

# Winchester Unitarian Society

## Highlights December 17, 2020

*(link to today's full issue of Highlights)*



*The theme for December is Stillness*

*Photo: Horn Pond in winter*

## Upcoming Worship

We will be meeting via Zoom at 10 a.m. this Sunday, December 20th, on the day before the Winter Solstice, for "The fourth light of Advent" Please note this is NOT the main worship Zoom room, but one dedicated to Family Worship and Religious Education. Please log on a little before 10 at <https://tinyurl.com/WUSFamily>. The separate Zoom link will also be posted in the chat in the usual worship virtual room. All will need to be admitted by Rebecca and sessions are not recorded.

**Miss Juanita and story time.** Following the first reflections, our youngest members are invited to visit with Miss Juanita (of the playroom fame) hear stories and sing songs. As soon as the First Reflections ends, please re-enter the link for <https://tinyurl.com/WUSFamily> (it will also be posted in the chat) room where Miss Juanita is waiting for you. The very youngest may wish to bring an adult friend. All will need to be admitted.

\*Reminder to families, there are materials posted on the website for you and your children to engage with during Sunday morning worship. The materials for December are posted [HERE](#)

## Sunday, December 20

## 10:30 Worship, ONLINE



Photo by [Vidar Nordli-Mathisen](#) on [Unsplash](#)

### Resting in Stillness: Winter Solstice

The Rev. Heather Janules

On Sunday morning, we will gather one day before the Winter Solstice, the longest day of the year. As a Quarantine Winter awaits us, what can this ancient observance and the coming season offer us so it is more of a gift than a time to endure?

This Sunday, we Share the Plate with **Mission of Deeds**, a local organization providing “beds, furniture, and household items, free of charge, to people in need.” Mission of Deeds receives no public funding so it is up to generous individuals and congregations to make their life-giving work possible.

**Due to the pandemic, our annual Solstice Ritual is cancelled this year.**

**Transcription Service Now Available** When you log on to worship, you will now see an icon reading "LIVE Otter ai." This is a transcription application that provides text for any Zoom meeting, a good tool for those with impaired hearing or anyone seeking clarity about what is being broadcast. You can see a tutorial here: <https://tinyurl.com/OtterDemo>

**Christmas Eve**  
One Service at 7:00 pm

This year we will celebrate Christmas Eve by drawing from the best of our 4:00 pm family-centered service and our 7:00 pm "lessons and carols" service. We will



gather at the usual worship link:  
[www.tinyurl.com/wusworship](http://www.tinyurl.com/wusworship)

As always, our service will conclude with candlelighting and singing Silent Night. Beginning Monday, December 21st, a container of candles with bobeches will be outside the Main Street door at 478 Main Street, Winchester for pick up.

## Worship Notes

**THANK YOU** to all the pageant elves, who acted, who narrated, who filmed, who got into costume and made this, our first virtual pageant a success. I hope it remains a bright spot for many over this season.

**Season's Greetings and Happy Holidays  
from Winchester Unitarian Society Program Staff!!**

<https://youtu.be/pk-V7U2aXJM>  
Our Video Greeting Card

## Let's Celebrate the Babies!

Our virtual Christmas Eve service will include a celebration of children and grandchildren born within the past twelve months. If there is a newborn in your life you would like to honor, assuming the baby's parents grant permission, send a few photos, the full name and birth date to Rev. Heather at [heather.janules@winchesteruu.org](mailto:heather.janules@winchesteruu.org) by December 20th.



## Your Generosity at Work

By Sharing the Plate with the Living Tribute program of the US Forestry Service as part of our remembrance service, we planted **261 trees!**

## Worship Notes Are Now Online

Although there is no longer an Order of Service, you can now find worship notes online. These notes include Centering Thoughts, Music Notes, as well as the various songs, readings, and hymns from the service. Follow the link below to see the most recent notes from worship. Thank you!

