

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

Thursday, August 12

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves
Cheesy Beef Bake
(Drive-Through/Take-Out)

Saturday, August 14

9:00 am – 2:00 pm - Summer Lawn Fair

Mondays

7:45 pm - AA Meeting, Parish Hall

Monday, August 16

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

Thursday, August 26

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves
TBD (Drive-Through/Take-Out)

Saturday, August 28

11:00 am – Social Outing: Hike to
Hermit's Cave, Erving, MA

From Your Editor

This month we welcome a comprehensive summary by Rev. Inanna Arthen of the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Association's General Assembly (GA) which is held annually in June. We are a small but dedicated congregation, and it is easy to feel isolated and unconnected to fellow UU's. Participating in the GA is a welcome reminder that we are certainly not alone. We have all gotten very familiar with virtual meeting attendance, and GA "going virtual" resulted in many more of us participating and reaffirming our shared UU values and Seven Principles. Take a moment to review our Seven Principles on the last page of this newsletter. Being a part of our UU community only asks that one support these Seven Principles. For our UU readers, these Principles have never been more relevant than they are in today's climate. For non-UU readers, is Unitarian Universalism something you'd like to explore further? Pay us visit, or give us a call. We'd love to welcome you to our UU community, small and large.

-Jill Nicholson Sackett - Chair, Governing Board.

UUCW Lawn Fair

Round 2 - August 14

Our tireless volunteers are ready for a second Lawn Fair fundraiser on August 14. This time we're part of the Winchendon Town-Wide Yard Sale, hosted by our neighbors Ahimsa Haven at 202 Central Street. Ahimsa provides a list of participating sellers for shoppers to travel stop-by-stop throughout town...bonus advertising for us!

We'll have a nice mix of brand new and repeat vendors on our front and side lawns. They include:

Country Craft Shack (gifts, décor)
Creative Country Crafts (furniture)
Off the Wall Records (collectible vinyl)
Paxton Flags (wood crafts)
Pup Time Barkery (dog treats)
Putnam's Clothing Bazaar
Rutka's Birdhouses (wood crafts)
Spinning Ginny (woven/knitted items)
Teenie's Sweet Shop (baked goods)
Wickedly Sassy Boutique (gifts)
Zebo's Wild Wood (walking sticks)
...to name just a few.

Additional vendors will be selling popular lines such as 31 Bags, Perfectly Posh, Paparazzi, Scentsy, DotDotSmile, and Color Street.

In concert with the town-wide yard sale, UUCW will have extra tag sale tables set up, along with our ever-popular Freecycle area.

Shoppers can stop for lunch at UUCW's food booth and enjoy DJ Kayden Gordon live-streaming country music favorites and originals from the church's center entrance.

This is our second and final fundraiser for the summer. Stop at UUCW's information table – we'd love to say hello!

Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon



Saturday, August 14

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

126 Central Street

New and Used Goods Freecycle Table
Crafts Food

To rent a space or learn more, visit
uucw.ncnuuc.org/summer-fair/

Held as part of the Winchendon Town-Wide Yard Sale
Hosted by Ahimsa Haven Animal Rescue

Contact Information

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(224) 567-3635

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Governing Board Members:

Allan Gordon:

Email: 31Allangordon@gmail.com

Rev. Emerita Inanna Arthen (Clerk)

Hike With Us! UUCW to Visit Hermit Cave

Our long New England winters make us appreciate these balmy summer months all the more. We always try to plan one or two social events this time of year. Our first event will be on Saturday, August 28 as we visit Hermit Cave in Erving State Forest, Massachusetts. Hermit Cave, once the 19th century home to eccentric Scotsman John Smith, is now a popular hiking destination in Western Massachusetts. It's a moderate 4-mile loop to the cave, featuring a cascading stream, the cave of the actual "hermit," and scenic overlooks.



We'll meet at the bright pink Erving Station Candy Shop on 3 Main Street (right on Route 2) in downtown Erving at 11:00 AM. Perhaps we will stock up on snacks before leaving? From there we'll proceed to the trail and hike.

Hikers please RSVP so we can be looking for you at the candy shop: Jill Sackett (224) 567-3635.

2021 UUA GA Goes Online for Second Consecutive Year

*by Rev. Inanna Arthen,
UUCW Minister Emerita*

The 2021 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association ("GA") convened online as an all-virtual event from Wednesday, June 23 through Sunday, June 27. GA was also an all-virtual event in 2020, because of the COVID pandemic.

