

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, September 14

5:30 pm – Our Neighbor’s Kitchen serves
Enchilada Casserole, Parish Hall

Friday, September 15

9 am -1 pm – United Way Day of Caring
Work Project, Sanctuary

Tuesday, September 19

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

Mondays

7:45 pm – AA Meeting, Parish Hall

Sunday, September 17

12:00 pm – Presentation: “Winchendon:
Keepers of the Millers River”
Anna Wilkins, NCLT, Sanctuary

Sunday, September 17

1:00 pm – Water Communion Service,
Sanctuary

Thursday, September 28

5:30 pm – Our Neighbor’s Kitchen serves
Chicken Dumpling Soup, Parish Hall

From Your Editor

Like many, I fall victim to complacency. That was most keenly felt when we returned from our travels to a failed home water treatment system and the good old “Rindge tinge” of insoluble iron appearing in our tap water. After a few weeks of bottled water and a service call, we are happily back to normal. But this gave me pause to pay attention to one of our most basic needs: water.

Our home adventures were timely as we head into September: the month where we reconvene with a Water Communion service. In this simple ceremony, we share our joys, concerns and hopes for the coming season...and of course, water. We are punctuating our Water Communion service this year with a special talk presented by Anna Wilkins of the North Country Land Trust on the Millers River. Please come hear this learned environmental advocate share her knowledge about the river on which our community is built. Trust me – you will learn something.

-Jill Nicholson Sackett - Chair, Governing Board.

Miller's River: Life Flowing Through Our Backyards

The UU community has long been a champion of environmental justice, with our 7th Principle calling for “Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

At the center of that interdependent web is that essential element: water. We watch the rain fall (plenty of it this summer), we drink from our taps, and we wash dishes, do laundry and bathe in leisure. We seldom pause to think about this core of our existence unless something goes *wrong*, such as a flood, a drought, or a broken water pump.

Since the beginning of time, human settlements were built near water, and Winchendon is no exception. While first located up in Old Centre, town operations proliferated down the hill on the Millers River as the mills and other industries flourished. The Millers River was largely responsible for the growth and success of Winchendon through its heyday as a thriving mill town. The mills are now closed, but the river is ever constant, running through the heart of our community.

So what does it mean to us today? The answer is: everything. Fortunately, we have organizations today who recognize this and advocate for its protection in tangible ways. UUCW is pleased to

welcome Anna Wilkins, Executive Director of the North County Land Trust, on Sunday, September 17. Anna will speak at noon on the Millers River watershed and its critical importance to our community and beyond. We'll follow with a Q&A session.

We promise you will learn something new and hopefully walk away with a newfound appreciation for this natural resource...flowing through our very backyards.

For more information on the North County Land Trust, visit:

<https://northcountylandtrust.org/>

Welcome Back: Annual Water Communion

Communion: the sharing of thoughts and feelings. At many UU Churches across the country, September is a time to reconvene after summer recess, greet each other once again, and offer a forum for “how are you doing?” We often reopen using water as a symbol of coming back together.

Fitting with our water theme on September 17, we will be holding our annual Water Communion at 1:00 p.m. following the Millers River presentation by Anna Wilkins of NCLT. Stay for this simple lay-led service. If you wish, please bring a sample of water to church. This could be from a source of special meaning to you (a river, pond, or

your rain barrel), or just from your tap (or the church's) or even a drinking bottle. We'll spend some moments celebrating water in poetry, readings and music. We'll all combine our water samples into a single container along with our hopes, wishes and thoughts for the time ahead. Following this brief service, those who wish will walk over to the bridge on Whitney Pond, where we will pour the water into the Millers River, and in doing so, send collective good tidings downriver and through town.

We look forward to seeing you again.

Walnut Doors Glisten Anew

In the world of non-profit funding, one gets used to accomplishing goals in step-wise fashion. But we do get it done.

Thanks to generous grants from the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, we have been sending our lovely handcrafted walnut doors out for refinishing. The tower doors were done over Winter 2021-22; the center doors in Spring 2022; and now, during Summer 2023, the overhead transoms and south-facing door received the same meticulous treatment.

Once again Gerry Brodeur and his crew at Furniture Plus in Worcester sanded, bleached, and coaxed the natural walnut grain back to life. While the doors were

taken to the Worcester workshop, the overhead transoms were refinished in place with the use of a lift. The crew sealed open seams and applied extra coats of spar varnish to hold off the incessant sun exposure.

The result are entryways that glow like the day they were installed – befitting for a building listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



UUCW Online

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

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

Facebook: facebook.com/uuwinchendon

Change of Address?

We want to stay in touch! If you change your address, either U.S. Mail or email, please let us know. Email jill@sackett.com or send a written note to the church at P.O. Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475.

You're Perfect

By Joe Sackett

The UU Pluralism value affirms that we are all sacred beings. Many consider this “divine spark” within humans as our fundamental essence. But how do we resolve our inherent perfection with an openness to transform? Self-improvement seems to be a universal human quest, as we so often hear “Be the best version of yourself.” This article will take a look at a common self-improvement goal in light of our inherent magnificence.

You're perfect. That is a truth with teeth. It's both a great relief and immensely empowering yet it does raise questions in the practical world. My article will take a small “bite” of this infinite topic by addressing its apparent contradiction regarding our obsession with weight loss: If we're perfect, why do we need to lose weight? The easy answer is: We don't, we're still just as perfect. As true as this is, it might be hard to see (and in my case, explain)... but here goes.

All of our opinions are sourced from information we *learned*. Regarding weight loss, did we pick up body image messages all of our life from peers and mass media? Did a doctor prescribe this to avoid adverse health effects? It might seem that these two reasons are different but I claim that they are not. While I am more likely to believe the second, that is

only because I *learned* that health science is more credible than fashion magazines and weight-loss ads. They are both just acquired knowledge and not inherent truth.

Before anyone thinks I'm suggesting you ignore your doctor let me be clear. Your true essence is perfect. In your perfectness, if you choose to act on knowledge which you respect, that's great! Start exercising, watch your nutrition, take medication. Just understand why you are doing it. If your plans don't succeed, give yourself a break and read this article again. Any type of transformation can be viewed similarly: take it on for your learned reasons but understand that it does not affect your inherent perfection.

As an engineer I spent my career applying theories and successful practices. I am doing the same above: this is a personally relevant application of my spiritual studies. I would enjoy discussing my sources and their further implications. Let's talk.

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