<https://www.winchesteruu.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Worship-Notes-12.13.2020.docx>

## Congregational News

Con artists are again impersonating Rev. Heather by email, asking you to be in touch. The email they use is very similar to - but different from - her WUS email address.

**SCAM!**  
**Alert!**

If you were to respond, they would ask you to purchase gift cards for those in need which would, of course, profit the scammers. **Ignore, delete and spread the word!** We support many individuals and community through a myriad of ways BUT WE DO NOT ASSIST PEOPLE BY ASKING FOR GIFT CARD CODES.

### Take an Ornament, Leave an Ornament

We would usually be sharing food at potlucks and holiday gatherings, but since that's not a great idea right now, let's share ornaments. **Participate in the 2020 Holiday Ornament exchange!** There are two bins, at the Main Street entrance. One bin will have blank ornaments for painting and instructions. Take one, decorate it and include your name and a note if you wish on the paper provided. Then when THAT's done, the other bin is there for you to return your ornament. Prior to Christmas Eve, there will be an opportunity to pick up a candle for worship. When you pick up your candle, choose a different ornament from the bin! You will then have made and received a special memento to mark the season and year. Later in December, prior to the Christmas Eve service, there will be an opportunity to pick up a bobèche, the candle in a cup that we use on Christmas Eve. At the same time, you'll be invited to take an ornament with you. We cannot join together in person, but we can reach out across generations and the distance between us.



### With Gratitude, in Memory of Judy Virnelli

We are pleased to announce that the Virnelli family has given a very generous gift in honor of Frank's late wife, Judy, an active and beloved long-time member of WUS. This gift will enable a beautiful landscape renovation of the Mystic Valley Parkway entrance. The renovations will include sweeping walks from both sidewalks converging to a central staircase that ascends to an expanded terrace outside the Parkway doors. Built on a central spine from the church and aligned with our flags, these improvements will once again prominently connect the church to the Town and give a long overdue facelift to that entrance.

Frank was on the landscape task force in 2009 that advised on the overall landscape plan, created by Julie Khuen and that vision has remained with him. Frank and his family felt this was a fitting way to honor Judy's memory. On behalf of the entire WUS congregation, we are deeply grateful for this gift.

In related news, a group of former Pastoral Care Associates is in the planning stages of a memorial gift brick initiative to be included in the new walkways. More to come!



**FOR YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING**  
**Support WUS through purchasing**  
**handmade soap this !**  
**This coming Monday, December 14th**  
**to Next Sunday 20th**

As some know, Rev. Heather makes and sells handmade soap. **Any soap purchased between December 14th-20th, 20% goes to the Winchester Unitarian Society.**

Order and pre-pay through the website - [www.tinyurl.com/wussoap](http://www.tinyurl.com/wussoap) - and pick up on **Saturday December 19th between 9am and 12:30 pm** or **Sunday, December 20th between 2pm and 6pm** at WUS. If you are quarantining and not leaving the house very often, she will deliver to your home. There will be some soap available on-site if you wish to browse (with your mask on and the door open and Heather standing far away.)

As "wash your hands" will still be an important mantra in 2021, soap is a perfect gift for loved ones and an easy way to pamper yourself! And spread the word - and the site!

### **An Update from the Pandemic Planning Task Force**

PPTF reconvened on 11/19 and will be meeting regularly to address specific questions and inquiries about use of WUS space /grounds, to update guidelines as needed and to stay abreast of the impact of the virus on congregational functioning. We will be including program staff in our meetings to support them in planning. We have conducted 2 polls since the beginning of this church year. Although there was a range of responses regarding comfort level in allowing more in-person activity at the church, in light of the recent increase in Covid-19 cases everywhere, we will not be changing the status of our response.

For the foreseeable future, we will continue in "Phase 3 – Vigilant" of our WUS Pathways to Reopening. This means we will continue to limit in-person gatherings to outdoors, or indoors following all guidelines for safety including number of people in the space. Please reach out to us at [pandemicplanningtf@winchesteruu.org](mailto:pandemicplanningtf@winchesteruu.org) if you or your committee has any questions about in-person activity on church grounds. All requests to use the church grounds should go through our church administrator, Thomas Slack, and follow the Screening Questions and Sign-In protocol.

