

THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon



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Church Telephone 978-297-0554

SEPTEMBER 2016

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE 11:00 A.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

Thursday, September 8

5:30 pm - Our Neighbors Kitchen serves
Barbequed Chicken dinner

Saturday, September 10

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

Sunday, September 11

11:00 am - Sunday Worship with Pastor
Inanna Arthen. Our new church year
opens with our traditional multi-
generational Water Communion
Service.

Monday, September 12

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Sunday, September 18

11:00 am - Sunday Worship
11:00 am - "Beginnings" RE Class
11:30 am - "Questings" RE Class

Monday, September 19

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Thursday, September 22

5:30 pm - Our Neighbors Kitchen serves
Spaghetti and Meatballs with garlic
bread

Saturday, September 24

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

Sunday, September 25

11:00 am - Sunday Worship with Pastor
Inanna Arthen - "Autumn Equinox"

Monday, September 26

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Sunday, October 2

11:00 am - Sunday Worship
11:00 am - "Beginnings" RE Class
11:30 am - "Questings" RE Class

Monday, October 3

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

Sunday, October 9

11:00 am - Sunday Worship
11:00 am - "Beginnings" RE Class
11:30 am - "Questings" RE Class



From Your Minister

We've had quite a summer here at UUCW, with Saturday Yard Sales, Our Neighbor's Kitchen, Summer Sunday Worship, a wedding and a child blessing keeping the church busy even during the heat waves. I apologize for not getting an August newsletter out, despite the best of intentions. Your minister has had a very busy summer, too: I sold my house in Pepperell, bought a house in Winchendon and became Winchendon's newest resident on July 28. Moving bag, baggage, cats, small business and home office after 27 years in the same place is quite an epic endeavor! I'm still acquiring major appliances and getting things organized and settled. But I really love Winchendon. Moving here has been like coming home.

As busy as I was with packing, banks and moving, I was just as busy with our events here at UUCW. On July 3 and July 10, UUCW hosted the second and third Winchendon Winds concerts of the 2016 season. The band played outside on July 3, while UUCW members Katherine, Maddy and Sue Faucher sold strawberry shortcake and beverages to benefit the church. The July 10 concert was held indoors, nearly filling the church with an enthusiastic audience who rose for a standing ovation at the conclusion.

Summer Sunday services were held every other week, on the same weekends as our Saturday Yard Sales. On July 3, I led a service on the theme of handling problems, and the dangers of treating everything as a crisis. On July 17, I led a service that explored questions of leadership and power, inspired by the ongoing presidential campaigns. On July 31, we reflected on the topic of “social justice”—what does it mean and why do so many Americans shy away from confronting it? With gardens at full peak and the weather hot and dry, on August 14 I spoke on “Bringing the Harvest Home,” and how we can recognize “harvests” of all kinds in our lives. Our final summer service on August 28 took an early look at Labor Day, and the history of the Labor movement. During our services, Katherine Faucher volunteered to lead the RE kids in crafts and activities downstairs—but sometimes the kids preferred to stay in the sanctuary and enjoy the service with the grown-ups.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen continued to grow in attendance, although we’re still missing some of our old regulars. Having exhausted the possibilities of “soup and sandwich” nights, I decided to upgrade second Thursdays to more substantial “casserole and comfort food” meals. On July 14, I cooked Shepherd’s Pie, and on August 11, Scalloped Potatoes with salad and cookies for dessert. On July 28, Dave Faucher prepared Chicken Fettucine Alfredo, and on August 25, Chicken Teriyaki, both entrees chosen by popular vote at the June 30 dinner.

As another new year begins at UUCW, it’s a good time to reflect on a simple and basic question: why do we come to church? I don’t mean that in just a general sense. I mean why do we Unitarian Universalists go to church, and even more specifically, we who are members of Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon?

The most important reason that UUs join a congregation is because they can find kindred spirits there. In a UU congregation, people can come to a meeting of minds without being asked to compromise on their personal principles and beliefs.

Unitarian Universalism has always appealed to those who thought for themselves, were prepared to challenge conventional wisdom and entrenched authority, weren’t afraid to experiment with different spiritual paths and traditions, and didn’t react with fear and suspicion to other points of view. The earliest Unitarians followed their own consciences at tremendous risk, and sometimes with very severe consequences. It was

literally against the law not to be a Christian—that is, a Bible-believing Trinitarian—in Europe and Britain until well after the Age of Enlightenment.

Early Unitarian churches bonded through their shared vision of God as singular and Jesus as an inspirational but merely human teacher, and through their courage in openly proclaiming their beliefs and resisting pressure to conform. Universalists faced similar prejudices and oppression when they first coalesced as a denomination.

