

Winchester Unitarian Society

Highlights December 12, 2019



*Photo illustrating this month's theme of "Awe"
- A photo from Christmas Eve worship at WUS, 2018. Reprinted with permission.*

Upcoming Worship

**Sunday, December 15
(No Family Worship)**

10:30 am Intergenerational Worship, Sanctuary

Pageant Sunday

The Innkeeper's Tale

Rebecca Kelley Morgan, Director of
Religious Lifespan Education



"The Innkeepers Tale" On this annual pageant Sunday, the congregation is invited into full participation as the enduring story of the baby's birth is told. The tale of the foreign young couple being turned away is also a story to explore in this moment in time. Participation by volunteers is asked for in the moment with no lines needing to be memorized, and a variety of roles to be filled, including the appreciative witnesses in the pews.

This Sunday, we share our gifts with **The Boston Immigration Justice Accompaniment Network** (or BIJAN, pronounced "Beyond") is a grassroots network of individuals, faith communities, and other activist groups working to reduce the escalating violence of our immigration system and accompany those directly impacted by the system of immigration detention and deportation through legal and court support, fundraising for bond and legal fees, housing and transportation support, and more.

In the last two years, BIJAN has bonded out over 150 people and paid over \$600,000 in bonds and currently has over 1400 volunteers. However, we have seen bonds increase dramatically over this time period, with bonds now being set between \$5,000 and \$20,000. This is unattainable for many of our neighbors, leaving people in jail for indeterminate periods, unable to support their families, and cut off from outside communication to fight their case.

BIJAN's values in this work are:

- *We honor people's dignity and choices in a system that denies dignity and choice.
- *We expect messiness, confusion, and discomfort, and we also choose courage and trust.
- *We judge the system, not people
- *We fight for one another as family, because we are.

Events This Weekend



A Community Potluck, Youth Group Fundraiser/Service Auction and Carol Sing immediately follows in Metcalf Hall

Everyone is invited down to Metcalf Hall following the Pageant for our annual Holiday Potluck.

Please leave your food in the downstairs kitchen before the service.

During the potluck, WUSYG will have a special services silent auction where they will be auctioning off a variety of services they can provide! They will also be selling homemade holiday treats (pictured above), all to benefit their upcoming Service Trip to War, West Virginia. WUSYGers and 8th graders will also be gift wrapping Mitten Tree gifts during the potluck, gratis, as a gift back to the congregation.

Once everyone has had their fill of food, the festivities will conclude with some joyful carol singing! You don't want to miss this wonderful winter event at WUS!



OH MITTEN TREE: This Sunday, December 15th we will have a free Gift Wrapping Service by members of WUSYG. If your gifts are dropped off unwrapped and clearly labeled (with the mitten) we will take on making them look wonderful, before they are distributed to the recipients. This year's recipients are children in Foster Care with DCF and children from families supported by LexRAP. Please return gifts no later than Sunday, December 15th at 12:00 PM with "mitten" contents and a name label securely attached to the gift upon its return.

Religious Education

This Sunday:

There is NO Family Worship or RE Classes this Sunday, please join us for our annual

holiday pageant in Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Eighth graders are invited to join WUSYGers this week, Sunday at 10:00 AM. You are invited to the annual pageant, where some members of WUSYG will be co-leading worship and serving as costumers (you are invited to assist with this) and be part of Mitten Tree gift wrapping during the potluck after worship.

Afternoon Programs:

Our Whole Lives meets **4:30-6:00 pm in the Wallace Room**. This week, Gender Identity. Sioux and Karen lead the group.

WUSYG

Winchester Unitarian Society Youth Group

This Sunday all youth are encouraged to join us at WUS at 10 AM. There will be roles for youth in the Holiday Pageant upstairs at 10:30, then we'll be holding our services auction fundraiser downstairs afterward alongside the all-church potluck and carol sing-a-long. Youth and 8th graders will also do gift-wrapping together for the WUS Mitten Tree and sell holiday confections alongside the services that they'll be auctioning off silently. Families are welcome and encouraged to join us for everything that day! There will be no WUSYG the evening of the 15th (or the 22nd or 29th). Our Holiday Party will be on Dec. 20th from 6-10 pm at Arthur's house. Present and past WUSYGers are welcome!

