

THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

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Church Telephone 978-297-0554

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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

Sunday, October 2

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

Monday, October 3

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Saturday, October 8

9:00 am - noon - Saturday Yard Sale
12:00 pm - Apple Picking Outing to Hollis
Hills Farm

Sunday, October 9

11:00 am - Sunday Worship with Pastor
Inanna Arthen - Columbus Day
11:00 am - "Beginnings" RE Class
11:30 am - "Questings" RE Class

Monday, October 10

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Thursday, October 13

5:30 pm - Our Neighbors Kitchen serves
Chicken Pot Pie

Sunday, October 16

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

Monday, October 17

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Saturday, October 22

9:00 am - noon - Saturday Yard Sale

Sunday, October 23

11:00 am - Sunday Worship with Pastor
Inanna Arthen
11:00 am - "Beginnings" RE Class
11:30 am - "Questings" RE Class

Monday, October 24

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Thursday, October 27

5:30 pm - Our Neighbors Kitchen serves
Apple and Onion Pork Roast Dinner

Sunday, October 30

11:00 am - Sunday Worship with Pastor
Inanna Arthen - All Hallows
11:00 am - "Beginnings" RE Class
11:30 am - "Questings" RE Class

Monday, October 31

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Sunday, November 6

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

From Your Minister

September is one of the loveliest months, "with summer's best of weather and autumn's best of cheer," as one poem says. It's filled with warm, dry days, clear deep blue skies, cool nights, and the first fringes of color in the trees. Our September at UUCW was busy but harmonious as we launched the new church year. On September 11, we held our traditional Water Communion "Ingathering" service, with a few minutes to acknowledge the fifteenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on 9/11. On September 18, Dave Faucher offered a Chalice Circle service on the theme of "Letting Go." On September 25, I led an intergenerational service about the Autumn Equinox, and the things that influence our feelings about the weather and the turning of the seasons.

Dave Faucher and I swapped our usual weeks for cooking Our Neighbor's Kitchen. On September 8, Dave

cooked barbequed chicken with corn on the cob, bread and cole slaw. On September 22, I tackled my largest and most complicated meal so far: spaghetti and meatballs with garlic bread and salad. I baked the bread for the garlic bread and made the meatballs by hand—I was cooking for three days! But the meal was a hit, so it was all worth it.

As I write this, we've just had the first debate between the Democratic and Republican candidates for President. The media and the Internet are full of analyses, critiques, and pronouncements on which one "won the debate." This is normal, of course. Quite honestly, I don't think either of them "won," because both candidates were so precisely themselves, they were each "preaching to the choir"—and not saying or doing anything that would change the minds of many voters one way or the other. Well, they get two more chances.

I think many of us would agree that this has been an unusually disturbing Presidential campaign, for a number of reasons. One of the things that especially bothers me this time around is the degree of hysteria, hyperbole, emotionalism and desperation that infects almost every discussion, article or news item. Wild accusations, suppositions and unsubstantiated rumors are made about both candidates. Forecasts of nothing less than nuclear winter and the end of America as we know it if the other candidate wins are made by both sides. Supporters of each candidate threaten and demonize those who don't vote their way. The worst possible consequences (and some that are impossible) are proclaimed certain if either candidate wins.

Back in 2000, Al Gore won the popular vote and tied for the electoral college vote, until the Supreme Court stopped the vote recount and appointed G. W. Bush President. Many of us who considered ourselves progressives at that time were extremely upset, to say the least. It was then that I joined a number of progressive organizations and subscribed to some of their newsletters and publications. Since then, I've valued these publications for their rational and realistic outlook. They documented, they fact-checked, they researched, they presented in-depth analyses, they debunked misinformation. "Reality based," we called ourselves, and it was true.

But now, these very organizations and newsletters seem to have turned into a sea of Chicken Littles, running in circles shouting at the top of their lungs that the sky is falling. I look in vain for calm, reasonable

perspectives. I've gotten very tired of being heaped with abuse, told I'm voting for The Enemy, that I'm stupid, immature, selfish, don't care about oppressed people, and am going to be personally responsible for making millions suffer, just because of the candidate I support or don't support. And this is from other progressives! This is from the people who I thought were on my side!

Unitarian Universalism has always been progressive. That's why it's called "liberal religion"—and it's also why conservative think-tanks and evangelical churches have accused us of conspiring against them or being a "cult." But along with being progressive, passionate and activists, UUs always valued rational discourse. Being well-informed, looking at both sides of an issue, thinking through a situation, listening to others speak, being willing to admit we're wrong, learning from others' experience—these are all traits that UUs historically have valued highly.

