

# THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

Established 1954 Published by the

*Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon*



Volume 59 Issue 2

INANNA ARTHEN, M.DIV, MINISTER

Church Telephone 978-297-0554

**OCTOBER 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

### Monday, September 29

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

### Wednesday, October 1

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Cybercafé opens at UUCW

### Saturday, October 4

11:00 am - Trip to Red Apple Farm

### Sunday, October 5

5:00 pm - Sunday Worship - "Compassion." Inanna Arthen, M.Div, worship leader.

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

### Monday, October 6

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

### Wednesday, October 8

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Cybercafé at UUCW

### Sunday, October 12

5:00 pm - Sunday Worship - Chalice Circle Service

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

### Monday, October 13

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

### Wednesday, October 15

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Cybercafé at UUCW

### Sunday, October 19

5:00 pm - Sunday Worship

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

### Monday, October 20

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

### Wednesday, October 22

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Cybercafé at UUCW

### Friday, October 24

*Deadline for November Newsletter*

### Sunday, October 26

10:00 am - UUCW joins First Parish UU of Ashby for a joint Sunday worship service in Ashby, followed by a Welcoming Congregations panel  
~ *No service in Winchendon today* ~

### Monday, October 27

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

### Wednesday, October 29

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Cybercafé at UUCW

### Thursday, October 30

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen community supper serves "Sloppy Joes". All are welcome!

### Sunday, November 2

5:00 pm - Sunday Worship - "All Hallows." Inanna Arthen, M.Div, worship leader.

6:00 pm - Post-Service Light Potluck Supper

### Monday, November 3

7:00 pm - AA Meeting

### Wednesday, November 5

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Cybercafé at UUCW



## From Your Minister

Our new church year at UUCW started off with a bustling and active September. It's great to see you all at Sunday worship and our potluck suppers again. After a summer of rather wet and cool weather, we're having a reassuringly normal autumn. The foliage is just starting to show real color. We've had long strings of days radiant with the bright sun and deep blue skies that are September's specialty—a pre-winter gift to remember summer by.

Our RE program, organized by our new Lead Teacher, Kirsty Erikson, has launched out of the gate running, skipping and dancing. Kirsty, with our assistant teacher Heather LaChance, is building lessons based on the Sunday worship themes, organizing crafts projects and teaching games, redesigning our bulletin boards and renewing the whole RE space downstairs. We're so lucky to have found such a perfect team for the UUCW RE program!

We're exploring alternatives for worship service music this year, and you'll be hearing a wide selection of beautiful recorded music and accompaniments to hymns on Sundays. We're able to utilize the church sound system so that everyone can hear, and we may have some guest musicians or other surprises through the church year. Musical suggestions and requests are welcome!

On Sunday, September 7, we held our traditional In-Gathering/Water Communion service. Congregation members poured water into a large container and spoke about what they'd been doing over the summer and what the water meant to them. The water, blessed to the four quarters, is being saved in a pretty covered jar with a tight lid, and will be poured around the boundaries of the church garden next spring.

On Sunday, September 14, David Faucher led a Chalice Circle Service on the theme of "Conservation and Good Work." On the 21<sup>st</sup>, I led a service on the theme of the Autumn Equinox and Harvest Home. On September 28, we heard a "UU Voices" sermon which reflected on "Inclusion."

The Saturday Yard Sales were very successful this summer, and we continued them into September with sales on the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup>. In conjunction with the September 20 Yard Sale, we held our annual Open House. The church was open so people could tour our beautiful sanctuary and see our E. & G. G. Hook pipe organ and Tiffany stained glass windows. We rang the bell each hour on the hour. I was there answering questions and chatting with visitors, while Kirsty had a crafts table set up in the drive for the kids. It was cloudy, cool weather but remained dry, and we had quite a few people passing through.

On Thursday, September 25, Our Neighbor's Kitchen served pot roast, vegetables, salad and donated baby white and red potatoes along with a dessert donated by The Winchendon School. A crew of students from the school helped serve the meal and bus the tables, while the main meal was prepared by our chef David Faucher and his hard-working assistants. A warm and congenial evening and a delicious meal was enjoyed by all who attended.

I've been networking UUCW with other congregations in the area by leading guest worship services. I spoke at the First Parish Church UU in Billerica on September 14 and at the First Congregational Parish, Unitarian in Petersham on September 21. On October 26, I'll be co-leading a service at the First Parish UU of Ashby with their minister, Rev. Bruce Taylor. All



RE Lead Teacher Kirsty Erikson and Madeleine Faucher work on a crafts project at the UUCW Open House on September 20.

UUCW congregation members are invited to this service, which is part of our Welcoming Congregations Journey of Learning and will be followed by a potluck lunch and a panel discussion.

We're about to start our newest community service: a "Cybercafé" with free wi-fi for those who don't have easy access to the Internet at home. We'll be setting this up on Wednesday nights from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. starting on October 1.

