

THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

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Church Telephone 978-297-0554

SEPTEMBER 2017

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

Monday, September 4

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Tuesday, September 5

6:30 pm - NA Meeting (NEW!)

Saturday, September 9

9:00 am - Saturday Yard Sales

Sunday, September 10

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

Monday, September 11

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Tuesday, September 12

6:30 pm - NA Meeting (NEW!)

Thursday, September 14

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves Fish and Chips

Sunday, September 17

11:00 am - Sunday Worship
2:00 pm - Indivisible Winchendon Meeting

Monday, September 18

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Tuesday, September 19

6:30 pm - NA Meeting (NEW!)

Saturday, September 23

9:00 am - Saturday Yard Sales

Sunday, September 24

11:00 am - Sunday Worship with Rev. Inanna Arthen
2:00 pm - Winchendon Winds Concert

Monday, September 25

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Tuesday, September 26

6:30 pm - NA Meeting (NEW!)

Thursday, September 28

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves Tuscan Chicken

Sunday, October 1

11:00 am - Sunday Worship
2:00 pm - Winchendon Winds Concert

Monday, October 2

7:45 pm - AA Meeting

Tuesday, October 3

6:30 pm - NA Meeting (NEW!)

From Your Minister

The last month of summer has been quite an eventful one at UUCW. We explored freedom in Summer Sunday Worship, celebrated our very first wedding of a same-sex couple, got a most pleasant surprise and served some delicious dinners. We're starting the new church year with changes, plans, and hope for the future. I've just updated the calendar page on our website (uucw.ncmuuc.org/calendar) through December, and we're looking forward to some great events at church.

In Summer Sunday Worship, we continued our series on President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" which began in the spring and continued in July. On Sunday, August 13, we looked at "Freedom from Want," and the ways that poverty and wealth inequality diminish all of us and stand in the way of a just and peaceful world. On Sunday, August 27, we finished the series with the last of the Four Freedoms, "Freedom from Fear." We talked about America's feverish pursuit of weaponry, both military and personal, and how we've become more dangerous to

ourselves than any threat we imagine exists “out there.” In both services, I presented a lot of things to reflect on but no pat answers; as UUs, each of us is challenged to find solutions in our own way.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen served two delicious meals in August, both of them greatly enjoyed by our growing crowd of enthusiastic diners. On Thursday, August 10, we cooked up a rib-sticking meal of beef pot pie with biscuit crust, salad and homemade peanut butter oatmeal chocolate chip cookies for dessert. On August 24, we presented parmesan-crusting pork chops, pasta salad so good there were requests for seconds, an *amazing* fresh fruit salad contributed by Cat Dart from First Parish UU of Ashby, and homemade chocolate chip cookies for dessert.

Many thanks to kitchen helpers Cat, Arlene, Elaine, Susan, Tracy, Melissa, Julie, Maddy and Katherine, Jill who set up tables and chairs on the 24th, and everyone who pitched in with serving and clean-up! Our volunteers are the best and we couldn’t do this without you—especially as more and more diners are discovering Our Neighbor’s Kitchen and joining us on Thursday nights.

On Saturday, August 12, I was proud and honored to officiate at UUCW’s first wedding of a same-sex couple. The ceremony was artistic and earth-centered in spiritual tone, and was followed by a reception in our Parish Hall. We wish Alexis and Mary good fortune, health, prosperity and a long happy life together.

We were very surprised to receive a letter from Town Hall informing us that UUCW was a beneficiary of the 100-year disbursement from a fund established by one of Winchendon’s most famous past citizens, toymaker Morton Converse. We were even more surprised at the amount! On August 7 Dave Faucher and I attended the presentation ceremony at the Board of Selectmen’s meeting. We’re putting serious thought into how we can use every penny of this bequest for the greatest benefit of Winchendon and our church.

