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INANNA ARTHEN, M.DIV, MINISTER

Church Telephone 978-297-0554

FEBRUARY 2014

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE 5:00 P.M.

PO Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475

**This is the Church of the Open Mind
This is the Church of the Helping Hands**

**This is the Church of the Loving Heart
This is the Church of the Caring Community**



Calendar of Church Events

Sunday, Feb 16

5:00 p.m. - Sunday Worship: "Uncommon Courtesy"

February is the month when we think about love, and about two Presidents we associate with honor, honesty and integrity. But these days, it seems that disagreements, outrage and rudeness overwhelm our interactions, both online and in real life. How can we express genuine concerns and strong feelings and still be civil, respectful, and open to other points of view? Why have we abandoned common courtesy, and why is it more important now than ever?

Worship Leader: Inanna Arthen, M.Div

6:00 p.m. - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper. Bring a dish or just your wonderful self!

Monday, Feb 17

7:00 p.m. - AA Meeting

Tuesday, Feb 18

4:30 p.m. - Brownies

Sunday, Feb 23

5:00 p.m. - Sunday Worship: Guest speaker from the Montachusets Interfaith Hospitality Network

6:00 p.m. - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

Monday, Feb 24

7:00 p.m. - AA Meeting

Tuesday, Feb 25

4:30 pm - Brownies

Sunday, Mar 2

5:00 p.m. - Sunday Worship: Chalice Circle Service, "Acceptance"

6:00 p.m. - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

From Your Minister

There are two kinds of change, and neither of them is easy. The first type includes those changes that we choose for ourselves and work hard to accomplish. Sometimes, as with the New Year's Resolutions I wrote about in January's newsletter, these hoped-for changes elude us no matter how hard we work. But we keep on trying because these are changes that we really want to make in our lives.

The other category is the one behind all the truisms about fearing and hating change. These are the changes that sneak up on us and surprise us. These are the changes which are unpleasant and unwelcome. They disrupt our lives and force us to break our comfortable routines and adapt to new circumstances and new problems. They may be small changes, such as the furniture being replaced in our office space; or major ones, like being laid off from our job. Often they involve loss, which is always difficult, even when the loss makes way for something new to take its place.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon has just experienced a major change of the second kind. John H. White, who passed away on January 18, was a core member of our church. He served as its Treasurer for sixty-two years, sat on the Governing Board and oversaw maintenance and repairs of our beautiful and historic building. He participated in nearly every church fundraiser and event and contributed to the life of the church in many ways. He was a church member for almost all of his eighty-five years, and reminisced about attending Sunday school at the church as a child.

Many congregations have a member like John—someone who seems to know everything and do everything, and who has been there as long as anybody can recall. John's unstinting work for UUCW was greatly appreciated, but more than that—we were used to it. We relied on John to be there, taking care of all

the things he managed for us. Of course, we knew that he wouldn't be able to continue doing as much as he did indefinitely, but we didn't expect him to leave us so suddenly. Now he's gone, and all the work that he shouldered still needs to be done. Others must now step up and take on these tasks.

Change forces us to adapt and grow. It can bring opportunities as well as sadness. New people who take on a role or a job bring with them their own ideas and knowledge, their own fresh perspective. Old-timers share a common history, but each of them experienced it, and remembers it, in a different way. There is a saying that you can never step into the same river twice, because the water is constantly moving. This is also true for a church. Our congregation is the sum of its parts—it's built up of all its members and everything they contribute to it. Without all of you, there is no church, just a building. As lovely and as important to Winchendon as our church building is, it's not a fraction as important as each one of you: the past, present and future members of UUCW.

February 3rd marks the exact midpoint between the winter Solstice and spring Equinox. Winter is half over. Unless we're outdoor sports enthusiasts or ski resort owners, we are, by now, pretty darned sick of snow, cold and gloomy days—and this year has been rougher than most. That's probably why we warm up the month with holidays like Groundhog Day (it's six weeks before the Equinox, there are always going to be six more weeks of winter, relax!), Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras, and even Presidents' Day with its homage to two of our most beloved Presidents. We pulled in after all the bustle of the early winter holidays. January is a month to get back into the groove of work and school, catch up with our backlog, and spend evenings hunkered down against the weather and relaxing.