All of this activity and launching of new projects may seem a bit contradictory at this time of year. As we start a new church year, and as schools all begin their academic year, the natural world is winding down toward winter. Our ancestors were finishing the harvest and preparing for the first snow storms at this season—stocking up food, repairing buildings, storing firewood, making new warm clothing. When winter's storms begin, we plow the roads and go to work or school as usual, but our ancestors braced themselves for a long period of being weatherbound and restricted. If they didn't put by enough food in the fall, there was no supermarket to run out to in February.

The month of October concludes with the holiday we celebrate as Halloween. To our Celtic ancestors it was called Samhain (pronounced "sow-in"). Falling exactly between the Autumn Equinox and the Winter Solstice, Samhain was one of the most sacred times of the year to the Celts, who brought their herds of cattle and sheep in from pasture at this time. It was a great

fire festival and a time to celebrate the final harvest and count up the wealth represented by the herds of animals. The Celts marked the beginning of the new year at Samhain, as the Celtic day began at sunset.

But Samhain also was the threshold of winter, and this is where its dark and sinister aspect comes from. Like all transition points, it was believed that the veil between the worlds—of life and death, of everyday lands and Faerieland—grew thinner, and it was possible to cross boundaries, or speak with those from other realms. Ceremonies for protection and good luck were held, and people did divination to ask how hard the coming season would be and who would survive. Our ancestors knew that some of their loved ones wouldn't see the coming spring, and they asked their gods and goddesses for mercy and kindness for those making the passage into death.

Modern Pagans honor Samhain as a solemn and serious holiday, but the 21<sup>st</sup> Century secular world has skimmed off the macabre aspects as a way of whistling past the graveyard, as it's called—confronting a fear of death by making light of it. All the spooky or gruesome costumes and decorations aren't evil, they're simply bravado. Trick or treating is a custom once common to many holidays (think of the wassailing songs at Christmas, when carolers used to go door to door singing for "figgie pudding" and other small comforts). At Samhain, any stranger who came to the door must

be shown hospitality, because he or she might be a faerie, a deity, an angel or a ghost in disguise.

If you wish to celebrate Samhain in the old way, prepare a feast of autumn foods and invite your friends and family. Play fortune-telling games. Leave a plate of food and a lighted candle on the hearth for the spirits when you go to bed. Take a walk in the woods at twilight. Write down your dreams, and count your blessings. Gather those you love close around you. We are stronger when we work as one than when we work alone, and we need our strength. Winter is coming.

Inanna Arthen, M.Div

## Trip to Red Apple Farm

On Saturday, October 4, we'll be making our popular annual excursion to Red Apple Farm in Phillipston for an afternoon of family fun. For \$6.00 per person, join us for apple picking (one bag provided—you can buy and fill more bags if you wish), choosing a pumpkin right from the field, and a hay ride. Red Apple Farm features food, a shop filled with fresh produce, locally crafted food and gifts, farm animals and of course many varieties of apples. Don't miss one of our favorite events of the entire church year! Meet us at the farm at 11:00 a.m. or arrange to carpool/caravan in advance.



Rev. Dr. Lynn Adair Unger set these words from the poet and mystic Rumi to music that many UU's are very familiar with:

"Come, come, whomever you are—wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving. Ours is no caravan of despair, come yet again come."

I often sing this as I drive from my home to be with your children on Sunday evenings. And it makes me ponder—why do you come to church? If you ask a group of children that question, you'll get a plethora of reasons: "My parents bring me," or "because it's fun," or "because I get to ring the bell," or even "candle lighting". All of these are wonderfully valid reasons. I wonder if the adult congregants would have similar answers?

One of the things I am deeply enjoying about my "return engagement" to a UU congregation is the chance to interact with people in spiritual community. We're Unitarian Universalists engaged in a communion of the spirit. The kids in the RE program have been learning about this type of communion during the month of September. We've created silver "water drops" symbolizing the annual water communion, and rainsticks to celebrate the waters that join us together with people the world over. We're working hard on a "mystery project" that will help us learn about inclusion as we create it. We're having fun! Do make sure you look at the bulletin boards we're creating downstairs!

I hope that you and your kids have a blessing-filled Autumn, and that we see you and yours soon at UUCW. We invite you (yes, YOU!) to come, come, whomever you are!

*Kirsty Erikson, Lead RE Teacher UUCW*



# Welcoming Congregations Journey of Learning

Last winter, UUCW began the Welcoming Congregations Journey of Learning as part of the process toward recognition as a Welcoming Congregation by the UUA. In order to be recognized, a congregation embraces a formal process of reflection, listening, discussion and education about LGBTQ people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer/questioning). After completing the sessions, we'll vote as a congregation on whether we feel ready to ask the UUA to recognize us.

We began in January with Sessions 1 and 2 from *The Welcoming Congregations Handbook*: "Introductions and Expectations" and "What We Know and How We Learned It." In February, we met at the First Parish UU of Fitchburg to hear a powerful testament by Deborah Fabian, a transgendered woman from the Gardner UU church, and participate in a roundtable discussion during social hour afterwards. On March 30, we met for sessions 3 and 4 of *The Welcoming Congregations Handbook*: "The Common Elements of Oppression" and "Gender Socialization and Homophobia." If you missed any of these sessions, or would like a refresher, please ask me and I'll be happy to provide you with the notes and handouts. Our sessions at UUCW were organized as PowerPoint presentations.