In most modern Pagan spiritual traditions, water is the element associated with the season of autumn. Air is the element of spring. You might think of spring as being the wetter of the two seasons, but it’s the quality of the elements that matters. The gusty, energetic, fickle and changeable weather of spring matches the element of air. But autumn, even its brightest, sunniest days, is filled with the reflective, nostalgic emotionalism that are qualities of the element of water.

In the 1980s, many UU churches began holding a

Water Communion service, often at the beginning of the church year. As each congregation member pours their individual water into the congregational bowl or vase, they mingle their energy and experience with that of everyone else. The Water Communion symbolizes that we are all connected and intertwined in ways that can’t be analyzed or separated out again, and our connections extend far beyond our conscious awareness. Air connects us, too—it is said that every breath of air you take has been breathed by every other living thing on earth. But water is more tangible, and a more permanent part of our selves. Our bodies are 70 percent water; science tells us that life itself originated in water, and cannot continue to exist on this planet without it. Like so many other things, clean water is a gift that we tend to take for granted until it’s not available.

But water, like everything of great power, has two sides. We’re seeing its other side right now down in Houston, still inundated by devastating floods caused by Hurricane Harvey. We may be feeling a distinct sense of *deja vu*. Exactly twelve years ago, we watched, appalled, as similar flooding drowned almost the entire city of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina (whose even more severe devastation of neighboring Mississippi is largely forgotten). Many of us are reaching out to help with donations and assistance; I have one friend who has been deployed to Houston to work on rescue and relief efforts.

Water is emotional and empathetic. When we witness the misfortunes of others, we struggle with our emotions. Some people respond by attempting to blame the sufferers for their own distress. We’re already seeing criticism of the flood victims for their choices (in where they lived, how long they waited to evacuate, what they tried to bring with them, whether or not they brought their pets). We’re seeing criticism of Texas for deregulating business and developers, resulting in worse flooding and exploding chemical plants. We’re seeing snide jokes about small-government conservatives suddenly being all in favor of government aid. Meanwhile, we’re seeing almost no mention at all in the news of the far worse flooding in Asia which has killed hundreds of people. Yet these floods are not unrelated.

Water is sometimes called “the universal solvent.” In chemical terms, it’s an acid. It dissolves, eventually, almost everything. In spiritual terms, water dissolves boundaries. It eliminates distinctions. It mixes everything together. It transforms. Dissolve a hundred substances in water and stir vigorously, and you’ll have something entirely new which is greater and different

This Month in UU History

September 28, 1887: Universalist minister and theologian Clinton Lee Scott was born in Newport, VT, the tenth of twelve children. He studied at six different universities and seminaries before earning his D.D. degree at the age of 43, and served nine Universalist congregations in every corner of the United States: the Northeast, Florida, California and the Midwest. He founded the Charles Street Meeting House in Boston in 1949. Scott is credited with reviving Universalism in the 1930s, 40s and 50s through his vigorous efforts as a minister, writer and radio personality. He organized the Universalist Church of the Larger Fellowship to gather isolated Universalists through the mail. He was a major force in crafting the merger of the Universalist and Unitarian denominations in 1961. A staunch pacifist, his opposition to American involvement in WWI almost cost him his Fellowship. He was the only Universalist minister to sign the Humanist Manifesto in 1933.

than the sum of its parts.

We'll all do what we can to assist the people of Texas in recovering from the floods. But as we answer the call for practical aid, let's stay aware of the greater lessons water and its deceptive power are teaching us. Water humbles us; it's the great equalizer.

Rev. Inanna Arthen

Water Communion/ Ingathering Service

Join us on Sunday, September 10 at 11:00 a.m. for our first regular Sunday worship service of the new church year. We'll share our traditional Ingathering service, "Water Communion." This service is intergenerational, so it will be more participatory. Please bring some water to pour into the congregational water container. You can bring water connected with something significant that you did or that happened to you, water from someplace you visited this summer, water from a special place or just water from your home. We'll pour the water together to symbolize the way all our many experiences and gifts blend together when we're part of a congregation. The water will be blessed and kept in the Minister's Study until our Flower Communion service in June. After Flower Communion, it will be poured onto the church gardens.