To see all of our upcoming events, **click here to see a PDF of our calendar** for the year, or view and subscribe to our google calendar by going to our website: **www.winchesteruu.org/youth** where you can also find more information about our programs and ways to stay in touch. Email **wusyouth@gmail.com** with any questions, concerns or compliments!

Music

Choirs

Adult Choir rehearsal begins at 8:45 on Sunday.

Children's Chorale and Youth Choir rehearsals are Tuesday evening from 6:15-7pm. Do you know a young person who loves to sing? Both these groups are wonderful opportunities to learn about music and enjoy community, and have a great time.

Please contact Music Director John Kramer for more information at john.kramer@winchesteruu.org

Congregational News

The Community Responds to Vandalism

As you may have heard, during the weekend of Thanksgiving, someone painted racist graffiti on the building of our neighbor, McCall Middle School, and a



homophobic slur on the WUS building. The Winchester Police Department is taking these acts seriously and is actively trying to identify the perpetrator. You may read a *Winchester Star* article about the incident here: <https://tinyurl.com/WStarGraffiti>

But the good news is many in the community-at-large have responded, wanting to do something positive in the wake of this most-recent vandalism. If you would like to join local residents and business owners in posting a rainbow decal in your window or hanging a rainbow flag at your home, please complete this on-line form: <https://forms.gle/tS65XvJPT7retZsM9>

By posting this tangible symbol of LGBT support, any anti-LGBT acts are overshadowed by affirmations of love, acceptance, identity

Social Action and Outreach will assist in doing some fundraising in January to cover the cost of the flags and decals. Any contributions beyond the cost of these items will be split between The Trevor Project and BAGLY. If you would like to contribute or if you would like to volunteer by visiting businesses to invite them to post a decal in their window, please contact Heather at heather.janules@winchesteruu.org

Sanctuary News About Maria

January 5, 2020 will mark the second anniversary of when Maria choose to enter sanctuary in the hope of remaining legally in this



country with her children. We have talked with her about how she would like to acknowledge this date. As you might imagine, at times she is disheartened that she is still here after 2 years. So this year, she has chosen to have a small dinner with her family and the sanctuary committee.

We also know that many of the volunteers were at the recommitment service last January and will be wondering how to be supportive this year. So we have a couple of suggestions of things that folks can do in her name:

Do a Jericho Walk – Tuesday, December 17 @ 1PM – carry a sign that says “I Walk for Maria” or something like that! (no last name please)

Donate to a college fund for Maria’s son, Isidro, who was deported two years ago. He is currently enrolled in college and studying to become an English teacher.

- Send checks made out to Manuel A. Rodriguez with “Isidro’s Fund” on the memo line and send to First Parish in Bedford, c/o Diana Finer, 75 The Great Rd, Bedford, MA 01730

Donate to BIJAN, a Boston immigrant rights organization that arranges bond for detained, undocumented individuals so that they can return to their families and actively pursue their cases. (Note that BIJAN will be the Share the Plate recipient for 12/15.)

- www.beyondbondboston.org

Donate to Bedford Sanctuary fund

- Checks can be made out to First Parish Bedford with “Sanctuary Fund” on memo line and sent to First Parish in Bedford, 75 The Great Rd, Bedford, MA 01730

Send a handwritten note of encouragement to her and address it to First Parish in

Bedford, c/o Sanctuary Committee, 75 The Great Road, Bedford, MA 01730

We ask that if you do anything at all in her name, that you send us an email telling us what you did. We plan to give her a small book with the names of all who did any action and what they did. We ask that you get an email to either Judi Curcio (judi.gez84@gmail.com) or Maureen Richichi (maureen.richichi@gmail.com) before January 3rd so we have time to put this together.

We hope that this is the last year that we have to rededicate ourselves to the work that supports this amazing woman!