But by February, we're starting to get restless. This is the season when small animals emerge from winter burrows to mark territories and court their mates. Sometimes we hear them squabbling in the woods outside our windows, or see them scuttling across the roads ahead of our cars. Serious gardeners begin planning their gardens and starting seeds now—the seed catalogs arrived weeks ago. The sun really feels warm again. The solar tides that turned at the Solstice are gathering momentum in earnest, just as the sap is beginning to run behind the cold bark of the leafless trees.

We can use this energy to help us adapt to the changes in the UUCW. This is a time to reach out, try

new things, let go of old obstacles, brainstorm and experiment and take chances. Our church is at a critical moment in its journey, and we need all our members to help shape its future. We hope to hear from you, see you on Sundays, listen to your ideas and concerns. Let's take our next steps together.

Inanna Arthen, M.Div

What is a Chalice Circle Service?

Once a month, UUCW holds a Chalice Circle Service for Sunday worship. If you've never attended one of these, you might not realize exactly what it is. A Chalice Circle Service is a complete worship service, with hymns and music played by our musician, Lucinda Ellert, readings, prayer, Joys and Concerns, opening and closing words, an offering and a Story for All Ages. But instead of a sermon, in a Chalice Circle service the congregation shares reflections and discussion about the theme of the service for about the same amount of time that a typical sermon would run. No one has to speak, but everyone has an opportunity to do so. Our next Chalice Circle Service will be March 2, on the theme of "Acceptance." All are welcome!



John H. White

1928-2014

We mourn the passing of John H. White (October 16, 1928 - January 18, 2014). A Winchendon native, fourth-generation Unitarian and life-long member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon, John served both the church and the town unstintingly in many capacities. He was the church Treasurer from 1952 to the present, oversaw maintenance and improvements to the church building, sat on the Governing Board, spoke as a lay leader for worship services and participated in all church activities. He attended every Sunday service and every Our Neighbor's Kitchen community supper. John's presence and contributions will be sorely missed.

A memorial service honoring and celebrating John's life was held at the church on Saturday, January 25, at 2:00 p.m.

Caring Connections

UUCW is a caring congregation. We reach out to each other to offer caring and we remember each other's joys and concerns. Please let Inanna know if you would like to visit other members and friends, deliver flowers or an occasional meal, act as a greeter for Sunday services, offer a ride to church, or make any other "caring connection." Please let us know if you or someone close to you is in need of such a "caring connection" from us. You can call Inanna directly at 978-433-8866 (home) or 508-572-1624 (cell).

Welcoming Congregation

UUCW congregation members met on Sunday, January 26 at 4:00 p.m. for our first "individual" workshop in the Welcoming Congregations learning and discussion process. We began with Sessions 1 and 2 from the UUA workbook, *The Welcoming Congregations Handbook*. The first session, titled "Introduction and Expectations," went over some of the basics, such as the titles and themes of the fourteen sessions, a list of definitions (to which I added a few more current ones), protocols for the workshop (confidentiality, respectful dialogue, and so on), and some fears or hopes people had for the process. I had sent out an article by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, "Twenty Questions about Homosexuality," so people could read it ahead of time and we wouldn't have to spend time on it in the session. Session Two, "What We Know and How We Learned It," included a discussion about ideas and associations (positive and negative) we have about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons and when we remember forming those ideas or first becoming aware of them.

We ran the sessions on a screen with PowerPoint slides and on-screen live notes, because that's so much easier than writing with markers on endless sheets of newsprint (saves a lot of paper, too!). This may allow for some "multi-media" options in future sessions, including audio and/or video clips.

On Sunday, February 9, UUCW members attended a joint service at the Fitchburg UU church as part of the journey of learning that UUCW is doing along with the

Fitchburg, Athol and Ashby congregations. Deborah Fabian, a transgendered woman, was the guest speaker.

Our next session at UUCW will be scheduled in March or April, and will cover sessions three and four of the workbook. All are welcome, even if you didn't make it to the first session! If you would like more information, or copies of the reading materials, please contact me.

Inanna Arthen, M.Div

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February Birthdays

Kayden Gordon

February 3

Keegan W. Mahoney

February 25

Change of Address?

We want to stay in touch! If you change your address, either U. S. Mail or email, please let us know. Email dfaucher@on24seven.com or send a written note to the church at P. O. Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475. Thanks!