

THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon



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PASTOR INANNA ARTHEN, M.DIV, MINISTER

Church Telephone 978-297-0554

MAY 2015

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, May 3

5:00 pm - Sunday Worship - Chalice Circle Service, "Garden Meditation." Wear your outdoor gardening clothes!

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

Monday, May 4

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Saturday, May 9

9:00 am - 1:00 pm Saturday Yard Sale at UUCW

Sunday, May 10

10:00 am - Morning Sunday Worship - Mother's Day with Pastor Inanna Arthen
5:00 pm - Sunday Worship - Mother's Day with Pastor Inanna Arthen

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

Monday, May 11

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Sunday, May 17

5:00 pm - Sunday Worship

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

Monday, May 18

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Thursday, May 21

5:30 pm - Our Neighbors Kitchen Community Supper (a week early due to an event on May 28) - Middle Eastern Banquet

Saturday, May 23

9:00 am - 1:00 pm Saturday Yard Sale at UUCW

Sunday, May 24

5:00 pm - Blessing of the Animals Service

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

Monday, May 25

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Sunday, May 31

5:00 pm - ANNUAL MEETING - all are invited to attend!

6:00 pm - Post-Meeting Light Potluck Supper



From Your Minister

The spring peepers are trilling, the forsythia is finally bursting into bloom, daffodils are opening and it seems that spring is slowly but surely advancing toward victory. On May 3, we'll be having a "Garden Meditation" as part of our service—the kind of meditation that involves sinking our hands into moist earth and planting things. Planting bulbs and seedlings is a physical expression of hope and optimism. You need both to invest in the future, both on a small scale and looking toward a farther horizon.

This month at UUCW, we celebrated Easter Sunday on April 5 with a traditional service upstairs, as the kids enjoyed an indoor Easter Egg hunt in RE. It was still too cold and snowy to hide eggs outside, but maybe next year! We shared a wonderful potluck dinner with a honey-baked ham brought by the Sackett and Nicholson families. We had two Chalice Circle services on environmental themes, and on April 26 we watched TED talks about our relationship with the planet and our unity with humans all around the globe.

We said goodbye to two long-time members. On Monday, March 30, I led the funeral service for Marilyn "Dusty" Meyer. Marilyn had not attended church for a very long time, but she received our newsletter, and her mother, Esther, was the church organist many years ago. On Saturday, April 18, UUCW hosted the memorial

service for Margaret Urquhart, known affectionately as “Meg,” who was an active member and benefactor of the church for decades. Meg, a gifted musician, donated the beautiful Chickering grand piano to our sanctuary, and at her service pianist Mary Towse-Beck played several pieces on it.

On Saturday, April 25, I attended the joint annual meeting of three UUA Districts: our District, Clara Barton, along with the Massachusetts Bay District (northeastern MA) and Ballou Channing District (southeastern MA and RI). I served as the delegate for our congregation.

These three Districts, along with the Northern New England District which consists of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, are now part of the “New England Region.” The UUA is making some administrative changes in how it serves member congregations regionally.

The Districts were initially formed in 1961 when the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged to become the Unitarian Universalist Association. Although the two denominations had grown very similar in theology and world view, they differed in organization and governance—what is called “polity.” Unitarian churches were very congregationalist—the independence and autonomy of each congregation was important to members. Universalist churches were less autonomous, and were organized into groups called conventions. UUA Districts were established as one of the many compromises and adjustments needed to dovetail the two denominations into a working unity.

The Districts are each incorporated as independent non-profit organizations in their own right. Now the Clara Barton and Mass Bay Districts are considering whether to adopt a new statement of purpose and a new direction, or whether to simply dissolve and return



