

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

Tuesday, July 11

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

Thursday, July 13

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves
Chili w/ Toppings, Parish Hall

Thursday, July 27

5:30 pm - Our Neighbor's Kitchen serves
Creamy Chicken 'n Rice Bake,
Parish Hall

Mondays

7:45 pm - AA Meeting, Parish Hall

From Your Editor

Companionship. Perhaps one of the longest-lasting aspects of the COVID pandemic is the eroding effect of isolation. We've seen this play out in reports from the schools, outbursts of rage, and the snarling remarks from the keyboard warriors on social media. Too many of us shut ourselves at home, watch television, play on our computers, and exist in our own echo chambers. An article in this month's newsletter remarks upon the lower numbers of indoor diners at Our Neighbor's Kitchen, while the take-out meal demand remains high. We also see this across the board in other places for public gathering, whether they be churches, movie theaters, concert halls, lectures, museums, or even outdoor festivals.

There is a remarkable healing that occurs when we rejoin humanity; when we challenge ourselves to interact with people other than ourselves or our most inner circle. We learn, we understand others' viewpoints, we commiserate and rejoice, and we realize that we are walking this earth in many of the same footsteps as others.

Come out in this lovely summer weather! As Mark Twain writes: "To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with." Divide it with someone *new*.

-Jill Nicholson Sackett - Chair, Governing Board.

A Soggy Summer Fair

For once the weather forecast was not an exaggeration: our annual Summer Solstice Fair on Saturday, June 17 was besieged with rain!

The overcast but dry morning allowed a few stalwart vendors to set up tents along our front sidewalk, while many other vendors opted to move their displays inside to our Parish Hall. By 11 a.m. the skies opened and the tarps came out.



While we did not enjoy the usual fair-weather crowds, we did see a number of cheerful determined shoppers make their way through the colorful offerings of crafts, raffle baskets, cookware, spa products, hand-sewn and crochet items, and more. The Winchendon Cultural Council collected over 50 surveys seeking input on funding priorities for future programs.

One “old timer” declared this was the first rainout in over 16 years. But this IS

New England, and we made the best of it.



This will be our only lawn fair this year. Our remaining two fundraisers will be selling concessions at the town’s Fall Festival over Columbus Day weekend, and holding an indoor Holiday Bazaar in December. More info will follow on those.

Roof Valley Rebuilt for Set in Stone Phase 3

We've all seen the green lift parked in various positions alongside the church tower for some weeks now. Phase 1 and 2 repairs featured obvious masonry repairs to the East face of our building. Phase 3 repairs, while just as important, are more...discreet. The valley area between our bell tower and main building, not viewable from the ground, was completely torn out and rebuilt with a slightly steeper pitch. This was covered with extensive sheets of copper flashing with thickly soldered seams.

The north face of the tower was entirely repointed, and an area of the roof retiled. We are happy to be nearing the end of this Phase and ensuring a watertight roof once again.

We are already setting our sights on Phase 4. The next most urgent area of repair is the West tower face, and we have been closely analyzing the deteriorated area while we have the equipment to do so. We remain in this for the "long haul," with several more Phases and years of work to go before our lovely 155-year-old building is reinforced for yet another century.

UUCW Online

Main Website: <https://uucw.ncmuuc.org/>

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

Facebook: [facebook.com/uuwinchendon](https://www.facebook.com/uuwinchendon)

North Gardens Settling In

We're still tidying up, but our reestablished north gardens are already quite a delight. While most gardeners would advise planting on southern exposure, the secluded area along our north wall receives a surprising amount of afternoon sun from the west, and provides a quiet respite from the traffic on Central Street. The "cooler" side demands less water and will be much easier to maintain. Our shade-tolerant plants such as fern bleeding heart and foxglove have already bloomed!



We once again thank Catherine Ellis's Murdock Middle & High School students for their hard work and Elaine St. Pierre for her generous donations of healthy, mature perennials.

A Warm Invite from Our Neighbor's Kitchen

We have established a new rhythm at Our Neighbor's Kitchen (ONK). Around 5 p.m. the first of our "regulars" arrive for coffee, lemonade and conversation. We now host about 20 indoor diners laughing and enjoying each others' company. Sometimes there is a birthday to celebrate or other news of acquaintances or town events.

We continue to send many more meals out the door with take-out customers. We know many of them have young children or mobility-impaired family members waiting at home for our warm meals, and we are happy to be able to assist in that regard. We are still serving about 55-65 meals at each dinner date.

But we honestly miss our pre-COVID indoor crowds. We realize that the protracted pandemic forced the start of many new household routines. People got much more used to staying home.

Our ONK table conversations have introduced us to:

- A man whose parents ran the boarding house across from White's Mill
- A life-long resident who worked in the Leominster plastics factory

-A music duo who perform at open mics in Western Mass

-A native American descendant familiar with some of the local indigenous people

We would have not easily met these folks anywhere else, much less under one roof! We would love to see you visit Our Neighbor's Kitchen. It is truly a community supper, open to all.

The Things Divine

These are the things I hold divine:
A trusting child's hand laid in mine,
Rich brown earth and wind-tossed trees,
The taste of grapes and drone of bees,
A rhythmic gallop, long June days,
A rose-hedged lane and lovers' lays,
The welcome smile on neighbors' faces,
Cool, wide hills and open places,
Breeze-blown fields of silver rye,
The wild, sweet note of the plover's cry,
Fresh spring showers and scent of box,
The soft, pale tint of the garden phlox,
Lilacs blooming, a drowsy noon,
A flight of geese and an autumn moon,
Rolling meadows and storm-washed heights,
A fountain murmur on summer nights,
A dappled fawn in the forest hush,
Simple words and the song of a thrush,
Rose-red dawn and a mate to share
With comrade soul my gypsy fare,
A waiting fire when the twilight ends,
A gallant heart and the voice of friends.

-Jean Brooks Burt