHERST

Fostering Justice and Compassion

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