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Website: www.ushartford.com
Office Administrator's Hours (adjusted for COVID-19): Tuesdays,
Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 9:00am to 1:00pm, or
email/call for an appointment.
FEBRUARY 24, 2021

Building Community Since 1830
Revs. Cathy & Heather Rion Starr, Co-Ministers



Image: [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

February 28th, 2021, 10:00am

"The Only Lasting Truth is Change"

Rev. Cathy Rion Starr, Co-Minister

Rayla D. Mattson, DRE

Sam Moffett, DMM

Peter Meny, Worship Associate

Buffie, Coffee Hour Host

"All that you touch You Change. All that you Change Changes you. The only lasting truth Is Change. God Is Change." ~ Earthseed: The Books of the Living (Octavia Butler).

Octavia Butler wrote presciently of a time of collapse and community -- a time that we are thankfully not in and yet can seem all-too-close. What wisdom can we glean from other times of change in our lives to guide us in these ever-changing pandemic times?

10:00am Worship Service - Join us [HERE](#)

Meeting ID: 952 8306 7113

Passcode: 014277

The Zoom Room "opens" at 9:50am with music and a brief slide show; you will be admitted from the Waiting Room when you join. Please watch the recording later on our [USH webpage](#), [Facebook Page](#) or [USH Vimeo library](#)

11:00am - [Fellowship Time](#) immediately following service in Zoom

Please see the "*special*" USH E-brief that went out early this morning. If you did not receive the brief please contact Buffie at hartforduusociety@gmail.com.



Congratulations to our Courageous Love 2021 Awardees:

La Bodeguita de la Gente and Mutual Aid Hartford/ Apoyo Mutuo

Connect with them here:

La Bodeguita de la

Gente & **MutualAidHartford.com** and @MutualAidHartford on Venmo

Gente & **MutualAidHartford.com** and @MutualAidHartford on Venmo

How to support:

Contribute to our Good Neighbor Offering to these two groups - send your check to USH (put "Share the Love" in the memo of your check or **donate online**)

Bring your paper grocery bags to USH, and Virginia DeLima will continue to get them to La Bodeguita

Donate directly or get involved: @MutualAidHartford on Venmo, **MutualAidHartford.com** or **La Bodeguita de la Gente**

RE News You Can Use: Rayla D. Mattson, Director of Religious Education

Hello USH Family!!

Join our DRE for this week's story ([20+](#)) [Unitarian Society of Hartford | Facebook](#)

This week we will have our all ages game night! Please come join a game, start a game or just come and hang out with us. This Friday night on Zoom at 7:00pm.

<https://zoom.us/j/96735469120?pwd=aVpLVHZzNHFGWVo5dWYwbENHTmhDUT09>

Who wants to bake? We're going to do Zoom Bake-Off. I'm encouraging families to join as teams. We will all be making Bedfordshire Clangers. You can use any recipe you like, we just ask that you have the dough pre-made before the start time of the event. We will Zoom bake and see who can create our "challenge dish" the best. Registration is required so we can make sure everyone has the ingredients they need.

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJwqduCqrzgvHt3uhJccFBmxHsDxTMSIWvE>

"Please join us for game night even if you want to just hang out and have fun and not play the games."

Join us for an all ages Game Night. Feb, 26, 20201

<https://zoom.us/j/96735469120?pwd=aVpLVHZzNHFGWVo5dWYwbENHTmhDUT09>

Be well, Rayla

**Rayla D. Mattson, Director of Religious Education
860-233-9897 ext. 104 | dre@ushartford.com**

I only check my email on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Programs for Adults and Families



Intern Minister Dianne M. Daniels is offering a 6-week e-course on Journaling. Live class sessions will be conducted over **Zoom**, and the Teachable platform will hold the course content, lectures, and audios. The course starts Wednesday, March 10 - let me know if you would be interested in attending. I have two times: a 12-noon course for those who can make it, and an evening course (let Dianne know if 6 pm or 7 pm would be better) for those who need it. USH Members in good standing are eligible to enroll at no cost - part of my

"Thank You" for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Intern Minister. Questions? Contact Dianne at ushinterndd@gmail.com. Enrollment will close on Monday, March 8, to give Dianne time to prepare.

