

# 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 11

5:30 pm – Our Neighbor’s Kitchen serves  
Summer Salad Trio, Parish Hall

### Monday, August 15

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

### Thursday, August 25

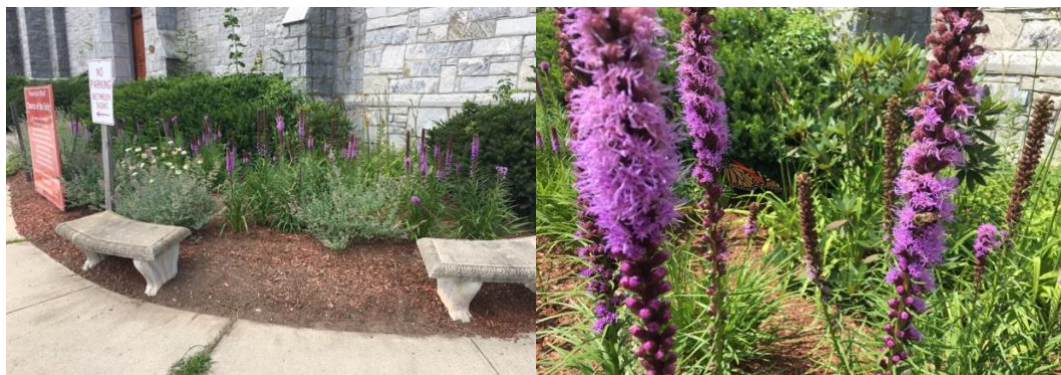
5:30 pm - Our Neighbor’s Kitchen serves  
Menu TBD, Parish Hall

### Mondays

7:45 pm - AA Meeting, Parish Hall

## From Your Editor

Bees and Butterflies. When we overhauled our front garden in Fall 2020, we had no idea that 18 months later we would have a glorious pollinator paradise. With a manageable investment of care and tending, our modest mulched entryway now boasts mature stands of catmint and other colorful aromatic plants that are positively abuzz with activity! Next time you visit, take a close look. Last month we encouraged our readers to “nurture something.” We hope you have embarked on your project of care. No effort too small...and so rewarding.



-Jill Nicholson Sackett - Chair, Governing Board.

## Set in Stone Phase 3 Begins

With funding now assured via generous grants from the Massachusetts Historic Commission (MHC) and the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, UUCW has officially launched Phase 3 of our masonry repairs. Phase 3 focuses on repairs to the leaky “valley” between the bell tower and main roof.

On July 13 we welcomed a site visit from Paul Holtz, our assigned Project Manager from MHC, and Douglas Manley, Principal Architect of the Spencer Preservation Group. Both gentlemen will work closely with us throughout Phase 3. Paul will monitor our progress and make sure we adhere to the State’s grant requirements and to our Preservation Restriction that is permanently in place for our building. Doug will produce the construction plans and documents against which contractors will bid, and will oversee execution against those plans. Jill Sackett will serve as the Project Coordinator for UUCW.

In the picture at right, Jill, Doug and Paul study the valley area and discuss the general scope of Phase 3. The visit included a trip up the dusty ladders to the interior top of the tower...*not* for the faint of heart.

We expect to have construction documents ready for bid by the end of August.



## 2022 UUA "Multi-Platform" General Assembly is a Mixed Bag

*by Rev. Inanna Arthen, UUCW Minister Emerita*

The 2022 General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association convened from Wednesday, June 22 through Sunday, June 26 as a "multi-platform" in-person and online event. The earnest effort to continue and combine "virtual" or online aspects of GA with the traditional in-person conference resulted in both halves feeling much thinner than either one alone has in the past, and much thinner than the registered attendance would predict.

Before COVID, GA was held annually as a five-day conference with around 2,000 attendees that rotated among various large United States cities. It included panels and talks, several worship services, lectures by high-profile speakers, a large exhibit hall filled with booths, and not least, "General Session": the UUA's annual members' meeting which stretches across all five days of GA. Rev. Arthen again served as a credentialed delegate for UUCW to General Session.

In 2020 and 2021, GA was held entirely online as an all-virtual event. This greatly increased attendance and participation because GA was now accessible to thousands of people who couldn't afford to attend in person. The response was so positive that this year, with GA scheduled to be held live in Portland, Oregon, the UUA designed the event to be online as well, with a "live" and a virtual exhibit hall. Panels, worship services and other events were "simul-cast" on Zoom or the GA web portal. Like last year, GA used a conference app called Whova for networking and programming.

Interaction and socializing for virtual attendees seemed much less vigorous and attenuated this year, although there were more than 1,600 virtual attendees (and about as many in-person). Many social gatherings were held in Zoom, but they seemed far smaller and quieter than the past two years. Online discussion forums also were much less

active. The virtual exhibit hall had about fifty online booths; the in-person hall only sported about a dozen.

The business elements of GA were not particularly significant. A small faction of UUs who have been objecting to the UUA's focus on social justice and anti-racism in the last three years sponsored two petition candidates for open seats on the UUA Board of Trustees, Rebecca Mattis and Rev. Beverly Seese. Both were defeated by margins of about 90 to 10. Rev. Justine Sullivan and Rev. Suzanne Fast, both nominated by the UUA Nominating Committee, were elected. Other open seats were uncontested. No officers were up for election this year. The same faction of discontented UUs, who call themselves the Fifth Principle Project, picketed outside of the convention center during GA.

That would have been the most exciting thing that happened at the 2022 GA had the Supreme Court not handed down its decision on abortion rights, revoking *Roe v. Wade*, on the Friday of GA. Quite a few GA attendees joined a protest rally in defense of abortion rights in Portland, including UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, who gave a speech at the rally.

Attendees approved three Actions of Immediate Witness (non-binding affirmations), which may be read online:

## "We Do Not Consent: Rejecting Legal Challenges to Abortion"

<https://www.uua.org/files/2022-06/2022%20AIW%20We%20Do%20Not%20Consent.pdf>

## "Anti-Racism and Reparations via Restorative Justice"

<https://www.uua.org/files/2022-06/2022%20AIW%20Anti%20Racism%20and%20Reparations%20via%20Restorative%20Justice.pdf>

## "Stop the Privatization of Medicare"

<https://www.uua.org/files/2022-06/2022%20AIW%20Stop%20the%20Privatization%20of%20Medicare.pdf>

The speaker for this year's Ware Lecture was Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, author of *How to Be an Antiracist*, *How to Raise an Antiracist* and several more books, and Director of the Center for Antiracist Research at Boston University. Rather than a simple lecture, President Frederick-Gray engaged Dr. Kendi in a dialogue, rather like an episode of *The View*, and did a bit more of the talking than I would have liked.

Much of GA is available as public recordings and may be found through the GA page on the UUA website, <https://www.uua.org/ga>. It is still possible to register for GA 2022 to access member-only recorded workshops and talks.

The 2023 GA will be held in Pittsburgh, PA from June 21 through June 25. Whether it will also be "multi-

platform," and to what extent, is still undecided. The business meeting, General Session, had been open to online participation for several years before COVID (attendees had to obtain delegate credentials but did not need to register for GA to debate and vote). If the UUA hopes to make all of GA accessible online going forward, it still has some rough spots to iron out.

## Change of Address?

We want to stay in touch! If you change your address, either U.S. Mail or email, let us know: email [jill@sackett.com](mailto:jill@sackett.com) or write to the church at P.O. Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475.

**Main Website:** <https://uucw.ncmuuc.org/>  
**Set in Stone Website:** [www.set-in-stone.org](http://www.set-in-stone.org)  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/uuwinchendon](https://facebook.com/uuwinchendon)

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