

THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

Established 1954

Published by the

Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon



PO Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475

Church Telephone: 978-297-0554

Volume 65 Issue 6

FEBRUARY 2021

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

Thursday, February 11

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen Serves
Mom's Sweet 'n Sour Chicken
(Drive-Through/Take-Out)

Sunday, February 21

7:30 pm - Governing Board Meeting,
Dial-In (RSVP Jill Sackett)

Thursday, February 25

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen Serves
To-Be-Announced
(Drive-Through/Take-Out)

Mondays

7:45 pm - AA Meeting, Parish Hall

From Your Editor

The first quarter of the calendar year at UUCW is always the quietest. We relax after a relatively busy holiday season, turn down the thermostat, and pack up the decorations. We're pressing forward with our list of projects that require mostly "elbow grease" and time, with faith that our steadfast building will show its best self when we reconvene. Many of these projects allow a step back into history. Whether it's the minister's library, financial records, religious education materials, or back storerooms, we always encounter the mark of our predecessors and the contributions they have made over these many years. It's a bit like a treasure hunt...and a nod to the investment it takes to create a caring and enduring community.

If you're longing to step out of your winter confinement and join us, we'll greet you with an enthusiastic welcome and a social but socially-distanced project to fit your skills and time. Give us a call - we'll likely be there!

-Jill Nicholson Sackett - Chair, Governing Board

UUCW Year in Review

We'll all look back on 2020 as the "Year of COVID." It required patience, resourcefulness and creativity for our community engagement, building maintenance, fundraising and worship. We determinedly pulled through, thanks to many helping hands. We look back in grateful retrospect for all we've accomplished...

Set in Stone Campaign: UUCW scored a major milestone last year with our first-ever grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission. This \$50,000 grant, matched by the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, allows us to continue major stonework repairs on the East faces (front) of the building. The grant required us to enter a Preservation Restriction with the state, which limits the type of changes we can make to the property going forward. We are maintaining a blog of our progress at www.set-in-stone.org. We're in this for the long haul!



Our Neighbor's Kitchen: The pandemic caused a temporary halt to our inside community dinner program while we converted to a "drive-through take-out" operating model. We've been running drive-through meals since last May, and now the Sackett and Faucher families take turns serving up to 100 meals every other week. We've attracted a variety of new diners, especially families. We'll keep serving outdoors until it is safe to resume sit-down meals.

Fundraising: The cancellation of the annual Clark Memorial Summer Solstice Fair and Town Fall Festival eliminated our two biggest Lawn Fair fundraising opportunities. We took a careful look at COVID-restrictions and were able to replace these with an August Lawn Fair and a December Holiday Bazaar. The Bazaar featured our first-ever online Christmas cookie sale which was an encouraging success. Our sincere thanks to the many of you who came to shop or volunteer your services!

Community Engagement and Worship: This was perhaps the most challenging aspect of our operations. We held only three worship services last year. In May we held a lay-led "Blessing of the Bulbs" outdoor ceremony with poetry, readings and music. Attendees selected flower bulbs to take home or plant in the church garden. We held a second lay-led "Water Communion" service last September. Attendees combined samples of water from sources meaningful to them, and we strolled over to the

Whitney Pond to send our waters downstream. On Christmas Eve we gathered for our annual candlelight service with Rev. Arthen in the pulpit and guest organist Robert Couchon.

We managed all of these gatherings with careful attention to COVID guidelines, as well as social outings for blueberry picking in August, apple picking in September, and our annual Toy Drive and Sanctuary Decorating on Black Friday.

Building Maintenance: A big, old structure like ours requires never-ending TLC. This year saw the demise of our decades-old boiler, which we replaced with a special grant in August. Numerous other projects included extensive work in the Parish Hall (painting, ceiling tile replacement, refinishing floors), kitchen (cleaning, reorganizing), and many other decluttering and cleaning efforts.



We have been extremely fortunate to have a number of skilled and reliable volunteers who have been instrumental

in keeping our building cared for and our labor costs minimal. We thank those who lent their time and expertise:

Dave Faucher	Ed Murdock
Allan Gordon	Joe Sackett
Jay McCrohon	Darren Surette

We hope that 2021 will eventually see us returning to our 2019 Focus Panel ideas for the future of our church, and always welcome new or returning members to join our friendly little community.

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Receives Second COVID-19 Emergency Grant

On January 14, the Sacketts brought a bit of the Midwest to Massachusetts with the “Skyline” version of Cincinnati 3-Way Chili, while on January 28 the Fauchers served up their annual winter meal of Swedish Meatballs over Egg Noodles.

Cold weather notwithstanding, we’ve seen a marked uptick in demand during these pandemic days. We were truly fortunate to be awarded a second COVID-19 Emergency Grant from the Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts (CFNCM). The \$4000 grant will help us pay for groceries, take-out containers and utility costs and carry us through a good part of 2021.

CFNCM is a tax-exempt public charity founded in 2001. Based in Fitchburg, it has been helping people establish charitable funds and makes grants to improve the quality of life in the 33 communities it serves (including Winchendon). For more information, visit www.cfncm.org.

The Transcendancy of Shakespeare's Sonnets

With Valentine's Day upon us, let us pause to soak in the master of the written expression of love. William Shakespeare wrote 154 love sonnets as well as other love poems. They are still as vibrant and relevant today as they were when first published in 1609.

With the onset of the pandemic, the Shakespearean-trained actor Patrick Stewart set out to read "a sonnet a day." These are posted on Instagram, with some being posted elsewhere. Treat yourself here to his online reading of Sonnet 116 – prose provided at right: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5rJyDGxgf8>

Happy Valentine's Day.

Change of Address?

We want to stay in touch! If you change your U.S. mail or email address, please email jill@sackett.com, leave a message on our voicemail at 978-297-0554, or send a written note to the church at P.O. Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475.

Sonnet CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove;
O, no! It is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks upon tempests and is never
shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Who's worth's unknown, although his
height be taken.
Love's not time's fool, though rosy lips
and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass
come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and
weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of
doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

- *William Shakespeare*

UUCW Online

Main Website: uucw.ncmuuc.org

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

Facebook: facebook.com/uuinchendon

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