Adult Programs:

Artist's Way Group: Meets on Mondays 6:30 – 8 p.m. via Zoom using Mira Kirschenbaum's book *The Gift of A Year* as the basis for our conversation. We focus on living creatively, with the appreciative eye of an artist; creative expression of all types and stripes is celebrated, though not required. If you're interested in joining us, mark your calendar now, and look for contact info here in early September. Contact Tina Davies for more info at daviesush@gmail.com.

The USH Book Club: Meets **monthly**, on the **2nd Thursday**, 2:30 – 4:30 pm, via Zoom. All adults in the USH community are welcome. Please contact Ginny Allen at fiddlenurse1@gmail.com if you'd like more information or if you want to join. An email with Zoom link will be sent a day or two before the meeting.

MARCH 11 – *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* – David Fromkin

Caring Network: This year's meeting dates via ZOOM. **2021:** 3/14, 4/11, 5/16, 6/13. Meetings will be ZOOM meetings at **12:15pm**.

20's/30's Group: If you would like to join, please email Tara Cote at tcote11@gmail.com.

Disability Support Group: This group has moved its gathering online. Please reach out to the facilitators for more info. In this group participants discuss the challenges of physical disability (chronic illness, chronic pain, impaired senses, impaired mobility) and emotional pain (loss, mental illness) and the stresses of caretaking a loved one. What is said in the room stays in the group. Email **Don Hope** for more information at donhope48@gmail.com or call at **860 463 7982**.



Coming this Spring.... Inquirers Series

A Program for Newcomers, Friends and Interested Members
On Sunday's following the USH Service
Four small group one-hour sessions via zoom
To learn about USH history, values and culture,
To introduce newcomers to church ministers and lay leaders,

To establish a safe space for newcomers to learn more about

Unitarian Society of Hartford.

Hold these Sunday dates: March 21 and 28; April 11 and 18

From 11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. via zoom

To register contact Carolyn Carlson at carlsoncjc@gmail.com

More details about each session will appear in future E-News.

Church Community & Business News

Building & Grounds: Your Thoughts and Comments Solicited

Greetings USH readers, your friendly B&G is contemplating a new project and solicits your interest, thoughts and comments. The opportunity for you to hear more, and weigh in, will happen in a Zoom meeting at 7:30 PM, **Monday, March 1st**. It is, as they say, a right close date!

Here is the connection:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89102195312?pwd=cnRzY2EzSWdST2hPbW5ReiBYRmRCdz09>

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 891 0219 5312

Passcode: 791831

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89102195312?pwd=cnRzY2EzSWdST2hPbW5ReiBYRmRCdz09>

Here is the thing. The Board recently held several listening sessions. There were many thoughtful comments, but a couple of things seemed to be of universal interest:

First, a good number of folks mentioned use of Zoom (and various other streaming services) worked well for some things: specifically, certain aspects of remote services, some small meetings, and an alternative when snow is arriving, the car is dead, or the preference is to attend remotely for a variety of good reasons (having a communicable disease for example). **So, why not have the possibility of, shall we say, remote USH activity continue after we have generally returned to our Meeting House, and the new normal of regular human interactions inside our remarkable building?**

Second, there was a preference for remote events being originated from the Sanctuary Chancel with the Meeting House background as usual. **Picture yourself in the third pew from the front viewing an entire minister in the pulpit, musician or RE leader as they familiarly appear in a worship service or similar event.**

And, if we are going to do something about either possibility, **why not get**

it underway now, because bringing up new procedures will certainly benefit participants, viewers and arrangers of technical devices now while pandemic requirements remain, and those benefits will carry forward when the constraints are relaxed?


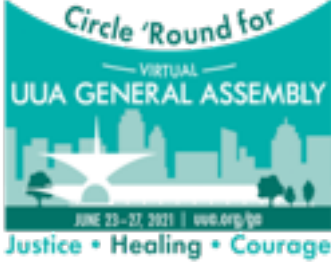
What do you think about this?