We look forward to seeing you on September 10, and to hearing your stories about the water you bring to share!

Our Neighbor's Kitchen

Thanks to swapping dates around, Rev. Arthen has a break from cooking this month. Chef extraordinaire Dave Faucher will be cooking, and we have a new chef trying her hand with a favorite recipe for you.

On Thursday, September 14, Dave will fry up a perennial favorite, Fish and Chips dinner, with crispy homemade potato chips, along with salad and dessert.

On Thursday, September 28, we'll dig into a flavorful fall treat of Tuscan Chicken dinner with pasta, sides and dessert.

We can always use more volunteers. If you can help with food prep, contact the chefs for details on their work flow for the night's meal and when help will be most needed, as this varies with the menu. If you'd like to help with set-up, come to the church between 3:30 and 4:30 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 5:45 p.m. and usually takes about forty-five minutes. Volunteers have a chance to sit down together to socialize and enjoy the meal.

On September 7 and 21, Immaculate Heart of Mary church (52 Spruce Street) will be serving "first and third Thursday" Our Neighbor's Kitchen dinners in their hall. Contact IHM for menus and details on volunteering. UUCW and IHM will be alternating serving dinner on the fifth Thursday, in months that have five Thursdays (silly calendar...!).

This meal is sustained by gifts from the people who attend, the religious communities of Winchendon, the Winchendon Community Action Committee, The Winchendon School, and many volunteers.

NA Meeting at UUCW

UUCW is hosting a new Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meeting on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. in our Parish Hall. This is an open meeting, with free discussion, information, support and sharing. If you're in recovery or would like to be, you're welcome to join us. If you know anyone who would benefit from an NA meeting or is looking for a local one, please pass this information on to them.

Spiritual Calendar

- September 1-4: Eid al Adha (Muslim).** The Islamic Festival of Sacrifice, which commemorates Abraham's obedience to God's command that he sacrifice the one thing most precious to him: his only son. In the story, which is found in both the Bible and the Q'uran, Abraham prepares for the sacrifice but is prevented by God from completing it at the very last moment. The story teaches not only complete submission to the will of God, but also the law that human lives should never be sacrificed. Abraham sacrifices a ram instead. Part of the observance of Eid al Adha includes sacrificing an animal whose meat is divided into three parts: one part is kept by the family, one is given to relatives, friends and neighbors, and one part is given to the poor and needy. Eid al Adha falls at the end of the Dhu al Hijjah, the month of pilgrimage. It is also observed with prayers and attendance at mosque.
- September 8: Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Christian).** Christian feast day honoring the birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Her date of birth is not recorded in Scripture; it may be significant that it was arbitrarily set at the time of the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries and the Autumnal Equinox (old calendar). Mary's birth is significant because according to Christian doctrine, she was the first human to be born free of original sin since Adam and Eve—this is why she is called “the Immaculate [clean of sin] Conception.”
- September 21-22: Rosh Hashana (Jewish).** A two-day celebration commemorating the beginning of the new year in the lunar Jewish calendar. It is observed with the blowing of the *shofar*, or ram's horn, and eating sweet foods such as apples with honey and pastries. In Jewish doctrine, the three books of accounting are opened at Rosh Hoshana, where the names of the wicked, the righteous and those “in between” are recorded. For the next ten days, the “in betweens” have the chance to repent and make amends, until Yom Kippur, when their fate is inscribed in the Book of Life and the gates of prayer are closed until the next year. Rosh Hashana falls at the Autumnal Equinox.
- September 21-30: Sharada Navaratri (Hindi).** A festival which lasts for nine nights. It falls at the time of the Autumnal Equinox, after the monsoon season ends, but is celebrated for different reasons in different parts of India. It often honors the divine mother, Durga, the wife of Shiva, and her victory over the buffalo demon, which restored Dharma, or cosmic order. Other regions celebrate different myths from sacred texts, but the common theme is always the victory of Good over Evil and the return of order and light.
- September 21-28: Eleusinian Mysteries (ancient Greek).** The Mysteries comprised a complex, multi-day initiation ceremony into the cult of Demeter and Persephone, held each year at Eleusis in Greece until Christians finally wiped them out in 396 C.E. They were ancient in Greek times and may date back to the culture of Mycenae. The only qualifications for participation were being free of “blood guilt” (never having committed murder) and being able to speak Greek. Women, slaves and foreigners were all accepted. Just what the Mysteries involved remains unknown as all initiates were sworn to absolute secrecy. The pattern, however, followed the story of Persephone and became the template for almost all classic initiations: a descent into “death,” with various ordeals, followed by a symbolic rebirth.
- September 22: Mabon/Autumnal Equinox (Pagan).** The Autumnal Equinox marks the peak of the harvest season in temperate latitudes and the beginning of autumn. Modern Pagans observe it as a harvest festival, a time to give thanks to Mother Earth and the deities for their abundance and blessings. Because this was the traditional time of the ancient Greek Eleusinian Mysteries, some Pagan groups initiate or induct new members at this time.
- September 30: Yom Kippur (Jewish).** The Day of Atonement, the holiest day in the Jewish year. Observant Jews have spent the past ten days—called the Days of Awe—in prayer, reflection, and repentance, taking action to make amends where necessary. Yom Kippur is spent in fasting and intensive prayer, often in synagogue for the entire night and day. At the end of Yom Kippur, Jews hope they have been forgiven by God and their names inscribed in the Book of Life.