Calm, moderate discussion seems to have vanished from American life. Never have we been so polarized on every issue; never have collective emotions been stuck so far into the red zone. Too many people feel as though their very existence is threatened. We have become a nation of people who walk around on DefCon 1, ready to fight to the death—all too often, literally—at the slightest challenge, intended or perceived. No wonder gun violence is so rife.

Our Founders believed passionately in their values and principles, and they certainly disagreed. But they were educated on a classical model that included formal training in logic, rhetoric and debate. They learned how to compromise. But if Americans today have a classical model for their approach to conflict, it's most similar to the Spartans at Thermopylae (vividly dramatized in Zack Snyder's 2007 film, *300*): stand your ground even when it means every warrior dies.

It makes for a good movie, but as an outline for functioning in a democratic society, "give no quarter and resist to the bitter end" has some major down sides.

I find myself wondering what kind of leader could have a calming influence on Americans today. Who could convince so many people to dial it back, stop and think, take a moderate view, and just plain get a grip?

I think it will take a collaborative effort. People who write articles and blog posts need to resist the temptation toward hyperbole and exaggeration. People who are concerned about the policies of a candidate they don't like need to realize that they only alienate potential allies by going on the attack. No one will change their vote because someone tries to make them

feel stupid, racist, ignorant or evil.

But lacking a massive “Everyone Be Reasonable” initiative, the best that we UUs can do is model calm, thoughtful behavior in our own conversations. Respect for everyone is our first Principle, and the first way we show respect is by being polite, even when we disagree. We know that in a room where everyone is shouting, no one is heard. Let’s work together to reduce the noise and encourage true dialogue. We’re UUs. Let’s make America **think** again.

Pastor Inanna Arthen

Our Neighbors Kitchen

We’re planning two great meals in October! On Thursday, October 13, Pastor Inanna Arthen will prepare Chicken Pot Pie with a flaky biscuit crust. Come enjoy this hearty meal-in-one with salad and dessert!

On Thursday, October 27, Dave Faucher will pull out all the stops for our traditional Fall favorite, roast pork with apple and onion dressing, sides and dessert.

Dinner is served at 5:30 p.m. 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.

Trip to Hollis Hills Farm

Join us on Saturday, October 8 for our annual family apple-picking outing. This year, we’ll be going to Hollis Hills Farm (www.hollishillsfarm.com) on 340 Marshall Rd. in Fitchburg to enjoy their Fall Harvest Festival events. We’ll carpool from the church after the Yard Sale closes up at noon. You can also meet us at the farm at about 12:30 p.m. Please email Sue Faucher at sfaucher@on24seven.com if you have any questions. See you there!

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 12:00 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



RE News



It’s October and Autumn is upon us. It brings us cool days, bright colored leaves, pumpkins, and the soft settling of the earth as she heads into her long winter’s resting time. Down in the Religious Education classroom, the room is warm, the smiles are contagious, the activities are fun, and our discussions are lively!

Our Beginnings class will be continuing to learn about just what this religion with the huge name is all about. We’ll sing songs and play games that help reinforce our Unitarian Universalist values, and have stories to share from our personal experiences. We’ll grow in this faith journey together, and learn about ourselves and our neighbors in the process. Class time begins at 11:00 a.m.

The Questing class will continue to grapple with some of the big questions that face us as we grow and mature. This is a curious age, when the reasons for things being as they are will be challenged, explored, and re-examined. This class has taken an emotional and developmental upswing from even a year ago, and needs time to try to restate things that they used to take at face value. We hope to offer a safe and non-judgmental space for them to work through their thoughts, through art, through stories, through discussions. A dynamic group of thinkers, our discussions range widely, but always come from the core beliefs of Unitarian Universalism. The youth in this class start upstairs in service with the adults, then head downstairs to class at 11:30 a.m.

We invite you and yours to come and visit with us soon!

