

The Chalice

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
**A Welcoming Congregation
of the Unitarian
Universalist Association**
4 North Main Street
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Inside this issue

From the Minister	8
From the President	9
Faith Development	10
Social Justice	12

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

10:00am Family Service/ / 10:30am Worship Service

For Zoom information [click here](#)

For Order of Service [click here](#)

February 2

10:00 AM Family Worship: Imbolc

In celebration of the pagan spring festival of Imbolc, today we will read and discuss a book called “Imbolc: Learn About Paganism With Grani Hulda.”

10:30 AM Worship: What is Pluralism?

Today we return to an important theme: Pluralism, which is one of our UU values. Several of the questions submitted during our January Question Box service asked something like... is it OK to believe in God in this congregation? Is it OK to not believe in God in this congregation? Is this place Christian? Today, Rev. Jolie will preach about one of the truly beautiful paradoxes of Unitarian Universalism: we are a pluralistic religion, through and through. We are many faiths and yet we are one faith. How do we do this?

February 9

10:00 AM Family Worship: Encountering Buddhism

Today we will begin our encounter with Buddhism. We will share a story and discussion together on the topic.

10:30 AM Worship: Am I Doing Enough?

Another Question Box-inspired sermon! Many people asked a variation of this question: how can we possibly heal our hurting world? Nothing I do feels like enough, sometimes I feel like I am not enough. Today, Rev. Jolie will speak on this question of “enough.”

February 16

10:00 AM Family Worship: Meg and the Ants

Our series on Buddhism continues, with this story from a Buddhist friend of Rev. Jolie’s who had a difficult time with some ants.

10:30 AM Worship: Living in Tension

And yet a third sermon pulled straight outta the Question Box. You all asked some wonderful questions! More than any other topic, the largest number of questions were variations on this theme: how do we find common ground with people who hold different values than our own? Let’s talk about it! Rev. Jolie preaching.

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February 23

10:00 AM Family Worship: Exploring Generosity

Today we will enjoy a tale from Kenya and talk about one of the most important themes from the story: generosity. Generosity is one of our UU Values. What does generosity mean to you?

10:30 AM Worship: Developing the Potential of Your Microbes, Diego Garrido Barreto, guest preacher

In his worship service today, our guest will invite us to explore the unseen forces shaping our lives—like the trillions of microbes inside us. Just as we nurture our health by caring for these tiny organisms, we are called to recognize and develop the hidden potential in ourselves and our communities, reminding us of the power of unseen forces in social justice and collective action.



Diego Garrido Barreto was born in Colombia, and migrated to Boston in the Fall of 2022. He still counts his time in the US as winters. He got married in his second winter and his husband's last name is Wisdom. He has a bachelor's in arts for Literature from Pontifical Javeriana University, is a poet and mandala maker, and is in his last semester of a Master of Divinity at Boston University School of Theology. His church home is the First Parish in Brookline, and he is a soon-to-be Aspirant for UU ordination. He was awarded the 2024 UU Climate Justice Revival contest. He has used his language skills as a chaplain intern at Boston Medical Center to translate care to Hispanic and Portuguese patients.

CHURCH NEWS

Art Wall

Currently, paintings by long-time UCS member, Natalie Smith, are hanging. They are in the realist style, and do convey a certain mood the artist felt on the Cape, and in her home in Foxboro, with her grandson and dog, Good art can do that through the careful and thoughtful application of paint guided by the head and heart. Behold, with receptivity and inquiry.

I'm still waiting for more artwork to hang. Speak to me, Dinah, if you have interest or questions.

Tai Chi

Tai Chi with Vince continues on the first and third Saturdays of each month, from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m., indoors in room A/B.

Come, relax and move. You can learn a new skill to add to your toolbox of life-coping activities. Our church is sponsoring this; a few dollars are requested (\$3-10) to help cover the cost. See Dinah with any questions.

