

# Winchester Unitarian Society

## Highlights December 3, 2020

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



*The theme for December is Stillness*

*Photo: Horn Pond in winter*

## Upcoming Worship

**Sunday Family Worship: This week, "The Second Light of Advent"** We will be meeting via Zoom at 10 a.m. this Sunday, December 6th. We will NOT have family worship next Sunday, December 13th, Pageant Sunday. 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.

**Family Worship Advert:**

<https://www.winchesteruu.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Family-Worship-12.6.20.mp4>

**Sunday 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 by a member of the program staff and sessions are not recorded.

**Sunday, December 6**

## 10:30 Worship, ONLINE



Photo by [the blowup](#) on [Unsplash](#)

### Eating All The Chocolate: A Celebration of December

The Rev. Heather Janules

Some grew up with advent calendars, boards with small doors you can open once a day to help mark the approach to Christmas. Many of these calendars come with a small piece of chocolate in each cavity. They teach us patience and savoring the sweetness of experience. Yet some also have the experience of eating all the chocolate at once as they just can't wait! This service will be an extended meditation and celebration of the season that has begun, essentially a musical and poetic feast reflecting on Advent, Hanukkah, Solstice, Christmas and the New Year. It will be like eating all the chocolate in one service. Yet, attendance will bring neither calories nor cavities...It's time to sing some carols! **As this is the first Sunday of the month, there will be a discussion after worship about the service for those who want to participate.**

This Sunday, we share our gifts with the **Council for Social Concern** our local food pantry, responding to the increased demand for food related to altered school schedules and lost wages during the pandemic. Today's Share the Plate boosts our annual drive, this year benefitting the Council. Our appeal to support the Council ends on December 14th.

**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>

## Worship Notes

Holiday Happenings!



**The Holiday Pageant will be on December 13th.** In lieu of our after-worship potluck, you are invited to join in an **Ornament/Decoration Show and Tell**, followed by a virtual **Tree-Trimming Party**. We can set up our trees at home and connect through the Zoom room while we untangle the lights.

## **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-11.29.2020.pdf>

## **Community Accountability**

Although many people loved last week's "First Reflection," some also felt uncomfortable by my portrayal of an "old man" in the story and were concerned that it was demeaning to that cohort of people and also to those who disagree about the Sachem mascot. If you are a member of our community who felt harmed in any way by this portrayal, I am terribly sorry. I am also grateful to those in this community who shared their concerns, and remain appreciative to this community for keeping ourselves accountable and staying in covenant while doing the complicated work of moving toward our shared goals of peace and justice.

## **Mystic Messenger: 2020 Winter Issue**

Volume 6, Issue 2

December's Theme is Stillness

*Stillness*

December 1, 2020

By Rebecca Kelley-Morgan, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

Usually this season, December is a rush of activity, gifting, cooking, planning, and taking advantage of the many different times and ways to gather. Not this December. I have always believed the many festivals during the winter were an instinctive push back at the darkness, finding consolation for the short days in celebration with each other. Not this December. The pandemic has forced a protracted pause on our accustomed rhythms of living.

A couple of months ago, I found this poem by Pablo Neruda and promptly posted it above my computer screen.

*"Now we will count to twelve  
and we will all keep still  
for once...  
If we were not so single-minded  
about keeping our lives moving,  
and for once could do nothing,  
perhaps a huge silence  
might interrupt this sadness  
of never understanding ourselves..."*

These last 9 months have been, for many of us, a time of trying to make sense of the abrupt and continuing disruption to them. Observing my own and other's reactions to the initial lockdown, once the shock wore off, I watched (and took part) as many careened from one activity to another, trying to make this time work in some fashion. Keeping, as the poet Neruda writes, "our lives moving". Reading, cleaning, exercising, baking sourdough breads, household projects, parenting, and home schooling, all on steroids. I was encouraged to keep a pandemic journal, so that a future Ken Burns has material to describe these times. I declined to accept the challenge.

There are others who found a different focus, falling into a sort of inertia, while doom scrolling through the news and pandemic statistics, perseverating upon them.

Whatever our reactions and responses, they all become exhausting, and at some point, the weight of keeping busy forces us into stillness. Stillness borne on fatigue, when the mind goes blank, when the hands grow idle. But are we ever still? Our hearts beat on, our bodies go about their business and we



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## 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





## Building Beloved Community, Book by Book!

The Racial Justice Planning Group is eager to share with you, every two weeks or so, a book that will help us grow further into the intentionally pro-active, radically inclusive, anti-racism congregation to which we have committed.

