

Winchester Unitarian Society

Highlights March 18, 2021

([link to today's full issue of Highlights](#))



The theme for March is Commitment

Photo: 2012 UUA General Assembly participants gather in worship in preparation to protest Tent City in Phoenix, AZ, a notorious camp incarcerating undocumented migrants run by then-sheriff Joe Arpaio

Upcoming Worship

Sunday, March 21
10:30 Worship, ONLINE



Widening the Circle

The Rev. Heather Janules

More information about the worship service can be found on the [website](#) and the Weekend Worship Announcement that comes out on Friday.

WUS Family Worship: We will be meeting for FAMILY WORSHIP via Zoom at 10 a.m. this Sunday, “UU liturgy -the spoken word” which is not nearly as dull as it sounds! *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.

Ms. Juanita and story time. 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, for a time to hear stories and sing songs, engage in parallel play and visit with each other.

Joys, Sorrows and Transitions

Our condolences are with **Brad Steele** and **Margaret Lowry** and family with the recent death of Brad’s mother, Ruth Reid Gjessing. You may learn more about her here: <https://www.curtis-britch.com/obituary/ruth-gjessing>

A reminder: The Service in Celebration of the Life of **Linda Reck** will be held this Sunday, March 21st at 3pm at www.tinyurl.com/wusworship All are welcome. You

are also encouraged to view and contribute to Linda's virtual Patchwork of Memories, found here: www.tinyurl.com/LindaReck

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

Congregational News

On-Going Scam Attempts: What You Should Do



On February 27th and the following Sunday, we brought to the congregation's attention that WUS has been targeted in a new scam.

The thief impersonated a staff person by email and requested the password to access the member directory. Having received the password, they have since downloaded the directory and have been impersonating Rev. Heather by email with two different messages, asking for gift cards for worthy causes. **You can tell the request is fraudulent as there are slight differences between the email they use and Heather's WUS email address. Also, Rev. Heather does not solicit gift cards this way.** Adding some humor to the situation, they have also confused ministers and congregations and have impersonated another local UU minister and requested gift cards from WUS members in *their* name.

We have changed the password to the member side of the website, removed the directory from this page and have reported the fraudulent email addresses to Google. **Contact the office if you need access to the member side of the website.**

We are asking all of you to respond in these ways:

- **Do not** buy gift cards and provide their codes to anyone on behalf of WUS, especially via email.
- While we appreciate being notified that this is happening, **do not** forward these emails to Rev. Heather and/or the office. The email traffic has been overwhelming. We are aware of the situation. Just delete the email and hope that the scammers make a positive change and use their obvious intelligence and talents for honest work.
- **Do not** forward an electronic copy of the directory to anyone; prompt someone needing the information to contact the office.
- **Do** spread the word about this situation among other members of the WUS community. The best way to counter these cynical attempts is to ensure that everyone is educated about what is occurring and prepared to recognize electronic impersonation when it happens.

These scams would not work if members of faith communities did not want to partner with their clergy to make the world a better place. In the end, while these scams are disheartening, let us focus our attention on the legitimate positive change we all create together through our service and generosity. **Thank you!**

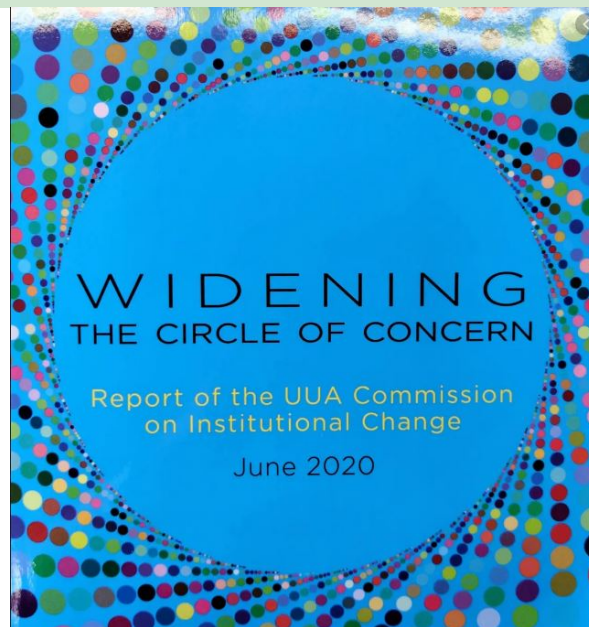


Next Open Mic night is Thursday, March 25th at 7pm.