UUs invoke this history when we focus so much of our energy on social justice, community service and supporting progressive causes. When UUs come together to worship, we’re usually seeking to learn something, to be made to think about hard truths, to share visions of hope and inspiration, and to affirm our ability to make the world a better place. Some of us appeal to God, or more than one god. Some of us see ourselves as working for, or with, God (or more than one god). Some of us don’t believe in God or deities at all, but place our faith in the highest and best manifestations of the human intellect and spirit. But all of us have this in common: we’re looking upwards, toward what inspires us and calls to us—not down toward “sin” or “evil” or what’s “bad.” We’re looking forward to a better future for everyone and everything on our planet—not backward at a nostalgic past that never really existed.

It can be hard to maintain optimism and hope in our world today. A congregation gives us a community which can support us and validate our feelings. It also gives us a team we can work with. As individuals, we can only do so much to address the problems that trouble us. Working in unity with others, our power is multiplied by far more than the sum of our numbers.

And this unity can’t be achieved effectively through social networking, texting and messaging. We could live-stream our Sunday services very easily; today’s technology makes it simple. We may do that, for our members who are away or can’t get out easily. But to build the kind of bonds that challenge power and weather storms, it takes face-to-face interaction and real shared experience. In a world where almost everyone has a cell phone and an Internet connection, loneliness is more epidemic than ever. Coming to Sunday worship, participating in a service with others, chatting about it afterwards—such small things forge friendships. Even more, a congregation that is “doing it right” feels like family. We care about each other and take care of each other. We exist to do good, and for

that we need to work together.

We're happy to see every one of you and we miss you when you're not there. Each Sunday morning, when the candles of Joys and Concerns are lit, we light a candle for "absent friends"—all the members of our congregation who couldn't attend that Sunday, but are with us in spirit. We want to see you there in person, too! So come on down and join us. You already belong.

Pastor Inanna Arthen



Our New Church Year Begins on September 11

Join us for our "Ingathering" service on Sunday, September 11, at 11:00 a.m. We'll be sharing our traditional Water Communion service to open the new church year. This will be a multi-generational service that includes our younger people, so there will be no RE class this Sunday. Please bring some water to pour into the congregational bowl. If you've saved some, this can be water from something significant or especially enjoyable that you did, or that happened in your life, this summer. We'll save the water until Flower Communion service next June, when it will be taken

RE News

Summer is a time for regeneration...the plants do it by blossoming and setting fruits and seeds. We do it by heading to the beach or to the mountains, by visiting lakes and splashing in backyard pools, running through sprinklers, or hanging out in lawn chairs in the yard. We roast marshmallows over fire pits, and slap at mosquitoes, and listen to the busy hum of insects. And if we're lucky, we get to chase fireflies in the dusk, watch the bats zipping around the sky as the sun lowers, and feel the cool hush of summer evening as we sit, taking it all in.

In the work of the church there is a different kind of regeneration. We plan dates for events for the upcoming season, we work on budgets, on curriculum for the young people, and any work to the building to get our space ready for the coming Autumn and the 'true' start of the new church season.

This is true in RE, as well as in big church. While your lead teacher is indeed sitting outside and watching bats gobble up those pesky mosquitoes, I'm also thinking about how we are interconnected, and wondering how to share that with the kids in a new and interesting way. I think about meaningful questions for our older kids, and ways to keep hands busy, while minds engage. Most of all, I want RE to be *fun*...not merely a place to stash kids while the big people are doing important stuff upstairs.

I think we attain that, week after week. I watch the understanding dawning in your children's eyes, note the skills that they have in their hands. I listen to their stories, too, for they have as many joys and sorrows to share as the adults. Church isn't just about sitting and learning on a specific path—it's not math, nor English! It's learning to listen, to share, to have safe space where our stories can be told, and where we can learn about one another. In those moments, we are learning some of the most important lessons of our lives—that other people have cares and worries and joys and happiness, and they are just as important to them as our own are to us. We're learning more than mere "tolerance"...we're understanding and accepting each person as an individual.

I hope you'll mark September 11 on your calendar now, and plan on attending our opening service with us. Our opening service will be an intergenerational Water Communion Service, so bring water from your summer adventures with you, to commingle with everyone's "adventure" waters, to symbolically begin our journey of fellowship for another church year. Registration for this year's RE Classes will be right after the service. Regular RE classes will start on September 18.

Peace,

Kirsty Erikson
Lead RE Teacher



Spiritual Calendar

September 6-15: Paryushana Parva (Jain). This festival of repentance and forgiveness is one of the most important in the Jain calendar, and lasts for 8 to 10 days. Jains fast, observe rituals, and reflect on their sins of the past year and how they can correct them. Observance of this festival is believed to clear one's karma and help prevent the accumulation of new karma. After the festival is over Jains ask forgiveness of everyone they may have harmed by an action, during a day called *Kshamavani*.