Sunday evening, November 29, the classic, long-standing news program “**Sixty Minutes**” featured a segment on a sunken shipwreck found two years ago at the bottom of the Mobile River in Alabama. The ship, *Clotilda*, was the last known slave ship to have brought captured Africans to the United States in the year 1860. You can listen to generationally-held memories of those Africans from their descendants at <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/clotilda-slave-ship-alabama-60-minutes-2020-11-29/>

And, we have an even more direct connection through our friend **Dr. Harris Gibson**. Harris was born in the very town that freed slaves, from the *Clotilda*, had founded, and he attended high school there. All the schools had been built by the slaves, primary through high. His family knew Cudjo Lewis, the central person in *Barracoön*. Harris led a small group of Racial Justice Book Club participants in a discussion of *Barracoön* last year. You can imagine how enthralling and informative his personal experiences and observations are.

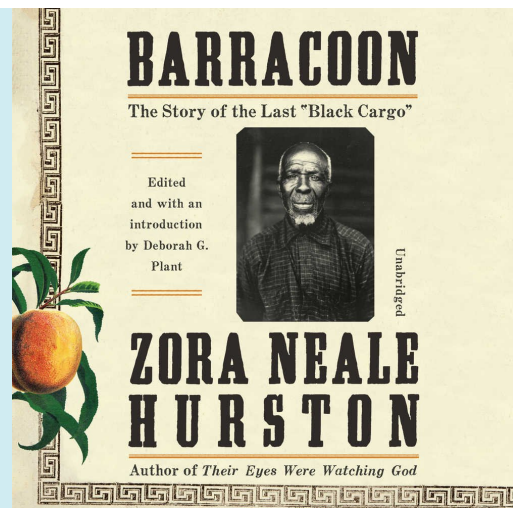
So, with these two extremely relevant, topical, and close connections with living history, we offer our first book *Barracoön*.

### Here are parts of a GoodReads.com review:

“In 1927, Zora Neale Hurston went to Plateau, Alabama, just outside Mobile, to interview eighty-six-year-old Cudjo Lewis. Of the millions of men, women, and children transported from Africa to America as slaves, Cudjo was then the only person alive to tell the story of this integral part of the nation's history. Hurston was there to record Cudjo's firsthand account of the raid that led to his capture and bondage fifty years after the Atlantic slave trade was outlawed in the United States...Based on those interviews, featuring Cudjo's unique vernacular, and written from Hurston's perspective with the compassion and singular style that have made her one of the preeminent American authors of the twentieth-century, *Barracoön* masterfully illustrates the tragedy of slavery and of one life forever defined by it.”

**To borrow the book from the Michelsen Room Racial Justice Library**, please contact Thomas Slack, Winchester Unitarian Society administrator, to set a pickup time at 478 Main Street!

May we grow, together, in racial justice exploration and learning.  
--Gloria Legvold, for RJPG, November 30, 2020



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.

## Congregational News



This year in lieu of our annual **Mitten Tree**, we are inviting cash donations to benefit the Council for Social Concern in Woburn. They are committed to keeping the shelves in their food distribution center stocked, and supplying families with what they need this winter.

You may make your donation via PayPal, Vanco's Give+ Mobile app, or by writing a check payable to WUS. Please put in the notes field that your contribution is for the 2020 Mitten Tree. Contributions will be collected until December 14th, so that families may have a more festive holiday season. Thank you for supporting our neighbors.

### 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. On Sunday afternoon, **December 6th**, a weather tight bin will magically appear under the shrubbery at Winchester Unitarian Society. It will have ornament blanks for painting. Pick one up, and take it home to decorate, and include your name and a note if you are so inclined. Then on

**December 13th**, another weatherproof bin will magically appear for you to return your ornament to. 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.





## 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)

### 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



### 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, time TBD. 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.*

### AN UPCOMING OPPORTUNITY

Your Co-Treasurers are coming to the end of their 3-year stint. WUS is looking for a member or members who are willing to step into this role by the end of this program year – or sooner for some training. **PLEASE KNOW that we do NOT intend to leave the new treasurer(s) on their own.** We will happily help guide whoever takes on this important role! There have been many changes over the last three years that make the role of treasurer much more manageable. Jenny is a capable bookkeeper and has a capable backup in Thomas. They have both worked diligently to learn the new systems and have lightened the load on the treasurer significantly. Most of the regular



responsibilities of the treasurer can be performed from the comfort of your home using Quick Books, Breeze, Google, and online banking. Please consider taking a turn as treasurer. It offers insight into the workings of the church and a deep understanding of some of the behind-the-scenes happenings. While it has been a particularly busy 3 years, it has been a rewarding experience for both of us. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN! If you are interested, please feel free to contact us or anyone from Nominating Committee. THANKS!

Judy Murray & Sue Kiewra  
[treasurer@winchesteruu.org](mailto:treasurer@winchesteruu.org)

### With Thanks from the Music Committee

Our concert series got off to a great start on Nov 14th with a moving celebration of African American composers. Thank you sponsors, attendees, donors and everyone who contributed to the evening's success. Thank you, John Kramer, for bringing a significant body of uniquely American music to light. And for all the technical work that went into our virtual concert, a big thank you goes out to James Pidacks. -- We are still sorting out the proceeds from the concert which came in via check, PayPal, and Gift+. 50% of the "at the door" donations will go to the Mystic Valley chapter of the NAACP.