Thanks to everybody who made the last open mic night a huge success. We had a number of stellar performers from our congregation who contributed their talent along with some friends from the Music School and the broader community. I hope many of you tuned in to enjoy the event. "Let's do it again!" was the consensus feeling following the event. And so we will on **Thursday, March 25 at 7pm**. WUS Music Director John Kramer will again be hosting and we are collaborating with the Winchester Music School and Winchester Together.

Watch the event live on the WCMS [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) channels, and learn more about Winchester Together on [its new website](#) and on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Contact Music Director, John Kramer john.kramer@winchesteruu.org if you have any question or are interested. Or [sign up at this link](#).



PLEASE SAVE the DATE:

Building Beloved Community, Circle by Circle

Saturday, March, 27th 2021, 10AM-12 noon

Session 1: Theology

Have you heard about [Widening the Circle of Concern, Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change](#) released last June at General Assembly? Our own Rev. Heather will be leading the first in a series of workshops designed to help UU congregations move into, understand, and implement the transformative findings of this report. How do we the Winchester Unitarian Society widen our own circle of

concern? Curious? Mark your calendar right now: March 27, 10 a.m. and watch for further details!



From the Music Committee:

Our 15th WUS Concert Series concludes with the Kemp Harris trio on April 17th. Kemp is a singer, songwriter, story teller, and master weaver of American musical styles. On NPR's *On Point*, Kemp has been described as being "beautifully there" and as an artist who will "take your breath away."

Please join us on Saturday, April 17th at 7:00 PM. 50% of "door donations" will be shared with the UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury. An all church Zoom invite will be sent out a few days before the concert. You can see Kemp and friends in action at this site: <https://www.kempharris.band/>



Summer Services - Do You Have a Sermon in You?

Summer services will begin on June 20 and end September 5. These services are led by lay members of the congregation. If you are interested in leading a service, please contact Lee Barton at lee.barton2009@gmail.com. You would give a 15 to 20 minute Reflection on a topic that relates in some way to our Unitarian Universalist values and principles. You would have help planning and carrying out the rest

of the service. Please consider it.

Prayer Shawl Ministry...Plus...

Are you struggling financially
due to the pandemic?
Can you knit?



Through the Pastoral Care Associates, the Winchester Unitarian Society has a long-standing Prayer Shawl Ministry, providing shawls and thus literal and figurative warmth to those in the community facing illness, injury or loss.

Our supply is currently low. Considering how many have been challenged by the pandemic, we seek to "hire" knitters who are financially struggling and may be feeling isolated.

If you are facing financial struggle due to the pandemic, can knit somewhere between "beginner" and "professional," have access to the internet and can attend at least 2 one-hour virtual sessions via Zoom, we will purchase a shawl you create for \$100. It is not much in terms of money but we hope that the on-line "crafting in community" gatherings will add to the value of the experience. Other crafters will also be invited to join, making for a broad and rich time of reflection and conversation.

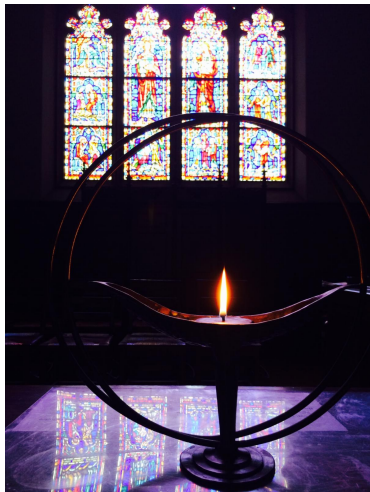
Once we have 10 participants we will schedule our first gathering. Supplies provided.