Winchendon NA Meeting (we will be giving it a more official name of its own) is led by Winchendon residents, in collaboration with the Central MA Area

and New England Region of Narcotics Anonymous. For more information about NA and its principles, see www.nerna.org.

Saturday Yard Sales

Saturday Yard Sales are continuing, every other weekend, as long as the weather permits. Come on down and find a treasure or a bargain! Dates in September will be:

September 9

September 23

We're still delighted to accept donations of goods to sell. As we're nearing the end of the season, check with us if you have donations. We're happy to provide a receipt for donations on request. Please write up a list of each item you're donating for our records if you'd like a receipt.

To arrange a donation of goods, or if you have questions, contact Sue Faucher at 978-632-5588 or sfaucher@on24seven.com. If you'd like to set up your own table or display, let us know, or just come on down. We only ask for a modest monetary donation to the church.

Winchendon Winds

Winchendon Winds will begin their concerts at UUCW on Sunday, September 24. The season will open with a special concert at the Winchendon School Faculty Hall on Sunday, September 10 at 3:00 p.m. This will be open to the public at no charge and all are welcome. The next three concerts will be held at UUCW, inside the sanctuary.

On Sunday, September 24 at 2:00 p.m., Winchendon Winds will play a concert of familiar favorites, titled "Music We Remember."

On Sunday, October 1 at 2:00 p.m., the concert theme will be "A Symphonic Sampling" of classical music arrangements.

On *Saturday*, October 7 at 2:00 p.m., Winchendon Winds will play a concert as part of the Winchendon Fall Festival, which will be held at the Clark Memorial and all up and down Central Street that day. (The

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).

concert will be at UUCW.) The concert theme, to harmonize with the Festival, will be "Family Festival of Delights" and will include the debut performance of a piece written especially for Winchendon Winds by composer David Maker, "The Toy Town March."

We know how much you enjoyed the three concerts that UUCW hosted last year, and we hope to see you and your friends at this year's series! Watch winchendonwinds.org or www.facebook.com/WinchendonWinds for the latest updates.

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.

September Birthdays

Willard White

September 11

Sue Faucher

September 15



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

UUCW Online

<http://uucw.ncmuuc.org>

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

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