



Image: Courtesy of Kevin Girouard December 2022

Unitarian Society of Hartford

December 21, 2022

Building Community Since 1830

50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105

Tel: (860) 233-9897 • Email: hartforduussociety@gmail.com

www.ushartford.org

Office Administrator's Hours: Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Please email/call for an appointment.



Image: courtesy of uumediaville.org.

*Winter Solstice Celebration Tonight @ 7, in the Sanctuary
Come, Honor the Return of the Light!*

Dana Donovan, Michael Michaud, Margaret Leicach

December 25, 2022: 10:30 a.m.

A UU Christmas: “So Many Gifts...”

**Sue Smolski and Ron Friedman, Worship Leaders
Sam Moffett, Director of Music Ministries**

Chancel Arts Sub-Council, Chancel Art

Annie Witzler, Interim RE Coordinator

**Dana Donovan, Welcome Table
Paul Cipriano & Deb Meny, Greeters
Tina Davies & Larry Lunden, Ushers**

Matters of the Heart:

Electronically by 9 a.m. Sunday: email HartfordUUHeart@gmail.com

In person – use MOH basket for written cards on Sunday morning

10:30 a.m. Hybrid Worship Service

**Join us in ZOOM [here](#)
See Order of Service [here](#)**

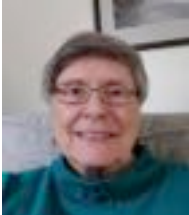
Closed captions are available.

Meeting ID: 931 0388 7934

Passcode: 128493

**11:30 a.m. – Coffee Hour immediately following the service, in person and
ZOOM.**

You can also watch the Sunday service
at <https://vimeo.com/unitariansocietyhartford>
or on the USH [Facebook](#) page.



Sue Smolski, Worship Leader

Sue Smolski has come to appreciate and be grateful for the many gifts in her life. This upcoming Christmas Morning Service has become one of today's gifts.

Ron Friedman, Worship Leader

Ron Friedman has been a member of USH since 1998 and has served on various councils and committees.



*** This is the last full issue of USH eNews for 2022. Next week, only worship information will be published... if you need to refer to information in this issue, it will be available on the USH website (see Newsletters). ***

Worship Services



**The Winter Solstice link differs from the usual
Sunday Service link.**

Please join us *TONIGHT* for the Winter Solstice Service
[HERE](#).

The Christmas Eve link differs from the usual Sunday Service link.

Please join us for the Christmas Eve Service [HERE](#). Order of Service can be found [HERE](#).

Please note there is no coffee hour in Fellowship Hall or Zoom. Join us for sparkling cider (no alcohol), shortbread and coconut macaroons in the foyer following the service.



Join us on December 24 for an evening filled with warmth, love, and light. A DIY holiday photo area will open for all, our holiday service will begin at 5 p.m. with singing and stories, and a holiday reception with food and drink will follow afterward the service in Fellowship Hall. Children and youth present will be able to receive small age-appropriate gifts from the RE department, as well.

**Please fill out [this form](#) if you and your family plan on attending, so we may plan accordingly.
Please contact Annie Witzler (re4ush@gmail.com) with any additional questions. We hope to see you there!**

Upcoming Services: Join us, in person or online.

December 24 – Livestreamed – Saturday, 5 p.m. *Christmas Eve Service*, Peter Meny, Pulpit Guest/Michael Michaud, Worship Associate. Instrumental Music by Sam Moffett precedes the service, beginning at 4:30.

December 25 – *A UU Christmas: "So Many Gifts..."* Sue Smolski and Ron Friedman, Worship Leaders.

January 1, 2023 – *"In The New Year: Forgiveness"* – Sue Smolski, Pulpit Guest/Carol Simpson, Worship Associate

January 8, 2023 – "Mary Oliver In Relationship" – Judy Robbins, Pulpit Guest/Rick Tsukada, Worship Associate

Sue Smolski

Worship Associate Coordinator



Welcome Team Sign-Up

Volunteer to be a greeter, usher, or to staff the welcome table this fall. Simple, rewarding short-term commitments helping extend hospitality to members and visitors.

Use the Sign-Up Genius app [here](#) to be part of our Sunday Morning Welcome Team.



Congregational Matters

Year-End (Tax) Planning

It is now December, and for a few this is a time to contemplate payouts from IRAs, Tax Deferred Annuities, and appreciated stocks or similar investments.

This presents opportunities for Qualified Charitable Deductions (QCDs). Making such contributions means there will be no tax due on the payout you would otherwise receive, and the full value of the contribution directed to the charity will benefit the charitable organization. Moreover, you will then have a charitable deduction for income tax due for 2022 as well.

Gifts from other sources may be eligible for a charitable deduction also.

May we politely note: USH is such a charitable organization!

Should you wish to pursue a QCD for 2022, it's recommended you consult with a fund advisor or accountant — they are familiar with such matters. In addition, your Endowment Committee members, currently David Newton, Chair and Jim Venneman, member, will welcome your inquiry. newton_dcnewton999@gmail.com and ellieloncove@gmail.com will put you in touch.

