

Winchester Unitarian Society

Highlights December 26, 2019



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

Upcoming Worship

10:00 am Family Worship, Downstairs Meyer Chapel

For young children, their adult friends and those with an inner child...
About Family Worship

There is NO Family Worship or RE activities on December 29th.

Sunday, December 29 10:30 am All Ages Worship, Sanctuary

Let It Go
The Rev. Heather Janules
Worship Associate: Lee Barton

On the cusp of a new calendar year, this is a time to reflect on the past. What are the mistakes, resentments or conflicts you want to release before 2020 arrives? This service will invite us to let go of all we are carrying within that we wish to set down through reflection and ritual.

This Sunday, we Share the Plate with **the American Civil Liberties Union**, whose mission is to defend individual freedoms guaranteed by the US Constitution.

Religious Education

This Sunday:

Morning Programs:

There will be no Religious Education classes this morning but please join us in the Sanctuary for All Ages Worship at 10:30 am.

Afternoon Programs:

Our Whole Lives will not be meeting again until **Sunday, January 5th, 2020.**

WUSYG

Winchester Unitarian Society Youth Group

There will be **no regular meeting on 12/29**. Enjoy your breaks and we'll see you next decade!

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

Beagle in Residence Hours Changed this Week

As the WUS office is closed on Wednesday and Thursday for the Christmas holiday, canine chaplain hours will be on Friday, December 27th.

The chaplain on duty will be BIR Emeritus, **Dobby**, visiting from New Jersey with his staff/driver **Alison Streit Baron**. Dobby and Alison will be at WUS from 10-12 to visit. Come by and say hello!

Photo: Dobby in his holiday finery, a Christmas





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

IMPORTANT REMINDER FROM THE CO-TREASURERS

In order for you to claim a charitable contribution/deduction on your income taxes for 2019, any gifts to WUS must be RECEIVED IN THE OFFICE no later than Tuesday, December 31st. The date on the check does NOT determine deductibility.

On December 13th, we mailed statements to those who have a balance due on the pledge that they made to the church for the current church fiscal year (unless automatic payments are being made). We hope to send out Tax year 2019 statements by late January.

If you have any questions about your donations, please contact the treasurers at treasurer@winchesteruu.org or reach out to Jenny in the church office at 781-729-0949.

Thank you everyone for your generosity throughout the year! Your contributions make our programs and social outreach efforts possible. Wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday and new year!

Judy Murray and Sue Kiewra

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:

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.

- 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.**

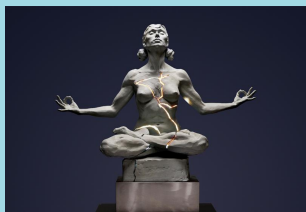
Circle Dinner sign-up time! Deadline - January 2nd, 2020

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>

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!



Due to the holidays, the weekly Meditation Group that meets on Wednesdays will **not be gathering on January 1, 2020**. Meditation gatherings will resume on **Wednesday, January 8, 2020**. See you there!

Save the Dates!
"Your Spiritual Legacy" Part I & II
Sponsored by the Pastoral Care Associates
January 26 & February 23
Michelsen Room / 12:15 pm

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.

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.

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 condolences are with **Carol Delaney** and her family with the recent death of her mother-in-law, Julia Barton. A memorial was held on December 24th.

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

Not Everyone is Home for the Holidays

Please make a couple of phone calls today:

Millions of people are locked up and countless families are broken apart due to mass incarceration and racial disparities in our legal system. Over 2 million children have a parent in a U.S. prison.

Call your lawmakers to support **S1379/H2047** to change visitation policies that interfere with jail-prison visits, and **S1372** to stop the outrageous system of exploitative phone rates and kickbacks. **[CLICK HERE for everything you need to know](#)**

Pass the #SafeCommunitiesAct

New date for the Safe Communities Act hearing: Friday, January 24, starting at 11:00 AM in the Gardner Auditorium.

UU Mass Action is helping to organize for this hearing. There is a Safe Communities Coalition registration link for this hearing, but we will register as a group – **[please let us know you're coming by completing this form](#)**

If you can't come in person, you can:

- Share the **[Facebook event page](#)**
- Write and submit your **written testimony** to the Co-Chairs of the Public Safety Committee. Please copy all members of the Committee **and** bcc the Coalition, **as**

**FRIDAY
JANUARY 24**

This is our biggest mobilization yet! Help us pack Gardner Auditorium with SCA supporters and visit legislator offices.

**SAFE
COMMUNITIES
ACT HEARING**

**RSVP TODAY:
[BIT.LY/SCA-JAN24](http://bit.ly/SCA-JAN24)**

Can't make it?
1. Email legislators: bit.ly/MA-SCA
2. Help us cover costs: bit.ly/SCA-fund

**SUPPORT
SAFE
COMMUNITIES**

The poster features a photograph of a person wearing a yellow hard hat and holding a sign that says "FAMILIAS UNIDAS". Other signs in the background say "CHILDREN BELONG IN SCHOOLS" and "SUPPORT SAFE COMMUNITIES".

instructed in the guidance here.

- Or: If you want to just send an email (not testimony) to the Committee! It's most impactful if you write your own; **click here to generate a pre-addressed email form**, or...
- Or: Use our Phone2Action tool: **this version if you've already emailed your own legislators**, or **this one to reach both the committee and your legislators**.

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.**

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.



Beyond the Congregation

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!

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)

Winchester Unitarian Society | 478 Main St. Winchester MA 01890
(781) 729-0949 | office@winchesteruu.org | www.winchesteruu.org