GA is held every year for five days in June, and incorporates the UUA annual business meeting, known as General Session, elections of officers and Trustees as needed, several worship services, and many workshops and presentations. Congregations in good standing may send one or more delegates to GA to represent their congregation and vote in General Assembly. This year, for the first time, UUCW qualified to send two delegates, so we had a vote in General Session. Our delegates were myself and our Governing Board Chair, Jill Sackett.

Typically, GA meets in person with some 2,000 attendees. Attending is costly, with registration running around \$200 per person, in addition to travel expenses, food, and lodging for at least four nights. Consequently, fewer than 5 percent of active UUs have ever

attended a GA, and many congregations have never sent a delegate. Several years ago, GA began allowing delegates to attend General Session and vote remotely, in an effort to increase equity and access. But the other elements of GA, such as the scores of workshops, the smaller worship services, the huge Exhibit Hall with over a hundred booths, social meetups and gatherings, and the overall experience, required in-person attendance.

In 2020, the UUA found that hundreds of people were able to attend GA for the very first time, paying the full registration fee, because they could log in from home. GA online was an exciting experience, including social events, workshops, worship services, and General Session, all done largely through Zoom and a cell phone social media app similar to Facebook Messenger. Registration exceeded 4,000 paid attendees.

The 2021 GA benefited from far more planning time. The planning committee chose a different app called Whova which integrated more features and could be accessed on a phone or a computer. Most program items were still done via Zoom. Some 78 workshops were pre-recorded and made available in an "on-demand library" which could be watched before and after GA or at any time during the week. A full schedule of live panels and workshops was programmed, along with worship services, affinity group meetups, social

events and of course, four days of General Session. A virtual Exhibit Hall included UU organizations, vendors and individuals. Attendance was similar to the 2020 GA, around 4,000.

No officers were on the electoral slate this year. The only contested election had two candidates vying for an open seat on the Board of Trustees. Sam Trumbore (trumbore.org), a long-time experienced UU, was elected by a large majority, defeating challenger Jim Kiskel (fifthprincipleproject.org, co-author of *Used to Be UU*). UUA Board of Trustees meetings are held via Zoom and are open to the public.

Several minor amendments to the UUA Bylaws were passed.

Delegates approved three Articles of Immediate Witness (AIW). These are statements affirming the need for positive action on an issue or situation; they are not binding resolutions. I am a member of TRUUsT (Transgender Religious UU professionals working Together) and signed the AIW which TRUUsT sponsored: a call to "Defend and Advocate with Transgender, Nonbinary, and Intersex Communities." The two other AIWs approved are "Stop Voter Suppression and Partner for Voting Rights and a Multiracial Democracy" and "The COVID-19 Pandemic: Justice. Healing. Courage." which calls for an equitable, universal health care system and support of the PRO Act HR-842.

The AIWs may be read on the UUA website:

https://www.uua.org/files/2021-06/20210624_Proposed_AIW_TRUUsT.pdf

https://www.uua.org/files/2021-06/20210624_Proposed_AIW_Voting_Rights.pdf

https://www.uua.org/files/2021-06/20210624_Proposed_AIW_COVID-19.pdf

General Session also approved the UUA Statement of Conscience (SOC), "Undoing Systemic White Supremacy: A Call to Prophetic Action," which may be read online here:

https://www.uua.org/files/2021-06/SOC_Undoing_Systemic_White_Supremacy.pdf

The prestigious Ware Lecture was given jointly by two speakers this year: Stacey Abrams, former minority leader in the Georgia House of Representatives and crusader for voting rights, and Desmond Meade, author of *Let My People Vote* and activist leader for voting rights in Florida.

Outside of organized programming, online live social meetups and an ever-proliferating number of forums were filled with vigorous debates and discussions. Topics such as inclusion, rights for disabled persons, anti-racism, Indigenous peoples' rights, the proposed 8th Principle, the ongoing discussion about updating Article II (the overall purpose of the UUA), and criticisms of current trends in UUism made for lively exchanges.

While most of GA's recorded programming is only accessible to registered attendees, some items, such as the Ware Lecture, may be available for general viewing in the future.

Although both all-virtual GAs had their rough spots and insufficiencies, their success in including persons who are unable to attend in-person GAs for any of a myriad reasons is compelling. The UUA is considering combining in-person GAs with all-virtual GAs in alternating years, and plans to make far more of the in-person GAs accessible remotely.

The 2022 GA is scheduled to be held in Portland, Oregon next June.

Unitarian Universalist's Seven Principles

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person.
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregation.
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and society at large.
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence for which we are a part.