Wait, there is more. Your elected Administrative Council representative, Jon Covault, has diligently sought out information including what goes on elsewhere and prepared a well-reasoned equipment list and plan. Paul and Laura Cipriano of Meeting House Presents fame, who also are B&G members, have worked with Jon's plan and find merit in it. Here are the essentials of the current plan:

- **A couple of suitable cameras, capable of movement and focus, would be mounted on the Ambulatory walls to capture Chancel events. These cameras would be operated by a person in the office, thus posing no distractions or impediments to various activities.**
- **The feed from these devices could be live-streamed via the internet to your computers. The system would have various other capabilities as well.**
- **In addition, the thought is to have the system also function out of Fellowship Hall for Summer services or other events. The technical detail supports the idea.**

For we normal mortals, the probable cost is about \$7,700 – \$11,000. Operating the proposed system with reasonable training is within the capability of your average participant, worship associate, or others during various events with, again, reasonable guidance from those with the necessary technical understanding.

What are your thoughts? Join us Monday March, 1 to share them.

Here is the link for GA information and registration: General Assembly: [The Unitarian Universalist Association's Annual Meeting](#)

From the USH Caring Network: Please inform the Caring Network of needs, or volunteer your services. If you know of any member experiencing some difficulty, please contact Eve Pech or any member of the Caring Network so we can provide some assistance. A wide range of community services is also available to those in need by calling the Community Info Line at 211.

Social Justice at USH



ACTION ALERT – Revised Feb. 22, 2021: Repeal Welfare Liens in CT

The Issue:

Connecticut individuals and families in need are encouraged to seek support from the state through the Department of Social Services (DSS). Residents are offered what appears to be genuine recovery support. Unfortunately, unlike almost all other states, Connecticut treats cash assistance and some medical assistance as a debt to be repaid. This debt is called a welfare lien.

Connecticut is one of only two states that aggressively collects welfare debt through an expansive and arguably immoral practice of placing liens on nearly all of a recipient's future assets. The state collects on welfare liens:

When a current or former recipient of assistance sells or refinances their home,

When a recipient receives a legal settlement (for example, for back wages, worker's

compensation, an accident, or even a civil rights case),

When a grieving family member receives any inheritance, or

When an ailing elder dies and attempts to leave any inheritance to his/her heirs.

Welfare liens remain with the recipient for life. They keep people in poverty, and they contribute to intergenerational poverty and the racial wealth gap by preventing families from ever building family wealth, or even a cushion. This is wrong! Recognizing this injustice after a landmark national study in 1973, over 30 states have repealed or restricted welfare liens, because evidence shows that welfare liens are bad policy and unfairly punish people for ever having been poor. The time has come for Connecticut, as one of the wealthiest states in the nation with the greatest income disparity, to do the same.

The Action:

Working with GHIAA, Speaker of the House Matt Ritter has introduced a bill to repeal welfare liens. Your voice is needed to fix this bad policy. **Contact your legislators and ask them to support An Act Concerning the Removal of Liens on the Property of Public Assistance Beneficiaries.**

Welfare liens transform state services into a poverty tax. Welfare liens undermine recipients' efforts to achieve stability and self-sufficiency. A repeal of welfare liens is needed to ensure that:

People in need of assistance are genuinely supported and no longer face future obstacles because they once received state assistance or state medical insurance,

Connecticut law furthers the mission of DSS by encouraging families' long-term stability and self-sufficiency (rather than placing a financial burden on anyone who has ever needed help), and

State programs are transparent and effectively further the state's public policy goals

As compelling as the need for change is, repeal WILL NOT be easy. Potential skeptics may cite the loss of revenue, which amounts to about \$18 million per year. However, GHIAA believes that the cost to Connecticut of NOT repealing the statute is much greater, in terms of the economic and social costs of perpetuating poverty.

Potential Talking Points:

Liens and Loans

Welfare liens act like a surprise poverty tax. Just when families have begun to improve their financial condition, they are pulled back down by welfare liens issued by the state. Every other state in America (except New York) has repealed or restricted policies that treat public assistance as a debt. The state budget should not be balanced on the back of our most vulnerable community members.

Since 1973, over 30 states repealed or restricted their welfare lien laws.

According to the fiscal note on welfare liens, CT recovers \$18 million a year from former

welfare recipients, adding another unnecessary barrier to breaking the cycle of poverty.

CT's Annual Budget is \$17 billion. Welfare liens account for 0.1% of CT's budget.

