



Highlights

December 1st, 2022

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

The Theme for **December** is Wonder



Upcoming Worship

Sunday, December 4th

Virtual Worship Logistics Below

Magic Everyday

Magic

Everyday

Photo by Alexander Grey

Rev. Heather Janules

IN PERSON ATTENDEES

Come to the WUS Sanctuary (478 Main Street, Winchester).

Please wear a mask when entering the building.
When the children exit to Metcalf Hall,
masks are optional.

--VIRTUAL ATTENDEES--

On Sunday at 10:30 am, click here to connect with the livestream from the Sanctuary: <https://tinyurl.com/WUSlivestream> .

The **Order of Service** for Virtual Attendees can be found on our website under the listing for this service.

Livestreamers are encouraged to send an email to checkingin@winchesteruu.org

We know where you are streaming from but don't know who you are!
We want to hear from you!

More information about the worship services can be found on the [website](#).

Joys, Sorrows and Transitions

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

WUS Holiday Schedule

December 4th

- **Greening Party, After Worship (Around Noon)** Linger after social hour to Deck the Halls in greenery and decorate the Mitten Tree. Holiday refreshments will fuel our festive labors and the fun! Decorators of all ages are welcome!
- Religious Education participants will be creating the **Advent Spiral** outside. **Return at 4:30 pm to walk the Spiral and receive a blessing for the season at its center.**

December 11th

- **Grieving a Loved One Through the Holidays** After worship; Location TBD. Facilitated by Rev. Heather and the Pastoral Care Associates.

December 18th

- **Pageant, Holiday Potluck and Caroling** Come to worship prepared to choose a costume and recreate the Nativity story in community. The Pageant is a favorite for people of all ages.
- After worship, we will share in a meal as part of the **WUSYG Holiday Fundraiser** and sing Christmas carols after dessert.

December 21st

- **Solstice Celebration and Caroling Party, 6pm** We gather in Metcalf Hall for a collaborative and interactive recognition of the shortest day

of the year. After we jump the flaming wreath outdoors, we will walk through downtown Winchester, serenading the town with Christmas carols. A great evening for people of all ages.

December 24th Christmas Eve

- **4 pm** A family-friendly service with stories, carols and singing by candlelight
- **7 pm** A service centered on lessons and carols with singing, beautiful music and celebrating the Silent Night by candlelight.

December 25th Christmas Day/Last Day of Hanukkah: "A New Day"

(This service is a collaboration by a few UU congregations. It is pre-recorded and will be livestreamed for those who wish to attend at home. There will be a "worship viewing party" at WUS at our usual time of 10:30 am. Rev. Heather plans to attend in her pajamas so you are invited to do the same.) This service includes something for everyone, with the kindling of many lights, a First Reflection, hymns and carols and two short reflections exploring what Christmas and Hanukkah offer us as we approach the new day.

Update from Pandemic Planning Task Force 12/01/22

At this time, evidence of Covid in our area's wastewater remains low and the PPTF and staff continue to monitor this as we make bi-weekly assessments in church protocols.

Thank you to the 71 people who answered the Coffee Hour poll we sent out 2 weeks ago. Based on your feedback, the PPTF has updated our guidelines to allow refreshments in Symmes for Coffee Hour. Masks remain optional for anyone who wishes to wear one.

As food and beverages are not allowed in the Sanctuary, we invite those who do not feel comfortable being around a group of unmasked folks to continue conversations in the Sanctuary.

We continue to ask all to arrive at Worship masked and remain masked until the children leave for RE. Masks will then be optional. On Sundays that we have All-Ages Worship, we ask that everyone remain masked throughout the Service.

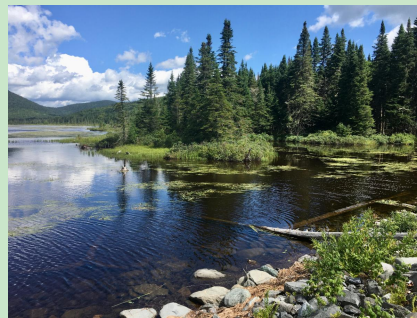
We continue to monitor CO2 output in the Sanctuary during Worship. We have generally reached the magic number 800ppm that indicates a need to open a couple of windows. If you sit near the windows, you may want to keep your coat with you.