With Gratitude

Maureen, Judi, Diana, Tony, John and Annie
Strategic Team



Save the Date: Silent Retreat January 10-11

*Begin the New Year with 24 hours of centering
heart, mind and spirit*

Participants gather at WUS at 7 pm on Friday, Jan 10th for an informal worship service. We then enter into shared silence. You may use the quiet to retreat as you wish (bring a journal, a puzzle or a book you have been wanting to read) or take part in organized activities such as collage creation and a shared meal.

Participants are invited to stay overnight. We close at 5 pm on Saturday with another informal worship service to reflect on our experiences together and depart by 6 pm. Cost: \$15 for materials; sliding scale available.

Contact Rev. Heather with any questions at heather.janules@winchesteruu.org or to indicate your intention to participate. **Deadline is January 6th.**

Circle Dinner sign-up time! Deadline - January 2nd, 2020

It's time to widen your circle of friendships with fellowship and good eating! Circle dinners consist of small groups of singles and couples from the church dining together in each other's homes throughout the winter and spring. Everyone contributes to the meal and it is hosted by a member of the group, on a rotating basis. Newcomers are especially welcome. This is a great way to get to know the people you see on Sunday in a relaxed, convivial setting.



You can sign up for Circle Dinners online - it's very easy! Go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5GKHV2C>

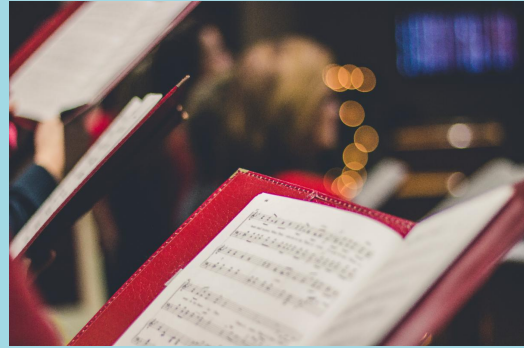
And, if you don't have a computer, Membership will have a laptop at coffee after the following church services on December 15th and 22nd. You will be notified in January of your group members. This is one of the most popular social events at the church and many people participate. Don't miss out!

Alternative Gift Giving is big this year and you can be a part of it!

Instead of buying more stuff, you can support a non-profit organization by giving a donation in honor of anyone on your shopping list who already has lots of stuff. Start a new tradition and hang a card on your tree (or mail it out) instead of buying and wrapping stuff. Seven different worthy groups were selected to go with our Seven UU Principles! These groups are **Women's Lunch Place (#1), el hogar (#2), WUSYG (#3), Mystic Valley NAACP (#4), ACLU (#5), LexRAP (#6), North East Animal Shelter (#7)** The cards will be available on Sundays before and after church on Dec 8, 15, and 22. Activists and animal lovers, get out the voters and those who stay local or be vocal, there's something for everyone to support! Look for our special card to support WUSYG's trip to War WV!

Carol Singing Saturday, December 21st 4:00 pm

Before we jump the wreath into the new solar year, we're off to share some holiday spirit with our neighbors in Winchester. Bundle up and join us as we walk through the center of town beguiling all with our rousing renditions of winter classics. We hope to see families of all ages there. Questions? Contact John Kramer.



Winter Solstice Celebration Saturday, December 21st 5:00 pm, Metcalf Hall

Join our extended community as we welcome the darkness and celebrate the returning light on this longest night and shortest day of Winter Solstice. The celebration takes place in Metcalf Hall, with the exception of the wreath burning which takes place in the parking lot! And then...stay and eat! We will provide a hearty soup and invite you to bring along finger foods or something sweet. Please bring along a contribution of a non-perishable food item to be distributed by the Council for Social Concern.

Kids & Cookies Sunday, December 22nd

Our Annual cookie baking and decorating happens Sunday morning, December 22nd in Metcalf Kitchen during the worship service and usual Religious Education program time. We hope you can join us! We gift these to the congregation for Christmas Eve worship services.



Jan Fest is coming!

