

THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

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**This is the Church of the Open Mind
This is the Church of the Loving Heart**

**This is the Church of the Helping Hands
This is the Church of the Caring Community**

Calendar of Church Events

Sunday, April 5

7:00 pm –UUCW Governing Board
Meeting, Parish Hall

Thursday, April 9

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves
Peachy Pork (Take-Out)

Thursday, April 23

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves
Chef's Surprise (Take-Out)

Mondays

7:45 pm - AA Meetings on hold

From Your Editor

What a difference a month makes! We are all currently standing vigil in our homes, watching Covid-19 grip the world. As with the grim uncertainties and anxieties of preceding threats such as AIDS, swine flu, MERS, and SARS, we realize it's an unknown period of wait, learn, and experience, that simply cannot be rushed. But there IS a light at the end of this tunnel, while we let science, common sense, and consideration for each other prevail. Let us practice patience, and leverage our forced time at home to be constructive. Take this time to put things in order: deep cleaning, decluttering, long-deferred repairs, contemplation and fresh air on quiet paths. Being alone does have to mean being lonely. The internet connects us better than ever before, and we still have our trusty phones. This too shall pass.

Our events this month are understandably sparse and adjusted for social distancing. Watch our website and Facebook page for any updates to proposed meetings. We hope to see you back at church when we're able. Please think of us...we're thinking of you.

-Jill Nicholson Sackett - Chair, Governing Board.

Easter Service: “The Blessing of the Bulbs” Postponed

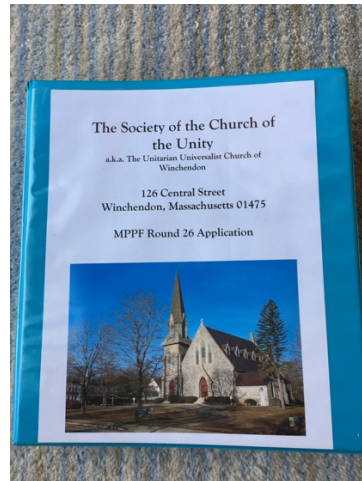
Our Easter Sunday service plans are being rescheduled. We wish everyone a lovely time at home coloring eggs, planting seeds, eating hot cross buns and baked ham, or whatever other traditions you enjoy.

When we can congregate again, we will belatedly welcome spring with a non-traditional “blessing of the bulbs” service to be held on a Sunday to be announced. Attendees will be welcome to spread out on the spacious, airy front lawn, where we’ll share a few readings and thoughts. We’ll have refreshments to enjoy outside. Everyone will be invited to select a flower bulb and have it planted in our front garden in a spot of their choosing, or take it home to their own garden.



We can remind ourselves that even after the darkest of times, there will always be a sunrise and re-emergence.

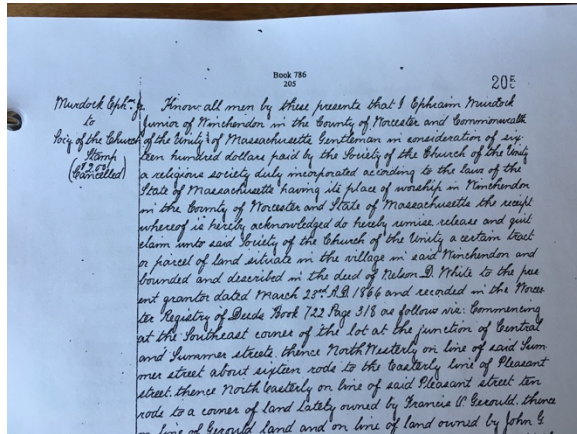
Massachusetts Preservation Project Fund Application Submitted



It's in! On March 16 we applied to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MCP) for a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) grant to continue onward with our stonework repair. MPPF is a 50% reimbursable matching grant program, and we have a pledge from the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation for the other 50%, as well as a generous line of credit from our neighbors, the Athol Savings Bank. MHC receives between 40-50 requests each year, and competition can be stiff. UUCW made a compelling case for the historic significance of our church and the community service it provides.

The grant application was rigorous, requiring legal attestations from our attorney Robert LaFortune, engineering reports, detailed photographic documentation, a commitment to enter into a

Preservation Restriction (see last month's newsletter), and a copy of the original hand-written deed, signed by Ephraim Murdock Jr.:



The application also asked for letters of community support. We were most grateful to obtain letters from the Winchendon History and Cultural Center, the Agricultural Commission (Toy Town Outdoor Market), the Community Action Committee, Toy Town AA, Winchendon Winds, and the Winchendon Historic Commission. We thank all of these folks for their kind words.

All in all, we required a two-inch binder to compile the application! Our fingers are crossed; MHC will notify all applicants of their decisions in late June.

Contact Information

Governing Board Chair: Jill Nicholson Sackett

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Governing Board Members:

Allan Gordon: 31Allangordon@gmail.com

Rev. Emerita Inanna Arthen (Clerk)

Our Neighbor's Kitchen

Our Neighbor's Kitchen (ONK) slipped in one hearty meal before the Covid-19 restrictions went into effect. On March 12 we served up bacon-topped meatloaf with sliced potato-onion casserole and green peas. In anticipation of St. Patrick's Day, we served green pistachio pudding with toasted almonds for dessert. Our *Pathway to Healthier Eating* placemats extolled the virtues of eating one's potato skins, where most of the nutrients and fiber hide.

We are following the state guidelines for social distancing and sheltering at home, while keeping in mind the urgent need for a community service such as ONK. We hope to return in April with a "take-out" set-up for the 2nd and 4th Thursdays. If we do, we'll post details on our website and Facebook pages, and hang our banners when we serve. Stop on by and pick up our delicious food!

Hidden Treasures Program Redefined

In February we reported on our preparations to participate in Freedom's Way month-long Hidden Treasures Program. UUCW was to be featured in a May 2 presentation of the history of our building, given in partnership with the Winchendon History and Cultural Center. Like so many others, Freedom's

Way was compelled to cancel the May celebration. Each entrant will be deciding if and when to go forward with their event.

There is a silver lining...we may reschedule our event and enjoy press coverage, advertising and other support from Freedom's Way. Our preliminary work is not in vain, and we hope to set a new date once public gatherings resume.

UUCW Victim of Break-In

We are saddened to report that our beautiful church recently suffered a break-in and destructive vandalism.



The crime occurred Sunday night, March 15. The perpetrator broke into the building and then into the church sanctuary where he ransacked the rear area of the church, in an apparent search for cash or small valuables. While finding none, he shoved over antique furniture, religious items, and threw the

contents of drawers into the pews. Among the damaged valuables were an early 20th century electronic organ from the Estey Organ Company in Brattleboro, Vermont, a partner's desk with leather top, rope side table, and Queen Ann style chair.

We are strengthening our security and undertaking repairs, and hope that anyone who may have seen or heard anything suspicious in the early morning hours on Monday March 16 to contact the Winchendon Police Department.

Invictus

Out of the night that covers me
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

*William Ernest Henley – written while
recovering in hospital from disease and
multiple surgeries*

UUCW Online

Main Website: uucw.ncmuuc.org

Set in Stone Website: www.set-in-stone.org

Facebook: facebook.com/uuwinchendon