Thank you for your interest; may your tax situation be optimized!
~ *David Newton and Jim Venneman*



Winter Weather Notifications

Last Monday's snow was a reminder that Connecticut is fully in the path of winter storm tracks, and anything from a dusting of snow to full-on blizzard conditions might be around the corner. It's been a few years since this has been a concern, and we thought it would be wise to revisit USH's approach to possible Sunday storm closings.

Our bias, historically, is to remain open if possible. Our snow contractor is reliable; the parking lot and walks are clear in time for Sunday services. However, that assumes snow has stopped in time for the plows to work effectively and for cleared areas to remain clear. Decisions on closing traditionally have fallen to the minister(s). In the absence of a minister at the moment, the board is adopting the practice outlined below regarding potential Sunday closures.

A decision will be made by board officers, by 9 p.m. Saturday. If the Sunday service are to be cancelled, the cancellation will be posted on ushartford.org and the decision communicated via email as well.* Where programs or activities during the week are concerned and the building is otherwise open, the program leader or organizer may judge whether to meet, and then notify group members accordingly. In any event, please remain aware of potentially hazardous conditions, and place a high value on your own safety, and that of others.

(**Note:** this practice does not supercede the policy adopted in 2016 and published on the web [HERE](#): it is merely a temporary adaptation of that policy to our present situation.)

***Closing information will also be available on the WFSB (Channel 3) weather screen crawl and on the WFSB app.**

Needs for Pastoral Care.. The Caring Network has had a number of requests for Pastoral Care during the past few months. Generally, we have been able to reach out to the individuals and meet their needs.

However, there are situations when contact with a minister is preferred. If you wish to speak to a minister, please contact me and I will give you the contact information. You can reach me by phone (860/212-6923), by email (janicecnewton(at)sign)gmail.com) or see me on Sunday. I will usually be at the Caring Network table at the entrance to Fellowship Hall.

Janice Newton, Chair

Social Justice



December Good Neighbor Offering

[Blue Hills Civic Association](#) has been selected for our December GNO. They have been working in the North Hartford communities of Blue Hills, Upper Albany, Clay Arsenal, and others for the past 60 years.

BHCA is a catalyst to inspire Hartford to be vibrant with civically engaged residents and leaders, strong schools and thriving economies. They offer programs for youth development, community organizing and senior services.

See how they empower people living and working in the Blue Hills and surrounding communities by following the link below to a short (51 seconds) video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLyEC1npdk0&t=1s>

West Hartford Food Bank Information

If you are a West Hartford resident, the Food Bank is at West Hartford Town Hall.

Here are this week's needs:

Pasta and sauce

Peanut butter and jelly

Baked beans

Cold cereal

Check on your local needs by going online. Some towns like Bloomfield, Hartford, East Hartford, Glastonbury, and Manchester have multiple sites from which to choose.

Please give as you are able! Thanks!

Grocery bags are now being collected by the office door rather than the main entrance.

~Diana Heymann

RE and Chalice Clubhouse



A Quick Announcement:



Our RE department is entering a two-week '*REcess*' for the holidays and the new year.

So — there will be no Chalice Clubhouse or Youth Group meeting on Sunday, December 25, or Sunday, January 1. The nursery will be open, however.

We will resume our classes on Sunday, January 8, 2023. The e-News will feature reminders of this change forthcoming. We hope to see you back on January 8!

If you have any questions or concerns please reach out any time via email or phone (text messaging works best) at re4ush@gmail.com or 706-248-9438.

Thank you and happy holidays!

-Annie Witzler, Interim Coordinator of RE.

The Sprouts Nursery (Ages Infant-Pre-K):

Our nursery is open to all infants, young children, and their families. There are toys, books, art supplies, and plenty of room for imagination to grow free!



We have dedicated personnel and volunteers there to supervise every week and the best part? You can now listen and participate in the service while you're there! Nursery go-ers can listen to the service and even participate in our Candles of Memory and Hope ritual!

Come visit any Sunday and never miss a single sermon!

Located downstairs adjacent to Fellowship Hall, open for both Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

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In The Chalice Clubhouse (Grades K-6):

Last weekend, our clubhouse goers concluded their UU advent experience with the lighting of the fourth and final purple candle, representing love.



As we all agree that we love coming to the meeting house, we worked together to tidy and decorate Fellowship Hall for Youth Soup Sunday. We decorated "mini" Christmas trees and placed yule logs around the tables to bring a festive flair to the room, then got a special treat from Jim and Ellie Venneman in the form of holiday sugar cookies they got to frost and decorate themselves. A huge thank you to the Vennemans for sharing such a sweet seasonal activity!

Please note there will be no Chalice Clubhouse on Sunday, December 25, or January 1. We will resume on Sunday, January 8, 2023. We hope to see you back in January!





USH Youth Group (Grades 6th-12th):



The USH Youth Group made 16 galleons of chicken and veggie soup this past Sunday, making sure the local soup kitchens of Hartford will be well-stocked for the beginning of

2023. We thank all who have participated and supported this project, but a special thanks is due to our own John Bengtson who has spearheaded this effort for the past sixteen years. Thank you to John, our youth leaders, and our youth!