Now we're continuing our journey along with the Ashby and Fitchburg UU congregations. On Sunday, October 26, we'll meet at Ashby at 10:00 a.m. for a joint service led by Rev. Bruce Taylor (minister of the First Parish UU of Ashby and The First Parish Church of Billerica) and Inanna Arthen, M.Div, from UUCW. After the service, we'll share a potluck lunch, followed by a panel discussion with guest speakers from the LGBTQ community. They will speak about their personal experiences and answer questions. This will be session 9 of *The Welcoming Congregations Handbook*. We will not have a worship service in Winchendon that Sunday.

Later this fall, we'll schedule another double session here at UUCW, and cover sessions 7 and 8, "The Radical Right," and "Religion and Homosexuality." We can then discuss which further sessions we'd like to explore.

Everyone is welcome to join the sessions at any time. You don't have to have attended earlier sessions to participate. If you'd like copies of the reading materials, slides or handouts, please contact me. The Welcoming

Congregations journey of learning is intended to be a thoughtful process, not a painful one. Don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

## UUCW Cybercafé

Wednesday, October 1, UUCW will open the first weekly Wednesday night Cybercafé from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall downstairs. We'll have a free wi-fi network running for those who need an Internet connection for work or personal reasons and don't have one at home. You'll need to bring your own laptop, tablet or other device. We hope to have some wi-fi-enabled laptops or PCs available soon for general use.

Inanna Arthen, UUCW minister, will be monitoring the Cybercafé and will also be available if you'd like to talk to her about other concerns.

## Spiritual Calendar

- October 4: Feast of Saint Francis (Christian). The main feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, who founded three religious orders, taught compassion and kindness to all living creatures, and of all the saints, most fully lived the teachings of Jesus Christ. He was never formally ordained.
- October 4: Yom Kippur (Jewish). The Day of Atonement, when Jews traditionally fast, pray, and atone for the sins committed in the past year.
- October 4-7: Eid al Adha (Islam): Commemorates Abraham and the near-sacrifice of Isaac. Gifts of meat are given to the poor.
- October 9: Sukkoth (Jewish). A harvest festival of ancient provenance, Sukkoth honors Asherah, the Queen of Heaven. Traditions include building small booths decorated with vines and produce.
- October 11-13: Thesmophoria (Greek). Festival of Demeter, in her role as the Law Giver. This women-centered two-day observance reminded men that they were responsible for supporting themselves and respecting natural law.
- October 21-25: Deepavali (Hindu): Festival of lights marking the end of the Hindu year.
- October 31: All Hallows Eve (Christian). A time of prayer and reflection before All Saints' Day (November 1) and All Souls' Day (November 2).
- November 1: Samhain (Pagan). The Celtic New Year and one of the two great Celtic fire festivals, this is traditionally a time to prepare for winter, reflect on our blessings, remember our beloved dead and confront our mortality.

## This Month in UU History

October 2, 1755: Hannah Adams was born in Medfield, MA. She was the first woman in America to earn her living as a writer. Never marrying, she wrote pioneering works in comparative religion that became standard Unitarian Sunday school texts for two generations. She was the only woman allowed in the Boston Athenaeum.

October 6, 1779: Merchant, manufacturer, financier, politician and philanthropist Nathaniel Appleton was born in Ipswich, NH. He sought to change working conditions in the U.S. factory system. A mill owner himself, he applied the Unitarian belief in basic human goodness to sound business practices. One of Boston's 10 richest men, he was involved in philanthropy and public service on a large scale. He served six terms in the MA legislature and one in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was active with the Federal Street (now Arlington Street) Church in Boston during the ministries of William Ellery Channing and Ezra Stiles Gannett.

October 19, 1735: Unitarian and second President of the U.S. John Adams was born in Braintree (now Quincy) MA. He served as delegate to the Second Continental Congress, commissioner to France, and as the nation's first vice president under President George Washington. Adams helped draft the Declaration of Independence, drafted the Massachusetts state constitution, and wrote numerous books on law and government. He and his family were members of the First Parish (Unitarian) in Quincy, MA, where he and his wife, son and daughter-in-law are buried.

October 28, 1858: Charles Francis Potter was born in Marlboro, MA. Initially a Baptist minister, he converted to Unitarianism in 1914. He served on the defense team with Clarence Darrow in the 1925 Scopes trial which challenged a law banning the teaching of evolution in Tennessee. Potter was founder and leader of the First Humanist Society of New York.

## 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).

## 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!)

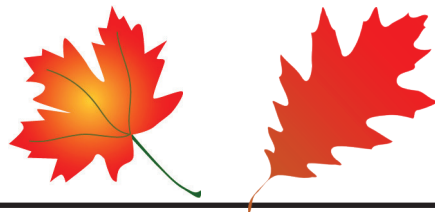
## Change of Address?

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](mailto: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>



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