Pie Sunday in Metcalf Hall went well and the CO2 concentration indicated we reached a level of 850ppm, a point at which we will aim to increase air circulation but is not of concern.

We hope to have our annual Holiday Potluck in some form in Metcalf Hall on December 18th. More details to come.

Thank you for your continued support in navigating Covid as a faith community.

The Pandemic Planning Task Force and Program Staff:
Fritzie, Cynthia, Dirck and Kim
Rev. Heather, John, Sam and Brenna



Thank You!

The "Share the Plate" from the November 6th Remembrance Service allowed the US Forest Service to plant **135 Trees** in honor of our remembered loved ones.

Dear WUS,

I hope this finds you well. I used to be a member of WUSYG several years ago. I now work for NOVA and we are producing a special about the brain. We are recruiting local folks to tell us about any false memories they might have for a sequence about how memory works.



We are looking for people who have a memory that was later proved to be demonstrably false or partially false. For example—perhaps someone could've sworn that they saw a particular movie when they were 5 years old, but later they found out that the movie didn't come out until they were

8. Or maybe they remember a massive storm approaching while seated in school, when in reality, the storm happened on a Saturday.

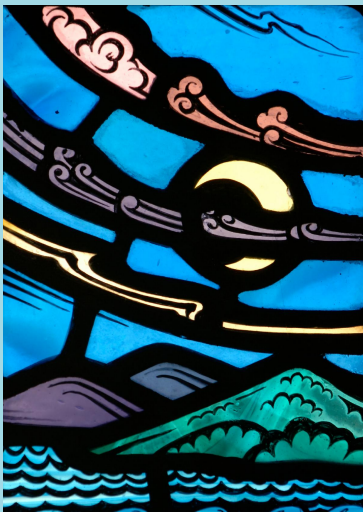
We are looking for participants of any age and background. The memory doesn't have to be about a major event; it can be a memory personal to them.

We are a Boston-based crew, so we would film this locally, and it would probably take an hour or so of the participant's time. We are aiming to film this next Monday 12/5 in the afternoon - evening in Waltham. We could help arrange any travel to and from the shoot, as well as cover any travel expenses. Do you know if anyone from the Winchester Unitarian community would be interested in participating?

This is an excellent opportunity to take part in science communication through a show that reaches millions every year, to generations young and old. All are welcome and we'd really love to have you.

No payment is available, but we can offer a credit on the film. If you are interested and available, please email Avakowalski00@gmail.com

Thank you so much for considering,
Ava Kowalski, NOVA PBS



Save the Dates

Silent Retreat

Friday, January 13th @ 7pm -

Saturday, January 14th @ 5pm

\$20 for food and materials

Begin the New Year in a centered way with a one-day Silent Retreat. Participants engage in DIY activities (journaling, knitting, reading, napping) and optional group activities (walk through the Fells - weather permitting - and creating Soul Collages.) There is the option to sleep over at WUS.

The retreat is a "go" with at least 10 registrants. Contact Rev. Heather with questions or if you are interested: heather.janules@winchesteruu.org

Religious Education



I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and weekend! We had a small group of kids join us for the worship service on the 27th. For the first reflection, the kids joined me as I read the book *Still This Love Goes On*, based on the song by famous folk singer Buffy Sainte-Marie. I chose this book especially to honor the first Sunday in Advent, when we light the candle for love. It explores the ideas of memory and home and all the different kinds of love we feel. I highly recommend it for bedtime reading – or really anytime. Let me know if you'd like to borrow it!

This Sunday, December 4th: RE Classes (K-6 Grades)

This Sunday, December 4th, Spirit Play kids will hear the story about the different **Festivals of Light** that we'll be observing in the month of December. Neighboring Faiths will explore **Hannukah and the UU source of Judaism**.