Meditation Group, weekly on Mondays 7-8 PM

Join Carol Abrams, local meditation teacher, for a simple weekly mindfulness practice in our Vestry. All welcome.

Compost Training

Our pilot compost program begins March 1. Our big green bin has arrived and is preparing to be filled! This program is for congregants as well as for UCS event use. Black Earth, our new composting service, requests that all users be trained on composting (so as not to contaminate the batch) before being given access to the bin. Please plan to attend one of the following training sessions if you would like to use the composting service:

Sunday Feb. 16 - 11:45 - 12:00 Classroom A & B

Sunday Feb. 23 - 11:45 - 12:00 Classroom A & B

At the end of these short sessions, you will be given the lock code for the compost bin. If you are unable to attend either of these sessions, please contact Kathy Farrell (contact info in Breeze) for a quick one - on -one session, or for questions.

There's Something About Mary (not the movie) with Rev. Jolie

Tuesdays, Feb 25, March 4, and March 11 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Program A/B

Want to talk about Mary, mother of Jesus? In this three-part class and discussion series, we will reflect on what we can learn from the divine mother figure – from a queer theological perspective, a de-colonial theological perspective, and from our own interpretations of Christian and Muslim scriptural texts. Have you never thought about Mary before? Are you humanistic / non-theistic? Never fear – this group is still for you! Rev. Jolie leading this class. Minimum group size 5, maximum group size 12. First come, first served. Email minister@uusharon.org to RSVP.

CHURCH NEWS, continued

Casual Jam 2nd Friday of the month

Every second Friday of the month, we get together for a cozy little campfire sing-along (minus the campfire). It's a very welcoming vibe, so feel free to bring your instrument and lead a song, or just join in and sing along with the group. We cover a mix of folk, traditional, and pop tunes - a little something for everyone.

Even if you're a bit rusty, don't worry! If a song is a bit tricky, we'll happily play through it a couple of extra times so everyone can get the hang of it. The most important thing is that we're all there to have a fun time making music together.

We meet from 7 to 9 pm at the Church in Program A/B. Mark your calendars for the second Friday of each month and come on by! Oh, and just a heads up - we do sometimes need to reschedule, so be sure to check the Church Calendar.

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee is delighted to see so many new faces at our services! We are looking at ways to be even more welcoming and accessible to everyone.

We are planning a Poetry service for April. Please let Ellen know if you are interested in helping with this. Ebordman@pm.me

- Ellen Bordman, chair

First Friday Fellowship Potluck

Please join us for this month's Pot Luck on February 7th at 6 pm. We invite you to make a Valentine for those in our community who may be in need of "well wishes". We will have some materials on hand but additional supplies are welcomed to add to the mix!

Hope to see you there!

The Fellowship Committee

Board Meetings

You can view the monthly board notes [here](#)

The UCS Board meets on the Second Wednesday of each month at 7:15 PM. All meetings are open to UCS members and invited guests unless otherwise noted.

CHURCH NEWS, continued

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (Submitted by Barbara Nelkin-Rose, Chair)



As you may have noticed, the Committee on Ministry has started a series of Small Group Ministry gatherings. Each month a topic is selected from the UUA values that were incorporated into the UUA bylaws at the 2024 General Assembly. There are 6 values: Generosity, Justice, Interdependence, Equity, Transformation, and Pluralism, all centered around Love. You can find an image of these values in the vestry - the flower graphic near the kitchen.

Still wondering what a Small Group Ministry is? The UUA website describes it this way:

Small Group Ministry is intentional lay-led small groups that deepen and expand the ministry of the congregation.

"Small" means a group with a maximum of 8-10 people. Groups of this size provide an opportunity to relate on a more intentional level. (Our current groups still have room for more participants, especially the Tuesday night group.)

"Group" is a gathering of individuals, sometimes selected at random, sometimes selected for a specific interest or characteristic. These groups meet over a period of time. (Our groups consist of participants who have themselves chosen to engage in these deep conversations.)