September 11-14: Eid al Adha (Islam). "Festival of the Sacrifice." This observance commemorates Abraham's obedience to Allah's command to sacrifice his son Isaac, the most precious thing he possessed. When Allah replaces Isaac with a ram, he demonstrates that human life should never be sacrificed even for God. Muslims observe the festival with prayers in their mosque and with a ritual meal.

September 13: Banquet of Venus (ancient Rome). Feast day of Venus, goddess of love and good fortune. Light some pink and red candles, and enjoy a romantic dinner—or buy a lottery ticket!

September 13: Ceremony of Lighting the Fire (ancient Egypt). Ancient Egyptians lit oil lamps in front of statues of the gods and goddesses and images of their deceased loved ones and ancestors. Light a candle for someone who has passed that you would like to remember.

September 22: Mabon (Pagan). Observed at the Autumn Equinox, this holiday celebrates the peak of the fall harvest, the end of summer and the beginning of Autumn. Pagans hold dances and feasts similar to traditional "Harvest Home" celebrations or Thanksgiving. Aidan Kelly adopted the name "Mabon" in 1970 from a figure in Welsh mythology, Mabon ap Modron, who appears in some of the earliest Arthurian stories and was originally a son of the Mother Goddess.

outside and sprinkled over the church gardens.

Registration for this year's RE classes will take place after Sunday worship service. We're looking forward to seeing you all on the 11th!

Our Neighbors Kitchen

We're planning two great meals in September! On Thursday, September 8, join us for a last-blast-of-summer Barbequed Chicken feast with salad, sides and dessert. On Thursday, September 22, we'll be serving up the always popular Spaghetti and Meatballs, with decadent homemade garlic bread, salad and dessert. Dinner is served at 5:30 pm.

We can always use more volunteers! If you'd like to help with set-up, come to the church between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. If you want to help with serving, come at around 5:15 p.m. so we can go over any special protocols for the night's menu. Clean-up starts around 6:15 p.m. and is usually done shortly after 7:00 p.m. Volunteers have a chance to sit down and share the meal and fellowship.

Yard Sales Continue into Fall

Saturday Yard Sales will continue every other week into the fall as long as the weather permits. We're

open from 9:00 a.m. to around 1:00 p.m., and sharing the lawn with the Toy Town Outdoor Market, so there's plenty of great stuff to browse. Be sure you stop by!

We're looking for good-quality stuff to sell, and will take donations at any time. If you're doing some fall clean-out, down-sizing, de-cluttering, moving, or just want to pay it forward, bring it to us! Small furniture, small working appliances, toys, games and puzzles, books, all sorts of gift type items in good enough condition to be good gifts—these have all done well. Clothing, outdated electronics, and toys that are worn or shabby tend not to sell (and please, no stuffed animals). Items like furniture must be small enough to store between sales.

If you'd like to have your own table, we just ask that you make a donation to the church in return. All donations are tax-deductible; we can provide you with a letter to document your donation on request.

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).

Saturday Yard Sale Fall Dates

September 10

September 24

October 8

October 22

This Month in UU History

September 4, 1848: African-American Lewis Howard Latimer was born in Chelsea, MA. He was a founding member of the First Unitarian Church of Flushing, NY. A gifted inventor and electrical engineer, Latimer was the only African-American on the Edison Pioneers, the engineering team of the Edison Company. Latimer authored many significant inventions, especially in the area of electric lights. He drafted the mechanical drawings for Alexander Graham Bell's patent application for the telephone.

September 15, 1847: President William Howard Taft was born in Cincinnati, OH. Taft spent his life in public service. As civil governor of the Philippines, he mentored that nation toward full independence while de-emphasizing its racial differences as far as possible. Before being elected the 27th President of the United States (following President Theodore Roosevelt), Taft served as secretary of war. After his term of office, he became the only person to serve as both President and Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. Taft served as moderator of the American Unitarian Association and was a member of the First Unitarian Church of Cincinnati.

September 16, 1803: Orestes Augustus Brownson was born in Stockbridge, VT (to parents who apparently appreciated the classics). He converted to Universalism at age 21, was ordained a Universalist minister in Jaffrey NH two years later, and converted to Unitarianism in 1831. He served as a Unitarian minister in Walpole, NH and Canton, MA. He converted to Catholicism in 1844 and also identified as a Transcendentalist. He was a strong advocate for the working class. In 1840 he published an influential essay, "The Laboring Classes," in the *Boston Quarterly Review*, which he founded and edited.

September Birthdays

Willard White
Sue Faucher

September 11
September 15



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

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!

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 978-297-1730 (home) or 508-572-1624 (cell).

UUCW Online

<http://uucw.ncmuuc.org>

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

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