Thank you to Thomas for faithfully implementing the guidelines with both church and community use of the building and grounds. Thank you to all who have respectfully

utilized these guidelines, allowing some much – needed in-person activity particularly for our youth! It is such vigilance that keeps our community healthy.

We have had one report of a member who tested positive, though no close contact occurred within our WUS community. Contact tracing was done using our protocol. The member successfully completed self-quarantine and reported negative test result post-quarantine. We are so thankful that only mild symptoms were experienced.

Please continue to use our Guidelines and Sign-In sheet for any in-person gatherings so that we may continue effective screening and contact tracing.

In gratitude for the sacred community we create together  
~The Pandemic Planning Task Force

PS: You may wish to download this resource, created by someone who recovered from COVID, about what to have on hand should you or a loved one become ill:

[\[link\]](#)

**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](https://smile.amazon.com) instead of the plain old [amazon.com](https://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](https://smile.amazon.com).

Thanks and Happy Holidays!

### Green Sanctuary Wants You

You are invited to a scheduled Zoom meeting of the WUS's Green Sanctuary Committee. We meet at 07:15 pm EST every month on the Third Thursday, which if you are reading this on Dec. 17 is tonight!

To understand who we are and what we did last church year: go to <https://www.winchesteruu.org>, then to "For Members and Friends", then to **WUS Annual Report 2020**, then to page 58. This year in addition to still promoting benign environmental practices by congregants and others, we are preparing for an assessment by Interfaith Power and Light of our church's potential to become carbon neutral; an inspiring example of an older iconic building no longer needing to pollute Earth's atmosphere with green house gases. We and the rest of Earth's nature, would welcome your thoughts, feelings, and help.

Zoom link <https://zoom.us/j/99116167871?pwd=cHNXcnVRNTIFYjdRUmlPOVBqYVFzQT09> will open a little before the 7:15 pm meeting begins.



## Invitation to "Coffee and a Bagel - on Zoom" - Dec 22nd 9:30 - 11 AM

Hosted by the Pastoral Care Associates and Staff

Would you like to get together casually on Tuesday, Dec 22nd with friends from WUS? Bring your own cup of coffee and a snack for munching and sign onto Zoom. No pre-registration is necessary: [www.tinyurl.com/wusworship](http://www.tinyurl.com/wusworship)

There is no specific topic. It's just a chance to catch up with friends or meet some new friends. Share what you've been up to or how you've been feeling. And maybe dream out loud about what you hope to be doing post-COVID. It's been a long time since we have been able to get together socially and if this is a popular idea we will set up more sessions throughout the winter.

(Call Donna Reed before Dec 21st if you need help getting onto Zoom. She'll try her best to help. 781-626-1785)

### IMPORTANT REMINDER FROM THE CO-TREASURERS

In order for you to claim a charitable contribution/deduction on your income taxes for 2020, any gifts to WUS must be RECEIVED IN THE OFFICE or postmarked no later than Thursday, December 31st. The date on the check does NOT determine deductibility.

On December 4th, 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. If you are enrolled in an automatic payment plan, please ignore this statement. We plan to send out Tax year 2020 statements for all categories of giving by mid-January.

Please read more at the IRS website about changes to charitable donation deductions during 2020 due to COVID-19 at <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/how-the-cares-act-changes-deducting-charitable-contributions>.

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

Thank you everyone for your generosity throughout this challenging year of pandemic! Your contributions keep our staff employed and make our programs and social outreach efforts possible. Wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday and new year!

Judy Murray and Sue Kiewra

### UPCOMING MINI SABBATICAL

Rev. Heather will take an abbreviated, six-week sabbatical, all of January and half of February,



2021. She will take a four-month sabbatical next program year.

We are in the process of hiring **Kye Flannery** as our part-time sabbatical minister. Many will remember Kye from the summers she has served as Summer Minister. While she currently lives in Austin, TX, ministry is a remote practice these days for all of us. Kye will preach for three Sundays, lend support to other worship services and be available to the Pastoral Care Associates and the congregation for pastoral support.