"Ministry" is the process or act of caring or being present with another. This relates to the spiritual as well as the physical and emotional well-being of the group participants. (We have already witnessed this process in both groups.)

Our gatherings so far - in December on the value of Generosity and in January on the value of Justice, have all been powerful - offering space for deep, meaningful and authentic conversations and connections.

Moving forward, our Small Group Ministry gatherings will follow a consistent schedule, and you may choose between these two times:

- **The First Saturday of the month, from 10:15-11:45 AM or**
- **The Second Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 PM.** (Moving to third Tues in March)

CHURCH NEWS, continued

COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY (Submitted by Barbara Nelkin-Rose, Chair), continued

FEBRUARY'S VALUE: INTERDEPENDENCE

- We honor the interdependent web of all existence. With reverence for the great web of life and with humility, we acknowledge our place in it.
- We covenant to protect Earth and all beings from exploitation. We will create and nurture sustainable relationships of care and respect, mutuality and justice. We will work to repair harm and damaged relationships.

FEBRUARY GATHERINGS:

Saturday, February 1st from 10:15-11:45 AM. Nursery

Facilitated by Barbara Nelkin-Rose and Alison Reid

Tuesday, February 11th from 7:00-8:30 PM. Nursery

Facilitated by Sarah Langmead and Lauren Grasso

Everyone in the Congregation is invited to participate. We hope you will join us!

Questions or comments? Please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose, or any member of the Committee on Ministry

CHURCH NEWS, continued

Not Just Another Coffeehouse

Torrin and Amy

Irish Traditional Music on Uilleann Pipes and Fiddle

Saturday February 22, 2025

Doors open at 6:30 and concert starts at 7:00.

Suggested donation \$20



Get in the mood for St. Patty's. The "true drop" from these two.

<https://www.ryanlawmusic.com>



From the Minister



Dear Ones,

As you may have noticed in my worship descriptions for February, I've decided to devote my February sermons to some of the excellent questions you wrote during our Question Box service back at the beginning of January. And I'd like to address some more of the questions here in my newsletter column. A few of the questions were rather straightforward: how many members do we have? Currently, we have 163 members. Does anyone want to start a UCS backpacking group? What a cool idea! If you're interested, I can give you the contact info of the person who wants to go backpacking. Another one: How does the Unitarian Church of Sharon feel about the newly adopted Article II of our UUA bylaws? Well, that remains to be seen. How do you all feel about it, as members of this congregation? I, for one, like the values just fine. In my sermons and newsletters I have been leaning on the [language of UU Values](#) contained within the bylaws revision. The values and their descriptions feel true to the faith I've always known, and I like that a lot of our most cherished Principles language is contained in the values descriptions (inherent worth & dignity, interdependent web).

And there was another question that I wish to share here. Someone asked, am I feeling discouraged about women's ability to stand up for our human rights? It just so happens that the day I am drafting this newsletter column is January 22, 2025, which would have been the 52nd anniversary of Roe V. Wade, had it not been overturned by the Dobbs decision in 2022. Now, I don't know if the questioner was referring to abortion rights when they submitted this question. But, as far as challenges to women's rights these days, abortion is front and center in my mind. I join with all who lament the lives lost and the myriad negative health impacts so far that have come out of the Dobbs decision, and I fear what it would mean for women's lives and the lives of all people who can get pregnant if a national abortion ban is put in place. So, yes, sometimes I feel extremely discouraged. But I take heart in the fact that people continue to fight for reproductive justice at local and national levels. Planned Parenthood is of course still hard at work, advocating and providing direct healthcare services wherever possible. And all over the country there are abortion funds who strive to make it possible for people to get abortions if they need one. Check out the [National Network of Abortion Funds](#), if you want to support, or if you know someone who needs assistance (or if you just want to garner strength from witnessing all the places where abortion funds are open and operational). Our UU faith in the inherent worth and dignity of all [calls us](#) to support reproductive justice, meaning we affirm our commitment to building a world in which all people are able to make choices about their bodies, their health, and their families within safe, thriving communities.