If interested, please apply here: [tinyurl.com/WUSPSMinistry](https://www.tinyurl.com/WUSPSMinistry)

Please also fill out the application if you wish to "knit for free" and join the group when it gathers.

Spread the word!

Photo by rocknwool on Upsplash



Nourish Your Spirit Two Opportunities for Spiritual Practice in Community

A year into the pandemic, in the heart of winter, so many of us are soul tired, angry, living with deep grief. These are the times when caring for body mind and spirit are critical. Please join us.

WEDNESDAY MEDITATION GROUP

Sitting from 6:30-7:00 pm

Walking from 7:00-7:20 pm

Optional informal discussion 7:20-7:30 pm

This long-standing group is now meeting on-line: [tinyurl.com/WUSWedMed](https://www.tinyurl.com/WUSWedMed)

Meeting ID: 816 9247 5503

Passcode: 767094

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kvW4i0HDx>

Please join as early as 6:20 pm to greet each other before we ring the starting bell at 6:30. We should all have audio access but the video access will be limited. We will all be muted during the meditation and you should be able to see a video of a lit candle on the screen during the 2 meditation periods.

SABBATH SIT

Led by Rev. Heather

Each Friday, 5:30-6:30 pm

www.tinyurl.com/hkjzoom

Log on at 5:30. We sit in silence for the first half hour. After a short reading and lighting the chalice, there will be a time for facilitated, reflective conversation. If you cannot sit for the full half hour, log on for a shorter time.

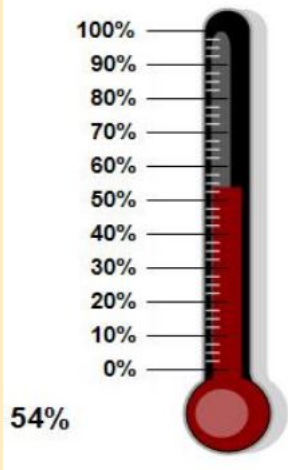
Open Office Hours Return

www.tinyurl.com/hkjzoom

Rev. Heather will open a Zoom room on Thursdays from 12-2 for open office hours. Drop in to say hello or to share something on your heart and mind. When the warm weather returns, we will resume meeting in the Meditation Garden!

Annual Pledge Campaign Update

Being generous is about being spiritually liberated. When you are spiritually liberated, you do not feel obligated but



thankful. -John T. Crestwell Jr. Unitarian Universalist clergy

As of this week, we have reached an overall participation rate of 54% with a significant number of outstanding pledges that we hope are forthcoming. Consequently, even though our “official” month-long campaign has ended, pledge efforts will continue behind the scenes. We are happy to accept and appreciate any and all outstanding pledges. Pledging is easy: submit your card by mail or pledge online at www.winchesteruu.org/giving/pledge/.

Thank you for your support and generosity.
Alison Kirchgasser, Robbie Brown, Stephen Perepeluk

An opportunity to take political action to dramatically reduce CO2 emissions while furthering economic and environmental justice

Soon, the Biden Administration and Congress will be considering serious climate change policy legislation. During the week of March 22-26, you have the opportunity to join Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), and thousands of fellow Americans, who will be calling Congress asking them to support climate legislation that includes a price on CO2 emissions. Economists overwhelmingly favor a tax on CO2 emissions, similar to that included in the [Energy Innovation Act](#) (EICDA). It is noteworthy that the [UUA is on the record as a supporter](#) of EICDA, having judged it to be consistent with key Unitarian Universalist principles of environmental and economic justice.

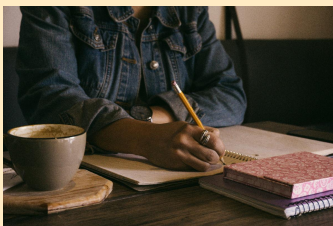
There are several alternatives on the CCL website for reaching out to your congressional representative:

1. To write, go to the [email support web page](#) on the CCL website.
2. To call, go to the [call your legislator support web page](#) on the CCL website.