Spiritual Calendar

- May 1: **Beltane (Celtic Pagan)**. Fire festival marking the end of winter and the beginning of the summer half of the year. Herds and flocks were moved to their summer pastures. Celebrated with bonfire dances, dancing around the May Pole (always decorated with flowers and leafy branches—the ribbon dance is a recent invention), decorating lavishly with flowers and greenery, telling fortunes and courting sweethearts.
- May 2-3: **Bona Dea (Roman)**. A women’s festival in honor of “the Good Lady.”
- May 4: **Visakha Puja (Buddhist)**. Holiday marking the birth, enlightenment, death and attainment of Nirvana of Lord Buddha. Devotees assemble in temples at dawn with offerings of flowers, candles and incense.
- May 7: **National Day of Prayer (US, Interfaith)**. Established by President Harry S. Truman in 1952, on this day Americans are encouraged to pray, meditate or otherwise reflect according to their faith.
- May 13: **Lailat al Miraj (Islam)**. Holiday commemorating Mohammed’s night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven. Some Muslim cities observe this holiday by lighting up the city all night, and Muslims may pray all through the night.
- May 18: **Feast of Pan (Greek)**. Also called Faunus, Pan was a rustic god of woodlands and wilderness who took many forms. He was always worshipped in natural settings like grottoes, not in buildings or temples. The Greeks considered him the god of theatrical criticism, and wind instruments like flutes were sacred to Pan.
- May 19-28: **Kallyntaria and Plynteria (Greek)**. “Spring Cleaning,” when the statues of the gods and goddesses in the temples were ceremonially washed in rivers and dressed in new finery and jewels. Greek statues were not plain white marble but were brightly painted.
- May 24: **Pentacost (Christian)**. Commemorates the day when God the Holy Spirit came to the disciples in the forms of tongues of fire and rushing wind. It is a traditional day for baptism and confirmation of new Christians.
- May 24-25: **Shavuot (Jewish)**. Celebration of Moses’ descent from Mt Sinai with the ten commandments. Plants and flowers are used in decorations.
- May 30-31: **Feast of the Queen of Heaven (European)**. In Christian times, honors the Virgin Mary in her aspects of divine maiden and Holy Mother. In ancient times, this holiday celebrated various goddesses who played similar roles, such as Isis, whose widespread cult morphed into worship of Mary.

their assets to the UUA.

While the nuts and bolts questions about money, administration and staffing are definitely important, it's the statement of purpose that more strongly affects all of our congregations. The proposed statement runs,

“Envisioning that Unitarian Universalist congregations walking together will set in motion a new Great Awakening of Liberal Religion in New England, our Purpose shall be to:

a: Say Yes! to this vision and all it comes to mean in our work together;

b: Promote faithful connections among congregations; and

c: Help congregations bust out of their walls to make a difference in their communities.

In pursuing this vision, we covenant to align with the UUA in all we do.”

What do we mean by “a new Great Awakening?” The two best known “Great Awakenings” in American history were both marked by evangelical, intensely emotional fervor. The theology preached by the ministers of those movements seems far from the typical beliefs of UUs. But theology aside, the Great Awakenings were profoundly radical movements in which the personal religious experience of each individual was more important than leaders or revealed wisdom, and passionate feeling rather than intellectual arguments inspired believers in their faith.

When we speak of a “new Great Awakening” of “Liberal Religion,” we’re talking about a passionate revival of our UU values—social justice, equality,

multi-culturalism, economic fairness, environmental responsibility, and the search for truth and meaning. We’re talking about evolving a new identity of our denomination as a true network of interconnected congregations, not as isolated churches. We’re talking about “spreading the word” beyond our church communities and out into the world—but being UUs, we’ll be doing that by actions and example, not by preaching or knocking on doors. We’re talking about responding to the new generations of Americans who aren’t affiliated with a church because they don’t find relevance in traditional religion, by making ourselves relevant to the realities of the present and the future.

An important aspect of all this is summarized in item b of the statement of purpose: “Promote faithful connections among congregations.”

UUCW is a small congregation in a cluster of small congregations here in central Massachusetts. Most of us are struggling to retain and build membership, balance our budgets, maintain our buildings, and pay our ministers—if we have a minister. We make some small efforts to work together, but for the most part, our congregations seem very alone.

In 1648, the Puritans and Pilgrims in Massachusetts adopted the Cambridge Platform which established the congregationalist polity of autonomous, independent congregations that our UU churches still live by. Our District Executive Rev. Sue Phillips writes, “Our religious ancestors were extremely specific about the web of connection they wanted to weave. In the Cambridge Platform, churches promise to take care of one another, consult one another, welcome members from other churches, share ministers, and provide ‘relief and



There’s a fun song that goes “the more we get together, together together, oh the more we get together, the happier we’ll be!” That certainly sums up the month of April downstairs! After a terrific Easter egg hunt inside (brrr! It was too cold and wet and snowy for hunting eggs outdoors this year!), we’ve spent the rest of the month learning more about how our UU Purposes and Principles can be put to work in our lives. We spent some time outside when the weather was warm and sunny, gathering trash from the church grounds, and then planting pansies around the sign out front. It’s been a lovely time to be together. Our year is winding down, and we’ll start to work on RE Sunday preparations as we slip into May. Please consider joining us! We’d love to have your kids come together with us!