So thank you all for asking such important questions. I hope that this upcoming month of question-inspired sermons will deepen the conversation, and keep it going.

Yours in faith,
Rev. Jolie

From the President



There's so much that could be (and has been) said about the current situation in our nation. Our guest minister, Rev. Gretchen Weis, gave a wonderful sermon on 1/26 exploring how to respond to these frightening and infuriating times that we're living through.

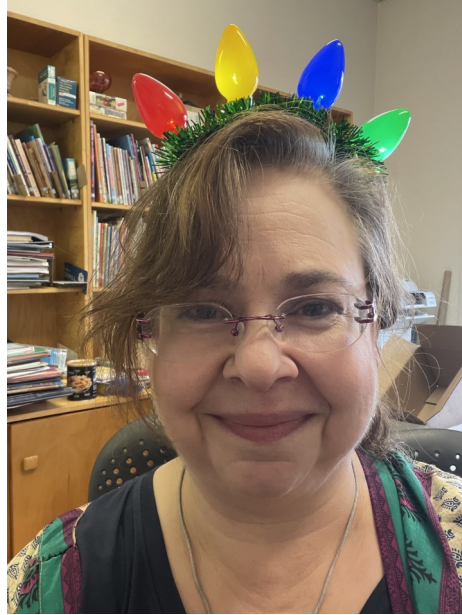
Instead, though, I'd like to discuss themes that were brought up by our consultant who visited us during our "Next Steps Weekend", Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry. In her sermon and at other times in meeting with us, she focused on what it is that church does for us. Why do we come to church? What do we value in it? When asked questions like that, a frequent response is "the community". She noted that, but encouraged us to go deeper into that. Below are my thoughts, though with much overlap with Rev. Lydia's.

So what is it about our community that we value? Many people who I know will tell me that they have their friends, who form a community for them. But there are some special things about UU church communities and ours in particular. One is that it is multigenerational. So much of our lives these days is segregated by age. It's wonderful to be in a place with people of all ages. We have such a variety of life experiences! Another central aspect of our community is that we talk about our values and how to live them out. I would venture to say that such topics are not discussed much among friend groups, even when they share, or assume that they share, similar values. Each week we come together to explore different facets of what it is to be living in our times and trying to live a good life. I personally find that essential, in all times, but especially now. And there are more things that I value about our congregation, such as our commitment to action for social justice.

Our Stewardship Committee is collecting testimonials from members who discuss their particular reasons for supporting this congregation. I will soon add my own. I encourage you all to watch those and to think about your own reasons for being a part of this community. As a bonus it might be easier to answer the next time someone asks you, "So what is Unitarian Universalism anyway?" or "Why do you go to church?".

Jon Slavin

FAITH DEVELOPMENT



Hello from Religious Education! The last few weeks have been full of adventure. The Crossing Paths class visited the Islamic Center in Roxbury last week, and our World Blessings class made Musakhan, aka Purple Pizza.

In February we begin exploring Buddhism in Crossing Paths, and the youth are headed to Cedar Hill on Feb. 6-8 for a retreat.

We've all been so happy having several new folks teaching in the World Blessings class, and hope you'll all keep it up! If you've taught and had fun, testify! Tell your friends how much fun it is!

Yours in our love-centered faith,

Lauren Strauss

dre@uusharon.org

774-286-9573 (call or text)

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

January—February Faith Development Calendar

K-5 - World Blessings: Exploring world religions through cooking

- January 26: Festive Stir-Fried Rice
- February 2: Caprese Salad Skewers
- February 9: Kenyan Pancakes
- February 16: Carob Pudding

[Lead a cooking class, it's a blast!](#)

Gr. 6&7 - Crossing Paths: Exploring our neighboring faiths

- January 26: Islam Session 3
- February 2: Buddhism Session 1
- February 9: Planned Buddhism site visit.
- February 16: Buddhism Session 3

Gr. 9&10 - Coming of Age - an Independent Exploration

- February topic: Spirituality and Worship. Pages 72 - 85 in the Journal
- Contact Caroline Dixon for questions or more info.