Here is a message from Kye:

*Hello, Winchester friends! It is a pleasure to be with you while Rev Heather enjoys a time of rest and sabbatical! I want to make sure that I'm available to you as needed both on Sunday mornings and for pastoral care throughout our time together — in short, that it doesn't feel like I'm 1,966 miles away. ;) Though I am.*

*If you're like me, all manner of existential questions, thoughts, and feelings are coming up during this time — So whether you are thinking about the meaning of life, if you have good coping mechanisms, or are wanting to strategize what health looks like for yourself or your family right now, I'd be really glad to talk it out with you. I'll work with the Pastoral Care team, so please continue to reach out to the group via ([pca@winchesteruu.org](mailto:pca@winchesteruu.org)) or to me directly at [kye@winchesteruu.org](mailto:kye@winchesteruu.org).*

*If you want to talk about less-confidential things, it would be wonderful to see you just to say hello — to that end, I'll plan on hosting weekly drop-in coffee/office hours on Zoom, **Thursdays from noon - 2 EST**. I'll have a kids' book on hand for the first hour if we want to do storytime, or if a parent would like to bring a good storytime book, that could also be wonderful.*

**Writers Group: Meets weekly on Wednesdays** led and facilitated by Dan Hermes from 9-10ish a.m. Please be in touch if you'd like the url to join the group. Dropping in is fine and invite your writing friends. Dan can be found here at [dan@lexiconsystemsinc.com](mailto:dan@lexiconsystemsinc.com)

**Registration Open!**: “Sage Advice - Aging in a Time of Covid” January 4th, 6:30 to 7:45 The Pastoral Care Associates are hosting a conversation with Geriatric Care Manager, Kathy Kemp. Whether you or a loved one is contemplating additional support and/or changes to your living circumstances now or much later - it's never too early to have these conversations. With the added complications of covid, plans are even more important to have in place in case of emergent situations. To sign up (you will receive materials in advance of the workshop) please do so via [Rebecca@winchesteruu.org](mailto:Rebecca@winchesteruu.org).





If you are facing a time of joy, sorrow or transition in your life, your minister 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](mailto:office@winchesteruu.org)

## Social Action & Outreach



### On-Going

There is an urgent need for food donations for the Council for Social Concern in Woburn. You may drop off food at church or at the pantry.

The Food Pantry at the Council for Social Concern is currently low on: **Canned meats (tuna, beef stew, spam, salmon), baked beans, hearty canned soups and pasta sauce.** Since donating food may not be convenient, contributions may be made directly on their website: [www.socialconcern.org](http://www.socialconcern.org)

*Please find the drop off baskets in a new location - by the back door of the building near the parking lot. Access to this basket is unlocked.*

Food Pantry is open to Woburn & Winchester residents  
If you have any questions or would like to make an appointment, please call Paula Matthews, Food Pantry Director at (781) 935-6495 ext. 208



**Joyful News!! Temporary Protective Status is extended for people from 6 Countries!!** On December 7th, the US Citizenship and Immigrant Services (USCIS) issued a notice stating the validity of TPS documents for beneficiaries from El Salvador, Haiti, Nicaragua, Sudan, Honduras and Nepal will be extended through October 4, 2021. [Learn more here](#)

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**[Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry](#)** Uniting communities, transforming lives. Join us for a new (digital) spin on our history and justice lecture and panel series! Community Conversations are hosted on Tuesdays (dates below) from 6 to 7:30, and include time for a facilitated Q&A period. Click the title to be taken to the Zoom meeting.

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**December 22: [“Mental Health and the Holidays in the Black Community,”](#)** presented by Toy Burton, founder of [DeeDee’s Cry](#), a mental health

awareness organization focused on communities of color. Tune in from 6 to 7:30 on the 22nd [here](#).