Sincerely,

Kirsty Erikson
Lead Teacher



This Month in UU History

- May 1, 1751: Ezra Ripley was born in Woodstock, CT. During his studies at Harvard, he became known as “holy Ripley.” He served as minister of the First Parish in Concord, MA for 63 years, helped set up a town school committee and co-founded the Concord Lyceum. He was composing a sermon on the day he died at age 90.
- May 1, 1933: Publication of the first Humanist Manifesto (http://americanhumanist.org/Humanism/Humanist_Manifesto_1), which was signed by 36 prominent philosophers, scientists and academics, including seven Unitarian ministers and a Universalist minister.
- May 24, 1944: The Unitarian Church of the Larger Fellowship was formed to serve Unitarians who did not live within traveling distance of a congregation. This replaced the “Post Office Mission” which had been running for some years. The American Unitarian Association provided sermons, literature, newsletters and materials. The Church of the Larger Fellowship is still very active. (<http://www.clfuu.org/>)
- May 31, 1743: William Emerson was born in Concord, MA. Educated at Harvard, he first was a teacher before being called to ministry and ordained by the First Parish in Concord. He participated in the battle at the Concord Bridge on April 19, 1775 and went on to serve as chaplain for the companies of Minutemen. He died in 1776 at age 33 of “camp fever.” Ralph Waldo Emerson was his grandson.



succor’ in times of need. New congregations promise to offer the ‘right hand of fellowship’ to existing ones, and large congregations pledge to propagate new ones. We would be hard-pressed to construct a more relevant list today.”

Working together—this, too, is part of the vision of our UU “Great Awakening.” I’ll be talking more about this, and not just here in this newsletter. These are exciting times, and there’s too much going on for us to go it alone.

Pastor Inanna Arthen, M.Div

Morning Worship Services

We’ve been getting some feedback from people who say that morning worship services would work better for them than our current afternoon services. We hear you! But we need you to “vote with your feet,” too. On the Sundays when Pastor Arthen is preaching (once per month), she will lead two identical worship services. The first will be at 10:00 a.m. The second will be at 5:00 p.m. We will not have RE available in the morning, so that service will be most appropriate for adults or young people who are old enough to enjoy a full worship service.

If you’d prefer morning services, please attend! If more people attend in the morning than the afternoons, we will consider changing our service time back to mornings. The first “double service” day will be Sunday, May 10, for Mother’s Day.

Blessing of the Animals Service

On Sunday, May 24 at 5:00 p.m., UUCW will hold its annual “Blessing of the Animals” service. For this shorter, simpler service, all animal (and bird) friends are welcome. Please be sure your animal or bird is leashed or in a crate or cage so it will feel safe! If you can’t bring your animal (or have lots of them), bring photos. All animals will be recognized and honored for the role they play in our lives, and blessed for the coming year.

Annual Meeting

The annual congregational +business meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon will be held on Sunday, May 31, 2015, at the church, after a short worship service. A warrant will be posted and sent out to all members in advance of the meeting. Only members of the church can vote, but all are welcome to attend. We will be voting on the budget for the coming church year, the minister’s contract, and whether to petition the Unitarian Universalist Association for formal recognition as a Welcoming Congregation. We’ll have a light potluck supper after the meeting.

If you have anything you’d like to discuss about our church, please feel free to attend! If you are a voting member and would like to add an article to the warrant, contact Dave Faucher, Governing Board Chair.

Yard Sale Season Begins!

The UUCW Yard Sales will begin on Saturday, May 9. They'll be held every two weeks after that, on Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., as long as the weather permits.

If you'd like to donate goods and materials for the Yard Sales, or have a table of your own, please contact the church or Sue Faucher (978-632-5588).

Sue is also the person to contact if you'd like to be a vendor at the big Summer Flea Market on June 20. Don't delay, as space fills up early!



Thursday, May 21 Our Neighbor's Kitchen Serves Middle Eastern Banquet!

Join us on Thursday, May 21 at 5:30 p.m. for a feast of fun Middle Eastern foods like kebobs and cous-cous, along with vegetables and dessert, prepared by our chef David Faucher and his crew of dauntless assistants. Volunteers for set-up, serving and clean-up always welcome!

May Birthdays

Cindy Malley	May 9
Katie Sackett	May 9
Sara Michalewicz	May 14
Erika J. Gambill	May 20
Julia F. Cardinal	May 28



(If I'm missing any birthdays, please let me know!)

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).

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!

UUCW Online

<http://uucw.ncmuuc.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/uuwinchendon>

Contact Information

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