This Year our Sundays are January 5th, 12th, and 26th. Please contact RE committee

co-chairs Naomi Magnoni and Erin Graham if you are able to lead a group this year during our January celebration of community across the age span. If you are not familiar with JanFest, it's an opportunity to share a skill, a craft or a special interest of yours with our young people. In the past people have offered cooking, rock art, nature explorations, simple sewing, beadmaking, Tai Chi, games, beekeeping, dance and more.

Shop local! But if you're one of the 75% of Americans who shop online at Amazon, please help support WUS by naming the Winchester Unitarian Society as your designated charity on Amazon Smile.

As you shop this upcoming holiday season, we urge you to shop local. But if you're doing your shopping online and you're buying from Amazon, we hope you'll make **Amazon Smile** your starting point and support WUS through your purchases. Why? Because Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. It's easy. You start your shopping experience at smile.amazon.com instead of the plain old amazon.com – it's the same Amazon you know, same products, same prices. You name the Winchester Unitarian Society as your designated charity and start shopping! Got questions about the program? Read more [here](#) or just get started at smile.amazon.com.

Thanks and Happy Holidays!

Membership Reflection and Renewal Retreat

A fun and reflective program for newcomers, long-timers and everyone in-between on Saturday, January 25th from 9 am – 3 pm.

Are you considering becoming a member of the Winchester Unitarian Society? Are you a member but it has been awhile since you thought about your spiritual journey? Or maybe you just joined and have questions about what membership means at WUS... This program is for all of you!

Drawing from our past "Beginning, Becoming and Belonging" classes, this retreat will help you gain understanding about your religious experiences, learn about UU history and receive practical information about membership at WUS. As we will explore together, you will also meet new people and strengthen existing bonds with participants.

A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided; child care is available upon request. In respect for the group process we ask that participants commit to staying for the entire program.

Please rsvp to marilynmullane@me.com and remember to request child care, if needed.

Your Membership Committee



Sunday Secretaries are needed!

The office could really use your assistance on Sundays.



Please contact the office at 781-729-0949 or office@winchesteruu.org if you're willing to consider it!

Supporting Local Refugee Families

WUS is beginning a supportive relationship with **Lexington Refugee Assistance Program** (www.LexRAP.org) whose mission is to provide refugee families with a network of community support.



There is an immediate need for the following items to support a LexRAP refugee family and their young child. Donations would be welcome and appreciated! If you would like to support this family, please bring items to WUS and place them in the LexRAP donation box in the Symmes room.

**Huggies brand pull-ups, size 5T for boys
Vanilla PediaSure Shake, 8 oz. with blue cap**

Additionally, there are opportunities to provide direct support to LexRAP refugee families who are living in the local area. There is a need for:

Drivers: to take family members to medical appointments, the grocery store, etc.
Conversational English visits: to help individuals practice speaking a new language

If you are interested in supporting local refugee families, please contact **Marianne DiBlasi** at marianne@winchesteruu.org.

Social Action and Outreach wants your suggestions for justice and service projects this year. Please talk to any member of the committee: Sue Doubler, Harris Gibson, Gordy McIntosh, Claire McNeill, Patty Shepard, and Martina Warner. We have one vacant spot. Visit a meeting, the first Tuesday every month.

WhaleCoast Alaska 2020

Have you ever dreamed of visiting Alaska? If so, WhaleCoast Alaska 2020 is for you!

4 Alaska UU congregations invite you to experience our unique environmental/cultural/spiritual program this summer. See Alaska through the eyes of local UUs, with friendly homestays and unique tour activities. See wildlife, including moose, bears, caribou, whales, bald eagles, sea lions, etc. Visit Denali National Park. Experience Native Alaskan culture. Forget the cruise ships -- our program is truly the best way to visit Alaska! Tours led by Dave Frey, member of the Fairbanks UU congregation and Alaska travel expert. Find out more about this Alaskan trip of a lifetime. For complete info go to: www.WhaleCoastAK.org, [email dfrey@whalecoastak.org](mailto:dfrey@whalecoastak.org) or call 907-322-4966. Discount for groups of 8 or more. We would love to share our Alaska with you!