Please note that there will be no Youth Group on December 25 or January 1. We will resume on Sunday, January 8, 2023, and hope to see you then!

Events & Happenings

Monthly Gatherings

Pizza and Movie Nights – Join us, **Friday January 13**, for conversation, pizza, a movie, and more conversation (about the movie). Movies are recommended by your friends at USH who have found them interesting, perhaps provocative, and worth seeing. The January feature is ***Pride***, based on true events surrounding Britain's mid-1980s coal miners' strike and an unlikely (at the time) alliance between Welsh miners and gay-rights activists. Sign up, starting on January 1, at Coffee Hour, at the Caring Network table. \$15 covers pizza, salad, dessert, non-alcoholic beverages. Feel free to bring your own beer or wine, if that's your preference.

Second Saturday Sing-Along –

Sing-Alongs, 2nd Saturday each month: NEXT UP: **January 14**.
Contact: Fred Louis (FLouis@yahoo.com) or Ed Savage 860-966-8155 (mobile) (EdSavage03@yahoo.com).

The Lunch Bunch – Our next gathering is **Tuesday, JANUARY 17, at NOON in Fellowship Hall**. Please brown-bag *your own* lunch and beverage... you'll ensure having something you enjoy! Sue Smolski will be speaking.

INVITATION FROM THE BOOK GROUP

*Our UU Book Group invites you to join us in reading our January selection – **Things We Lost to the Water** by Eric Nguyen (see preview* below).*

Enjoy the reading.

If you want to participate in (or listen to) a discussion of the book and related issues, join us on Thursday, January 12 at 2:30, by Zoom.

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.

Book Selections 2022/23

Second Thursday of each month

*January 12 – **Things We Lost to the Water** by Eric Nguyen*

*February 9 – **The Premonition** by Michael Lewis*

*March 9 – **The Lincoln Highway** by Amor Towles*

*April 13 – **Power: The limits and prospects for human survival**
by Richard Heinberg*

*May 11 – **Beloved** by Toni Morrison*

*June 8 – **The Book of Lost Friends** by Lisa Wingate*

*July 13 – **Matrix** by Lauren Groff*

*August 10 – **Mismeasure of Man** by Stephen J Gould*

**Our January selection:*

***Things We Lost to the Water* by Eric Nguyen**

A captivating novel about an immigrant Vietnamese family who settles in New Orleans and struggles to remain connected to one another as their lives are inextricably reshaped. This stunning debut is "vast in scale and ambition, while luscious and inviting ... in its intimacy" (The New York Times Book Review).

Disability Support Group:

This group meets online the first Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m. The zoom link is sent a few days prior to the meeting. 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 group stays in the group. Email **Gloria Bent** for more information at bentgloria@gmail.com or call at 860-904-7768.

Caring Network

From the USH Caring Network: Please inform the Caring Network of needs, or volunteer your services. If you know of any member or friend experiencing some difficulty, please contact **Janice Newton** at janicecnewton@gmail.com 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. The Nationwide Mental Health Crisis and Suicide Prevention hotline is available by calling or texting **988** to talk with a counselor.

The latest financial reports for **FY Nov-Dec 2021** have been posted, click [HERE](#) to view.

The **2021/22 Annual Report** is available [HERE](#)

The Board Meeting minutes for **July, August and September 2022** 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.

2022 – 2023 USH Board of Directors

Eve Pech: President
Dana Donovan: President-Elect
Jon Covault: Treasurer
Sarah Harmon McKenzie: Secretary
Peter Meny: Spiritual Life Council Chair
Paul Cipriano: Administration Council Chair

Judy Sullivan: Social Justice Council Chair
Tina Davies: Community Within Council Chair

The January 2023 board meeting is January 10, 6:30 p.m.
via Zoom link [HERE](#) and in the USH calendar via this [LINK](#)

Missed Last Week's Enews? Click Below:

<http://www.ushartford.org/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.org/events/

To submit a Calendar Request (also for an online USH Zoom Room gathering) 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. Announcements about upcoming events typically appear for two consecutive weeks maximum, unless other arrangements have been made with the editorial team. Articles should be sent as email file attachments, and images need to be sent separately as jpeg, jpg, png, tiff, bmp, or gif files. Thanks for cooperating.

USH Staff:

<http://www.ushartford.org/staff-members/>

Sam Moffett, Director of Music Ministries
smoffettuu@gmail.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 108

Annie Witzler, Interim Religious Education Coordinator
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Patty Peck, Bookkeeper, Office or Phone by Appointment
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Karolina Wojtysko, Office Administrator & Building Rentals
hartforduusociety@gmail.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 100



USH Calendar of Events

The calendar for December 2022
can be viewed [HERE](#).

Please contact the office with any
questions or concerns.

The deadline for USH Enews submissions is

Tuesday at Noon.

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

Email to: hartforduusociety@gmail.com

www.ushartford.org