Kirsty Erikson
Lead RE Teacher

Spiritual Calendar

- October 3-4: Rosh Hashana (Jewish).** The “Jewish New Year” commemorating the creation of Adam and Eve. Jews wish each other a Happy New Year, and share sweet foods (for a “sweet year”). Apples dipped in honey are a traditional treat. Some Jewish people eat a “Rosh Hashana seder” of food mentioned in the Torah, such as black eyed peas, pomegranates, dates, spinach and gourds.
- October 4: St. Francis Day (Christian).** Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi. St. Francis (1182-1226) walked away from a life of privilege to live simply and preach. He taught that all living things and all parts of the natural world were “brothers and sisters” to humans, and founded several religious orders. Many churches hold “Blessing of the Animals” services on or near St. Francis’ Day.
- October 11: Vijayadashami (Hindu).** An important Hindu celebration which commemorates the victory of the goddess Durga over the demon Mahishasura. Durga battled evil for ten days and nine nights before she prevailed. Traditions vary widely from place to place, but Vijayadashami generally lasts five to ten days and is celebrated with feasts, processions, games, sacred theatre, fireworks and the lighting of oil lamps and bonfires.
- October 12: Yom Kippur (Jewish).** The Day of Atonement, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. Observant Jews may spend twenty-four hours fasting and praying, often in synagogue. In Jewish theology, each person’s fate for the coming year is written into the Book of Life at Rosh Hashana and sealed at Yom Kippur; this is the last chance for a person to improve their fate through conscious repentance. Like Christmas Eve for Christians, more Jews attend synagogue at Yom Kippur than any other time.
- October 30: Diwali (Hindu, Sikh, Jain).** The “Festival of Lights” and one of the most important Hindu celebrations. It spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair. Hindus clean and decorate their homes, share fancy meals and sweets, and exchange gifts. On the night of Diwali, which is always the New Moon, thousands of lights shine from rooftops, doors, windows and inside temples.
- October 31: Samhain (Pagan).** The eve of the first of November, the ancient Celtic New Year. Samhain marked the beginning of the winter season, a time when pre-industrial peoples were preparing for a long stretch of harsh weather, privation and loss. Food animals were slaughtered and their meat salted or dried, and the very last crops and forage plants were harvested. Like other Celtic sacred days, Samhain was a “liminal” time when the boundary between everyday reality and other worlds (the past, the afterlife, the realm of Faery) grew thin. Spirits and supernatural beings might walk abroad, and people told fortunes for the coming year. In most Celtic lands, great bonfires were kept burning all night long. Samhain’s sinister reputation, as “Halloween,” is primarily a product of Christian propaganda and modern literary fantasies.

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

October 8

October 22

October Birthdays

Tracy Gambill	October 5
Hannah Gordon	October 10
Katherine R. Faucher	October 11
Ronald Gaspard	October 20



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

This Month in UU History

- October 6, 1967: The Black Empowerment Controversy within Unitarian Universalism started on this day with the Emergency Conference on the Black Rebellion in the Biltmore Hotel in New York City. Black UUs wanted the UUA to create and fund a Black Affairs Council (BAC) which would be run by African American leaders within the UUA. The proposal was approved by the delegates at General Assembly in 1968, but after issues arose around the failure of the UUA to fully fund the BAC, and its exclusively black membership, in 1969 black delegates walked out of GA in Boston in protest. In 1970 the BAC disaffiliated from the UUA. The controversy over the perceived lack of support of the BAC from the UUA led to questions about the UUA's commitment to racial justice. Over 1,000 black Unitarian Universalists left the denomination, including William Sinkford, who returned years later to serve as president of the UUA. This episode in UU history remains a painful and unresolved one, and to this day questions about how to welcome and include African Americans in UU churches continue to be a challenge. (See this 2012 *UU World* article by Mark Morrison-Reed, <http://www.uuworld.org/articles/empowerment-tragedy>)
- October 19, 1735: Unitarian statesman, Vice President, President and Founding Father (and author of the Massachusetts state constitution) John Adams was born in Braintree, MA. A number of the nation's Founders were Unitarians, including Adams, Thomas Jefferson and John Hancock.
- October 23, 1850: The first women's suffrage meeting was convened in Worcester, MA. Most of the organizers and supporters of the movement were Unitarians.
- October 26, 1811: Unitarian minister Abiel Abbott Livermore was born in Wilton, NH. He graduated from Harvard College and Harvard Divinity School and became the minister of the Unitarian church in Keene, NH. He went on to serve congregations in Cincinnati, OH and Yonkers, NY. Abiel headed Meadville Theological School as its president until his death in 1890. He wrote numerous books examining the Bible, morality and politics from a Unitarian perspective, and edited the periodical, *The Liberal Christian*.

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>

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).

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