Right at the end of RE, the classes will join up to create an **Advent Spiral** for the four weeks leading up to Christmas. This WUS tradition is a gift from the RE classes to the congregation. **Parents are invited (and requested) to join in**, as possible, in helping to create this special holiday activity. Later, the congregation (along with RE families) is invited to walk the spiral at night, and receive a blessing from Reverend Heather when they reach the center. People are welcome to gather to walk starting at 4:30 on December 4th.



The Advent Spiral installation will also be part of a larger effort to “green” the sanctuary with traditional holiday greenery, help with organizing the costumes for the Paper Bag Pageant (coming up



on December 18th), and enjoy cocoa, cookies, and carols! It's going to be super fun!

Do you have any paper bags (grocery bag size) in good shape? If so, please bring them with you on Sunday to donate for the Pageant costume organization. Thanks!

OWL: Our Whole Lives (7th & 8th Grades)

The OWL class for this Sunday is about gender identity and expression, roles, and stereotypes. This Sunday's class will be in the usual place (the OWL room) at the usual time (5 to 6:30). See you there!

Junior Youth Group (7th & 8th Grades)

We hope you all had a wonderful weekend with your families. We will continue to meet in Metcalf Hall after OWL Classes from 6:30 to 8 pm most Sundays, starting with dinner. This Sunday, Dec. 4th, we will be playing more games together, planning for MLK Day, and talking about what we want the group to look like this year. Message Sam with any questions: sam.wilson@winchesteruu.org

WUSYG: Winchester Unitarian Society Youth Group (9th-12th Grades)

We hope you all had a nice weekend with your families, and also took some time to honor Indigenous people and how to decolonize your life.

This coming Sunday, Dec. 4th WUSYG will have a regular meeting from 4:30-6:30 pm. We will be walking the Advent Spiral together, and also planning for MLK Day and our Holiday Festival on the 18th. If you have questions, concerns or compliments about our youth programs, please email Sam and Alison at wusyouth@gmail.com.

Social Action & Outreach

Thanksgiving Basket Update

The Thanksgiving Basket Drive was a big success again this year, with 71



Thanksgiving Baskets

boxes delivered to the local food pantries. Whether you contributed a box of food or helped with the drive in other ways, your generosity has helped ease the burden of local families with food insecurities. Thank you very much for helping our community ,

The SAOC Committee

SHARING THANKS!

This week seems like a good time to share some inspiring words in a thank you note from one of our nearest and dearest grantees, **The Network for Social Justice**:

"We consider your gift a strong indication of the faith you have in us and of your shared commitment to the core goals of our work: confronting intolerance, honoring differences, and creating inclusive community. Please know that your gift truly has a significant impact on the work that we are able to do." [For a link to an image of the entire letter, click here.](#)

Patty Shepard, SAOC

Building
Beloved
Community
Through
Gratitude



The November 22 issue of *The Emancipator** featured an essay by Mia Henry, *a social justice educator and founder of Freedom Lifted*. In this season it seems particularly appropriate to stop, in the midst of the hustle and bustle of December, and reflect on this excerpt:

Cultivating a culture of gratitude is critical to movement-building and a clear antidote to White supremacy. We often think of giving thanks as easy and trite, but there is no true freedom without connection. There are few better ways to connect than by rooting ourselves in gratitude.

Working for liberation through a social justice lens means we divorce from oppression and understand power as abundant. We strive for a world where everyone, regardless of identity or circumstance, is affirmed for who they are and has access to the resources they need. This practice requires recognizing everyone's unique contributions to our collective struggle and seeing ourselves and others as inherently valuable, appreciating the fact that we simply exist.

**The Emancipator is an online newsletter with the tagline: Reframing the conversation on racial justice and equity. It is a collaboration with the Boston Globe and Boston University's Center for Antiracist Research.*

Sandy Thompson for the Racial Justice Planning Group

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