There is a **Facebook group for WUS Members and Friends**, a fun way to connect outside of Sunday morning. If you wish to join, simply find the group on Facebook, ask to join through the page and, recognizing your name, office staff will approve your request. **Join the conversation!**



Community Joys and Sorrows

Our love and care go out to all who have joys or sorrows, hopes or prayers on their hearts. If you are facing a time of joy, sorrow or transition in your life, our ministers and the Pastoral Care Associates are available to offer a listening ear, compassionate presence and, if applicable, resources. Contact the office, 781-729-0949 or office@winchesteruu.org

Social Action & Outreach

UUs Showing Up for Climate Action & Justice!

Important: **Please RSVP**



**Join fellow UUs: UU Climate Action Advocacy Day
Tuesday December 17, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

All the materials you'll need will be provided – we just need you!

**UU Mass Action has a new mailing address: 40 Mechanic St., Suite 306,
Marlborough, MA. 01752 or find it on the web: uumassaction.org**

If you are interested in engaging in National level actions for economic justice, environmental and climate justice, immigration reform or defending our democracy, **check out this great resource UUSJ**. UUs for Social Justice.

Safe Communities Act. Although the December 2 hearing was cancelled due to the snow, the effort continues. Tell your MA representatives of your support. **Here's a helpful tool to help you do this** Ask them to contact the Joint Committee on Public Safety and request that the hearing be rescheduled as soon as possible.

Council of Social Concern

Next time you go shopping, please consider buying extra **shelf stable milk, apple juice** and **canned soups** for the Council of Social Concern's Food Pantry. These are the items they need this month to stock their shelves. Thank you for your generosity.



Sunday Volunteers & Flower Dedications

Coffee Hour Refreshments

Two people/families will be assigned to bring

refreshments for one Sunday. We truly appreciate your willingness to be asked to help out in this simple way - thank you!

You can see when your assigned week is by looking [here](#).

Without a doubt, there will be an assigned week that won't work for a given family and we ask then that you barter with your fellow congregants to switch up the assignment to cover your assigned Sunday.

Help make Sunday mornings more welcoming and joyful by bringing refreshments for coffee hour!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tyson (tyson@kamikawa.us) along the way.



Flower Dedications

Dates are available for flower dedications. You may dedicate flowers in celebrations of, in memory of, or in honor of someone and it will appear in the Order of Service.

The cost is \$45.00 (or you can bring your own flowers, but let the office know). Please click to [sign up](#) or use the sign up sheets in the foyer.

Seeking people to organize and lead the message part of Family Worship first Sunday of each month! The Religious Education Committee invites those who are interested to lead the message for 10:00 Family Worship for the first Sunday of the month. If you have a favorite child-friendly story to read or tell, or short activity you would like to share, please do! Themes in the past have involved the environment, meditative practices, social justice, and friendship. You will be asked to coordinate with that day's worship leaders and provide any props. The message should be no more than 10 minutes long. Email the RE Committee at rec@winchesteruu.org (link address?) if you are interested. If you would like to lead, but need some suggestions, please let us know!

Ongoing

**Yoga, Meditation, Caregiver Support Group,
and 350 Massachusetts Metro North**

See Ongoing Activities at:

<https://www.winchesteruu.org/news/ongoing-activities-groups/>

Deadlines

Sunday Morning Announcements Guidelines: [Click here](#)

For Highlights submissions: Wednesdays, 9:00 am


For submissions to the OOS: Wednesdays, 9:00 am

Email to office@winchesteruu.org. No more than 250 words, please.

Staying Connected

Visit the WUS website!

- Read the latest Highlights and Mystic Messenger in **the news section**.
- Want to know if a room is free, or when your meeting is? View **the calendar page**.
- Need the latest directory, or a list of committee chairs? Go to **the members' section** (**contact the office** for the password).
- Want to set up electronic giving? Go to the **How to Give page**.



It's probably on the website!

(And if it's not, let us know)

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