### Outdoor Office Hours

#### *With the Minister*

Weather permitting, **December 3rd TODAY will be the last Outdoor Office Hours session** for the season.

As always, you may make an appointment with Rev. Heather if you wish to meet. You may email her at [heather.janules@winchesteruu.org](mailto:heather.janules@winchesteruu.org) or leave a

message at her voicemail box at 781.729.0949.

### We Believe in Dog

*Last walk of the calendar year  
and the season...*

**Saturday, December 5th, 10am:** We Believe in Dog is a gathering of WUS members and friends – and their dogs – who walk together in the Fells. You don't need a dog to participate! All participating dogs must be friendly and vaccinated.



**We next gather on Saturday, December 5th.** We will meet at the second of three entrances to the Middlesex Fells on Hillcrest Parkway at 10:00 am and start walking around 10:05. *Our walk will comply with WUS pandemic protocols for outdoor gatherings including a sign-in sheet with a brief symptom survey. Masks – worn properly – are required.* Dogs, however, are free to walk without masks.

Let Rev. Heather know if you plan to come: [heather.janules@winchesteruu.org](mailto:heather.janules@winchesteruu.org)

Please also send your cell number if this is your first walk so we can reach out to you if you are not at the starting point when we are about to begin.

*Photo: Group "snow selfie" on the last WBID walk on Halloween.  
Most walks do not have such a dramatic background!*

**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)

**Harvest the Power** - Values-led leadership for today and beyond. The group meets Sunday December 6th from 2-4pm to launch the first of our monthly sessions. There are two spots open, if you want to join the group, it's not too late. Please contact Liz Lintz via [nominating@winchesteruu.org](mailto:nominating@winchesteruu.org)



**FOR YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING PLANNING  
Support WUS through purchasing handmade soap!  
December 14-20th**

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.spoonerhillsoapworksonline.com](http://www.spoonerhillsoapworksonline.com) - and pick up on **Saturday December 19th between 10am and 2pm** 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.

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!

**Save the Date!  
"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 contact [Rebecca@winchesteruu.org](mailto:Rebecca@winchesteruu.org)

**Are you grieving the loss of a loved one this Holiday Season?** Are you anticipating a BLUE Thanksgiving or Christmas? The pandemic is keeping us physically apart this Season in ways we never imagined thus disrupting our normal grief rituals. The Home Health Foundation is offering interactive Zoom workshops on Bereavement and ways to cope with your loss. The 1 hour workshops are being offered on the following dates: **Tuesday, Dec 8 at Noon - register by Dec 6 and Thursday, Dec 17 at 7pm - register by Dec 14**

Please register in advance with Whitney Hall via email at [whall@homehealthfoundation.org](mailto:whall@homehealthfoundation.org). You are welcome to attend 1 or more - each workshop will follow the same general outline, but please indicate which dates you plan to attend. Peace and blessings during this Holiday Season.

### Joys, Sorrows and Transitions



We celebrate the birth of Lyra Quinn Pray, born November 14, 2020 to Caitlin and Michael Pray. Lyra is the granddaughter of **Cindy Crothers and Dennis Brett**, their fourth grandchild. Congratulations!

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)

### 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)

**Sundays after worship: RE families** and/or anyone who would like to visit outside socially distanced, as kids play are welcome at the congregation's back lawn from **12:00ish to 2:00ish**. Dress for the weather (forecast in the low 40's) and get your ya yas out! Social distancing and mask protocols will be observed. You are invited to use this time with friends to record costumed players for the pageant.

**THIS Sunday, Crossing Paths meets from 12:00-1:00.** In December the class covers Catholic Christianity - Christianity has many branches, including the heir to the Roman Church, Catholicism. We will learn about In virtual RE, we are able to connect with a community we would not normally be interacting with, broaden understanding and

create connections in our diverse world with our friends in Illinois. 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.

**Let's Connect!** 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.

## WUSYG Winchester Unitarian Society Youth Group

This Sunday we will be meeting on Zoom from 4:30-6 pm for a regular ZOOMSYG meeting, where we will be making Genderbread Cookies together using the ingredients from your care packages! You will also need 4 tablespoons of butter/vegan-alternative, and 1 egg/flax egg (plus optional choc chips, nuts, mnms/whatever else you want to add!) Rebecca will also be with us for this fun activity where we will talk about the difference between gender and sex, expression, orientation, and other fun things! Link to Zoom: [www.tinyurl.com/WUSYGZoom](http://www.tinyurl.com/WUSYGZoom) AND STAY TUNED for other fun WUSYG things this holiday season, while 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](#).

Winchester Unitarian Society | 478 Main St. Winchester MA 01890  
(781) 729-0949 | [office@winchesteruu.org](mailto:office@winchesteruu.org) | [www.winchesteruu.org](http://www.winchesteruu.org)

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