Subsidies to middle-class residents, corporations and others, such as for solar panel installation, which are much greater in annual amount, favor wealthier residents and do not require repayment.

Impact on Homeownership

Available data from New York—the only other state that expansively collects welfare debt—suggests that welfare liens discourage homeownership and negatively impact:

Divorced women who received the home as the only asset in their divorce

Elderly individuals and their families seeking to sell the family home

Homeowners seeking to avoid foreclosure through loan modifications

Homeowners seeking to refinance, obtain home equity loans, or sell their home to purchase a new one

Transparency, Efficiency and Effectiveness

The welfare lien program lacks transparency, both to recipients and to the public, and reflects an antiquated, punitive system that is out of step with our current understanding that poverty is not a personal or a moral failure.

Even as far back as the enactment of Connecticut's current welfare lien system (1969), critics called out the lack of advanced notice of the lien/loan terms and the lack of transparency on the terms of repayment.

Since that time, information about paying back assistance has been buried in the fine print of the application and in obscure locations on the DSS web site. Unlike traditional mortgages there is no easy way to track accruing debt or make early repayment.

Recipients also may have no real choice but to take on welfare debt since their family's basic needs and their healthcare may depend on it.

Who to Contact:

Calls and emails are needed to your local legislators. Find your legislator at cga.ct.gov and ask them to support repealing welfare liens this week!

Sample Outline for Contacting your Senator and Representative, (Contact information for your representative/senator at cga.ct.gov.)

Dear Senator/Representative

Introduce yourself and state that your congregation is a member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA).

Say that you are contacting them in support of the bill that will come before them this week to repeal existing real estate liens and that you want their support in the coming weeks to repeal legal settlements and judgements from recovery for welfare liens.

Share why you support this bill. Feel free to draw from talking points above and connect them to your own lived experience and personal values.

Use your own words – form letters do not influence legislators!

Sign it with your name, home address, and phone number.

News from the USH Board of Directors

No regular Board meeting this month

In lieu of a regular monthly Board meeting, Martha will work with individual Council chairs to focus on completing preparations for the upcoming Stewardship drive. Please contact Martha with any questions or suggestions at marthabradley49@yahoo.com.

Your 2020-2021 USH Board

Martha Bradley: President

TBD: President-Elect

Bob Hewey: Treasurer

Sarah Harmon McKenzie: Secretary

Peter Meny: Spiritual Life Council Chair

Jon Covault: Administration Council Chair

Dana Donovan: Social Justice Council Chair

Tina Davies: Community Within Council Chair

Rev. Cathy Rion Starr, Co-Minister (ex-officio)

Rev. Heather Rion Starr, Co-Minister (ex-officio)

The latest financial reports for **Sept-Oct 2020** have been posted, click [HERE](#) to view. The Board Meeting minutes for **Oct 2020** have been posted. To view the USH Directory, Reports, meeting minutes and other church business information online, click [HERE](#). Contact Buffie Pinney at hartforduusociety@gmail.com for the username and password.

News in the Larger Community

AIM Alert: Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry Resources from EqUal

We want to bring to your attention these resources and connections now regularly available for Unitarian Universalists who self-identify as living with disability. If you are a person with a disability, you can go to the EA

website to find the weekly theme and the active links to join all connections by Zoom: <http://www.equualaccess.org/connect-online/>

- **Tuesdays @ 3:00 pm** Eastern Time: Theme Chat (with an EqUUal Access facilitator)
- **Thursdays @ 8:00 pm** Eastern Time: Oasis (worship service/spiritual gathering by/for disabled UUs led by EqUUal Access volunteers, ministers, seminarians)
- **Fridays @ 1:00 pm** Eastern Time: Craft & Chat (bring your latest craft project/idea and join in relaxed conversation-- with an EqUUal Access facilitator)
- Individual Pastoral Conversation with a UU minister (by appointment)

Pastoral Conversation appointments are available with Rev. Helen McFadyen or Rev. Barbara Meyers. Please email hmfadyen@uuma.org or bfkmeyers@gmail.com to arrange a private Zoom or telephone call.

Thank You,
Shelly & Helen (AIM Administrative Director Duo)
AIM Alert by Rev. Helen McFadyen, Administrative Director



CommunityNOW: Please see this online calendar compiling what other UU churches and organizations are doing during this

pandemic. Check out some new programs [here!](#)

COVID-19 Hartford Community Resources

A way for Hartford residents to connect with Hartford resources and beyond...