Senior Youth Group

- Cedar Hill trip Feb. 6-8

RE Committee

- February 5 @ 7:00pm, check the calendar for zoom details
- All welcome! We are searching for new members, come check us out! Contact Lauren for more info: dre@uusharon.org

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee encourages you to visit the UCS website (uusharon.org) for

information about the social justice programs at church. The Social Justice pages are a great source for information about opportunities to engage, resources, and links to partner organizations and groups that we collaborate with in our work.



Sharon/Stoughton Food Pantry



Brown Envelope Collections

For November and December, our Brown Envelope donations raised \$3,238 toward the work of **UU Mass Action** (uumassaction.org). Their Vision: A world where all people are honored and valued. Their Mission: to organize and mobilize UUs in Massachusetts to confront oppression, by providing pathways towards justice and identifying opportunities in which we can live our shared values. The SJC is in the process of joining their **Partner Congregation Program** to deepen our connection with UU Mass Action, and the BE funds raised will be applied to launching this work, and to supporting various UU Mass Action initiatives in the coming months. Stay tuned for more details as we ramp up this important collaboration.

The collection during our Christmas Eve services this year raised \$987, rounded up to \$1000, for the work at **Father Bill's & MainSpring House** (helpfbms.org) in Brockton, our partners in addressing homelessness. (In addition, we continue to provide MSH with monthly bag lunches, funded by our Shopping for Justice grocery card program, to help feed individuals and families facing housing crises.)

The January Brown Envelope collections will once again support the **6 local food pantries** in our surrounding communities of Foxboro, Walpole, Norwood, Canton, Stoughton/Sharon and the First Congregational Church of Sharon's local pantry. Donations will be converted into Shopping for Justice grocery story cards, which allows for an additional 5% boost to our gifts. Thank you for your support.

These Brown E donations will build on our extraordinary 5-year effort since Covid struck that focuses on support for local food insecurity, which has raised over \$75,000 to date. This is in addition to numerous bags of food staples that are donated and given to local pantries each month.



The February Brown Envelope donations will support **Right to the City Boston** (righttothecityboston.org), a multi-issue alliance of grassroots organizations representing working-class communities and communities of color in Boston.

(Continued on next page)

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

Their collective work is focused on fighting the displacement crisis in Boston, including:

The right to stable housing and communities;

The right to economic justice;

The right to democratic participation;

The right to the public good; and

The right to a healthy environment

Emergency Support for inmates after a fire at MCI Norfolk

On December 1st a fire occurred at MCI-Norfolk correctional facility, ruining the personal belongings of 57 inmates. UU Mass Action alerted the SJC to a fundraising effort to help their recovery, and the committee voted to immediately release \$780 from our discretionary account for timely relief. To date \$5,739 has been raised; here is the note that we recently received:



Black Earth Compost Pilot Program - "WE COMPOST" ...AND HERE'S WHY

Our new congregation wide pilot composting program, creatively called **We Compost**, starts March 1st, when we will begin offering the UCS community access to a shared Black Earth collection bin in the church parking lot. You might be wondering: *So why compost? Life is busy enough, right?*

Despite many environmentally destructive influences in our world, composting offers us an easy, useful, sustainable practice we can all engage in.

Composting reflects our UU values – we are supporting the interdependent web of life.

Composting can be a family activity, involving everyone at your home. It's a great way to learn about the cycle of life.

Composting is FUN! Weigh your compost, see how much you keep out of the landfill or incinerator every week, month & year!

Composting can actually reduce food waste – good chance you devise ways to better use food before composting it: Leftovers go into soups, stir-fries, salads, and quiches; extending food life; freezing extra food, etc., etc.

Composting is easy, quick, satisfying, habit forming. It is not slimy, messy, alarming. And we will teach you all about it, to make it as easy as **earthly** possible!