Just follow the simple instructions. There's also a CCL video, posted on reddit ([Nervous about calling congress?](#)), showing what to expect during your call, and how to get your opinion on the record.

Americans now have the best chance it may have for many years to pass meaningful climate change policy legislation. The time for you to act is coming soon.

If you have any questions, contact either John Keller (wxchief@gmail.com) or Carol Delaney (ccdolaney1@hotmail.com).



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

Are your shelves overflowing with books? Winchester Unitarian supports *More Than Words*, a local non-profit whose mission is to empower young adults who are in the foster care system or court involved, through job training and mentorship. Make room on your shelf by donating books to any of our drop-off sites. *More Than Words* has a donation box at the Winchester transfer station. Or purchase gently used books and clothing online at: <https://shop.mtwyouth.org/>

Join UU Mass Action Advocacy Day. No travel needed; it's on zoom this year. Let's put our faith into action as we fight for Immigrant Justice, Climate & Environmental Justice, Economic Justice, Indigenous Justice and Decarceration & Ending Solitary Confinement. We'll have a community gathering to kick us off, and then participants will have virtual meetings with their Reps and Senators. We ask that you help the organizers by registering early! **Deadline to Register: April 6**



Building Beloved Community Book by Book

The Racial Justice Planning Committee will be sharing reading recommendations each month in the spirit of helping us grow further into the intentionally proactive, radically inclusive, anti-racism congregation we aspire to be.

This month we highlight *Say I'm Dead, a Family Memoir of Race, Secrets, and Love* by E. Dolores Johnson. Ms. Johnson tells a multi-generational story of interracial relationships, racism, and her own search for her white roots. We chose this book because of the opportunity to meet her via the Network for Social Justice program on Wednesday, March 24 at 7:30 p.m. To register for this free program, click here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/book-talk-tickets-140856823551>



On-Going

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

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



Religious Education

Middle School Crossing Paths Interfaith exploration meets this Sunday, March 21st 12-1PM. This month, an exploration of the **Buddhist religion, Buddhism.** This week, the **three Jewels and the five precepts of Buddhism - we begin and end with a short meditation.** We welcome middle schoolers on an ongoing basis, so if a particular topic/religion is of interest, you are welcome. Learn more via rebecca@winchesteruu.org.

ALL AGES INVITED: March 21st 4:30-5:30ish Potluck Theology Intergenerational egg dying - Our second (!!!) virtual potluck theology spring egg dying. Join us at 4:30 on March 21st for virtual egg dying and some theological reflections on the nature of spring, equinox and stories of rebirth and renewal. We ask you to provide your own eggs and dye. There are eggs to print and color at [this link](#). Stickers and other egg decor will be available at WUS in a plastic box outside of Main Street beginning Sunday.

Annual Easter Canned Goods Hunt April 4th, 12:30: We bring back this Easter tradition of hiding nonperishables around the congregation's building and grounds in a socially distanced way. This year, whatever the weather, we'll be placing your nonperishables in protective containers for the hunt. **Please drop items off at WUS in the food pantry collection baskets for hiding before or on the morning of April 4th** and EVERYONE is welcome to cheer our hunting crew on if you would like to wander over after worship.

Looking Forward: We plan to offer **Our Whole Lives in the 2021-2022** program year. The program will begin in mid-October (as is typical) or as re-opening rubrics allow. The Our Whole Lives program is open to the greater community, so please spread the word! I (Rebecca) am looking for teachers, parents and graduates of OWL to offer a sentence or two for testimonials about the experience to go into publicity materials. If you have one, please drop me a note via rebecca@winchesteruu.org

WUSYG

Winchester Unitarian Society Youth Group

This Sunday: We will be hosting an in-person, outdoor, socially distanced meeting on March 21 from 2-4 pm! Be sure to bring your mask and an empty bladder :) Can't wait to see you there!

We're still planning our alternative April Vacation "Service Camp" - [please fill out this planning survey ASAP](#).

As always, message Sam & Haley at wusyouth@gmail.com if you have any questions, concerns, compliments, or want to schedule some time for a one on one with us, too! We'd love to hear from you.

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 if you have any questions.

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