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Talking About Race. **Structural racism** is the overarching system of racial bias across institutions and society. These systems give privileges to white people resulting in disadvantages to people of color. *Example: Stereotypes of people of color as criminals in mainstream movies and media.* <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>

When we talk about integration, it is important not to become enamored with shortcuts, nor to lose sight of the fact that “**integration is not a pathway to social justice; it is a result of social justice,**” says David Harris, the managing director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School.

### **Providing Winter Warmth and Continuing Welcome for Local Refugee Family**

We continue our Go Fund Me campaign for the local refugee family many of you have so generously helped this year.

We are very grateful that the Reverend Anne Robertson of the Crawford Memorial Methodist Church congregation underwrote the recent purchase of four new tires for the family, ensuring safer driving as New England's ice and snow season arrives.

We hope that you will consider a donation in this season of giving that is comfortable for you. Daily needs and unexpected expenses continue as they gain secure footing in their new home country.

You can reach the campaign [here](#) to donate and/or share the link to the campaign by email, Facebook, Instagram with your circle of friends. Thank you.

Please contact Gloria Legvold ([glegvold@comcast.net](mailto:glegvold@comcast.net), 781-729-8247) or Sandy Thompson ([sandra.thompson3@comcast.net](mailto:sandra.thompson3@comcast.net), 781-724-7571) with any questions.

## **Religious Education**

**Children's Religious Education Feedback requested:** We are using a combination of online or delivered to your home religious education and family support resources. The Sunday morning packet is now monthly rather than weekly, and the November/December packets have been delivered or mailed to younger families. What's working? What isn't? What suggestions do you have? Share your thoughts with Rebecca Kelley-Morgan [Rebecca@winchesteruu.org](mailto:Rebecca@winchesteruu.org) or Naomi Magnoni at [REC@winchesteruu.org](mailto:REC@winchesteruu.org)

**THIS Sunday, Crossing Paths meets from 12:00-1:00.** In virtual RE, we are able to connect with our friends in Illinois. This week, we follow up last week's discussion of beliefs and practices around baptism, with beliefs and practices for coming of age ceremonies. Please note, after this Sunday, we will be on hiatus, until January

3rd. Please contact Rebecca [rebecca@winchesteruu.org](mailto:rebecca@winchesteruu.org) for the private link to the group meeting on Sunday and if you have other questions.

Coffee/Tea and bagels on **Tuesday, December 22nd at 9:30**. With weather and Covid numbers keeping us more isolated again, let's connect virtually. Sponsored by the Pastoral Care Associates. Join us via the main link, <https://tinyurl.com/WUSworship>  
Dropping in and out is fine - we'll be there!

## WUSYG Winchester Unitarian Society Youth Group

This Sunday we will be meeting on Zoom from 4:30-6 pm for a regular ZOOMSYG meeting: sacred space-making! Link to Zoom: [www.tinyurl.com/WUSYGZoom](http://www.tinyurl.com/WUSYGZoom)

AND STAY TUNED for more info on our Secret Gift Giving G-nome PLUS get ready to get Garden Gnomed as we still spread the love whilst staying apart

PARENTS: please REGISTER your child in WUSYG if you haven't already:  
<https://forms.gle/pRtVA6SEWLxN783w9>

Questions, concerns or compliments, message Sam & Haley: [wusyouth@gmail.com](mailto:wusyouth@gmail.com)

## Music

### Virtual Choir

The music program will be experimenting with a "virtual choir". This is new to all of us so it will be interesting to see how it comes together. Choir members should already have been contacted about this. Please contact Music Director John Kramer at [john.kramer@winchesteruu.org](mailto:john.kramer@winchesteruu.org) if you have any questions.

## 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](mailto: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](#).

(781) 729-0949 | [office@winchesteruu.org](mailto:office@winchesteruu.org) | [www.winchesteruu.org](http://www.winchesteruu.org)

Winchester Unitarian Society | 478 Main Street, Winchester, MA 01890

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