For City of Hartford updates go to: <http://www.hartford.gov> and follow <https://www.facebook.com/Hartford311/>. See full article [here](#).

~Provided by USH member, Wildaliz Bermudez
(<https://wizandjosh.org/>).

Resources for the food insecure and places to give:

These are tough times for many folks already living paycheck-to-paycheck and/or food insecure. If this is you, please reach out to the Revs so we can mobilize some financial and/or food support for you. Here are a few community resources for food in particular:

- Bloomfield food for kids: Carmen Arace Middle School food pick-up: Breakfast 8:00-9:00am and lunch 12:00-1:00pm. It's a drop-in pick-up only.
- West Hartford Meals for kids and adults: <https://www.smore.com/jxwvz>
- Hartford meals for kids: <https://ct-kids.org/>
- Foodshare has mobile sites for food pick up. Click here for more info: <http://site.foodshare.org/site/PageServer?pagename=coronavirus>

Foodshare welcomes your financial contributions and is in need of volunteers especially right now. They have extra safety precautions in place. If you are not already high risk, please consider signing up. The Universalist Church of West Hartford is working to keep their pantry functioning and could use volunteers who are not in the high risk categories (underlying pulmonary/cardiac/immune issues or diabetes...and/or 50+ years old). Call Jacob Lee, their food ministry coordinator, at 860-233-3669 x109 if you are interested in helping through the coming weeks and months. See more here: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/coronavirus-hunger-research>

For questions about Coronavirus in CT, call 211 to talk to a person 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. The hotline is for general questions about COVID-19. If you're experiencing symptoms, contact your medical provider.



Please contact our Office Administrator, Buffie Pinney, with any administrative questions or concerns. Buffie is working on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays from 9am-2pm. While the church remains closed, please email at her at [**hartforduusociety@gmail.com**](mailto:hartforduusociety@gmail.com).

Buffie's always happy to hear from you!

More In This Week's Enews:

[RE News You Can Use](#)
[News from the USH Board of Directors](#)
[Social Justice at USH](#)
[Church Business News](#)
[Programs for Adults and Families](#)
[Connection Circles](#)
[Events & News of Our Community](#)
[Meeting House Presents](#)
[Upcoming Events & News in the Larger Community](#)

Missed Last Week's Enews? Click Below:

<http://www.ushartford.com/nourishing-spirit/newsletters/>

See Articles and News for USH and the Surrounding Area you may have missed or find a link to the USH Facebook Page [HERE](#).

Please consult our Online Calendar regularly for all upcoming events coordinated by the

Unitarian Society of Hartford: www.ushartford.com/events/

To submit a Calendar Request (also for an online USH Zoom Room gathering) click [HERE](#).

To read the USH Blog click [HERE](#).

E-News Contributors please take note: The deadline for USH E-News submissions is *Tuesday at 12 Noon*. Please include the dates that your submission should be included in the 'Subject' field.

USH Staff:

<http://www.ushartford.com/about-us/staff/>

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revcathyrionstarr@gmail.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 103

Rev. Heather Rion Starr, Co-Minister

revheatherionstarr@gmail.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 103

Dianne Daniels, Intern Minister (half time, through December 2021, & not in July or August)

USHInternDD@gmail.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 109

Rayla D. Mattson, Director of Religious Education and Rentals Manager

dre@ushartford.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 104

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smoffett@ushartford.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 108

Buffie Pinney, Office Administrator

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Brian Mullen, Bookkeeper

Office or Phone by Appointment | bmullen@ushartford.com

The deadline for USH-Enews submissions is **Tuesday at 12 Noon.**

Email to: hartforduusociety@gmail.com

Please note in the subject line "USH-Enews." Thank you for your submission!

Peace – as we come to the close of the USH-Enews week.

Be kind to others – and to yourself.

Our Unitarian Universalist Principles: The member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association covenant to affirm and promote: the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations; a free and responsible search for truth and meaning; the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process, within our congregations and in society at large; the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part. Consider the proposed 8th Principle as well! <https://www.8thprincipleuu.org/>.