The church will receive occasional shipments of rich, composted black earth to nourish our flower beds and The Memorial Garden, closing the loop on our collective commitment to being good stewards of the resources we require to live – another win-win-win!

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

Our large green Black Earth compost bin will be located by the dumpster at the back of the parking lot. Please plan to attend one of these short trainings about our composting program:

Sunday, February 16, 11:45 – 12:00, A&B

Sunday, February 23, 11:45 – 12:00 A&B

Questions? Comments/suggestions? Feel free to contact any SJC member or project point person Kathy Farrell (781-201-0799 or kfarrell-dfail@comcast.net). Pitching in together (literally!), we can make this a great success!

Supplies needed to help rehouse local immigrant families

The effort to find permanent housing for the immigrant families relocating in our area is working on settling individual families as housing is being found, and there is a need to help set up new homes with the basics. A wide range of items can be donated in the Vestry at UCS, and we will see that they are transferred to the team matching housing with families.

The most pressing items right now are:

Sheets and winter blankets for twin and queen beds

Crib sheets

Bath and hand towels, face cloths

Bed pillows

Drinking glasses. No stemware

Medium and large pots and pans with lids if possible

Serving utensils and cooking tools

Pot holders and dish towels

Table and floor lamps with shades or even just the shades

Small kitchen appliances

Items have to be in new or very good condition, clean, without stains or tears;

nothing fancy or delicate, all practical stuff.

If anyone has a night table or crib that meets current safety standards, we can arrange to pick it up.

Questions? Ask members of the SJC. This will likely become an evolving, case-by-case list, as families move from temporary to settled housing; specific requests for items of furniture may also come along. Look for updates in the weekly Friday email, and postings in the Vestry. Our new neighbors are already thanking us for our assistance!

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

Honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Moving Forward with Our Anti-Racism Work



JANUARY 19TH EVENTS HONORING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The Worship Service was beautiful, filled with deep reflections, wonderful music and a meaningful Re-commitment Ceremony in which we committed ourselves once again to our UU value of Justice and our call to dismantle racism and all forms of oppression. The afternoon presentation/conversation led by Bryan Trabold, was both informative and thought-provoking as he educated us and invited us into dialogue, all around "breaking bread" together - all 40 of us!

Thanks to everyone for making these events such a success.

- To the team that put it together – Barbara Nelkin-Rose, Gare Reid, Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, Lauren Grasso and Rumni Saha
- To Rev. Jolie for sharing her personal reflection and journey around racism during Worship and allowing us to hold the Recommitment Ceremony during the service

- To all of you who attended Bryan's presentation – around 40 of us came together for this special event!
- And, of course, a special Thank You to Bryan Trabold for his deep Reflection and presentation

FUTURE SESSIONS WITH BRYAN

Because of the interest in moving forward with additional discussions concerning white supremacy, racism, and Black Lives Matter, Bryan will offer 3 sessions in February on the 13th, 20th, and 27th. In an attempt to focus on issues that matter most to members of the congregation, Bryan has created a short Google form to obtain some information regarding congregants' preferences. If you are interested in attending any of the 3 upcoming sessions and would like to express your preferences, please fill out the [Google Form](#). The first session, February 13th, will be devoted primarily to discussing and selecting the topics people most want to examine at future sessions, but Bryan will also provide a short presentation and facilitate a discussion based on the survey responses contained in the Google Form.

Session Information:

Dates: 3 consecutive Thursday evenings in February: February 13th, 20th, 27th

Time: 7:30-9:00 PM.

Location: TBD. Check the UCS Calendar

HELPFUL LINKS:

- [Google Form](#) for gathering information about Topics of Interest/ Availability. If you haven't yet filled in this form, please do ASAP, as it will help Bryan in his planning
- [Bryan's Slide Presentation](#)
- [Bryan's Reflection](#) during the Worship Service

[Text of Recommitment Ceremony](#) during the *Worship Service*:-