

Image: Courtesy of Kevin Girouard January 2023

Unitarian Society of Hartford

February 1, 2023

Building Community Since 1830 50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105 Tel: (860) 233-9897 • Email: hartforduusociety@gmail.com www.ushartford.org

Office Administrator's Hours: Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday & Tuesday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Wednesday &Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Please email/call for an appointment.

*The Meeting House will be closed to the public on Monday February 6 and Tuesday February 7 as there will be no water service in the building. If for any reason you need access to the building, please contact Karolina in advance to discuss your need.

There will be no Monday yoga session on February 6.



What is the scope of Reproductive Justice? How do our UU principles inform our actions? What can I do?

February 5, 2023: 10:30 a.m.

"Reproductive Justice: How It Matters to Unitarian Universalists"

Judy Sullivan, Dana Donovan, & Louise Harmon, Pulpit Guests Sue Smolski, Worship Associate Sam Moffett, Director of Music Ministries Annie Witzler, Interim RE Coordinator

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.

Mask Update

Due to the drop in Covid cases in Hartford County, masking is currently optional. Our policy is to follow CDC Guidelines.



Judy Sullivan, Pulpit Guest

Judy grew up in a Catholic home, raised her five children in the Jewish faith (keeping a kosher kitchen!) and discovered Unitarian Universalism about 15 years ago while living in Boston. She is a past member of UU congregations in Boston and Cape Cod, and joined USH as a member in 2014, because, as the song goes, it "feels like home". She is currently a trained core leader and representative of USH with the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) and serves as chair of the Council on Social Justice.

Dana Donovan, Pulpit Guest

Dana Donovan first stepped foot in USH in the fall of 2017. With prodding from his granddaughter, Aaliyah, he became a full member by the following spring and has continued to grow closer to this community ever since. At present, he serves as the president-elect for the board of directors. Dana has been on a lifelong spiritual journey. He became a practicing pagan 25 years ago. Dana spent the last 45 years as a professional woodworker, specializing in designing and building staircases in homes and public buildings throughout New England and New York. His greatest joy is his 9 children, 24 grandchildren, and 9 great-grandchildren.





Louise Harmon, Pulpit Guest

Louise Harmon is a retired law professor and social worker. She joined USH in December 2019, although her extended family haslong been associated with Unitarianism. Her three daughters are first cousins of USH's treasurer, Sarah McKenzie. Her sister, Mimi Stevenson, is also a member of USH. Louise is a member of the USH Book Group, the Caring Network, and the Social Justice Committee. She is also a hospice volunteer with the Farmington Valley Nursing Association.

Sue Smolski, Worship Associate Sue Smolski, is a longtime member and is currently the Worship Associate Coordinator.



Worship Services

Upcoming Services: Join us, in person or online.

February 12 – *Textured*, Rev. Jan Carlsson-Bull, Pulpit Guest/Michael Michaud, Worship Associate

February 19 – Title pending, Rev. AJ Johnson, Pulpit Guest/Rick Tsukada, Worship Associate February 26 – Love Will Guide Us, Sally Rogers, Pulpit Guest/Sue Smolski, Worship Associate



Worship Associate Coordinator



Twilight Fire Circle

Join us in celebrating *Imbolc*, the halfway point between Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. All are welcome!

Saturday, February 4: 3 – 7

Saturday, February 4: 3 – 7 p.m. in the Library

Looking for a few moments of spiritual pick-meup?

Braver/Wiser, series of weekly inspirational messages from a variety of UU writers, may appeal to you. See this week's message here...

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.

And — More You Can Do on Sunday

Here are some other things you can do once and be done – see Rick Tsukada or Laurie Kelliher if you're interested.

- Candle Bowl Lifter
- Chalice Lighter
- Sermon
- Reflection
- Welcome Table
- Summer Service Pulpit Desk
- · Chancel Art

Request from the Caring Network

Our friend and member Peter Upton has recently moved to Brandywine Living in Litchfield.

The Caring Network is looking for volunteers to fetch him for Sunday services and return him to his new home. While one Sunday a month would be ideal, we would welcome anyone wishing to volunteer on a more occasional basis. Peter lives about a 55 minute drive from the Meeting House. If you wish to do this, please contact Janice Newton for details and arrangements.



John Carl Brancato

October 23, 1930 – January 24, 2023 John Carl Brancato, 92, longtime resident of Plattsburgh, passed away on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, at Elizabethtown Community Hospital after a long decline. Carl married his high school sweetheart and began a career in mamagement with Montgomery Ward, eventually settling in Plattsburgh, NY. Carl stayed in Plattsburgh and developed his love for the North Country and the Adirondacks. He married Grace Ryan in 1963 and in 1966 became Urban Renewal Director and Community Development Coordinator for the City of

Plattsburgh. He worked to improve the infrastructure and quality of life in the city for twenty years, retiring in 1986.

To view John's full obituary, please click **HERE**.

Our thoughts go out to the Brancato-Richardsons: John, Tom, Aran, and Maddie, and their extended family, during this time.

Mid-Year Financial Update ~

At the close of December, our financial status and cashflow remains healthy. Pledge payment response continues to be excellent, with 80% of pledge dollars collected at the close of calendar year 2022 (50% of the pledge period). Some of these early contributions can be attributed to tax-advantaged giving

from eligible IRAs during the 2022 tax year falling within the first half of our 2022/23 fiscal year: this "front-loads" these payments to USH. We continue not to use funds from the endowment.

At last year's annual meeting, the congregation approved a one-year trial period during which cash and other undesignated contributions to Sunday offerings would be divided evenly between USH and the month's designated "Good Neighbor Offering" recipient organization. Reports from other UU churches indicated the likelihood of this practice yielding increases in collection-plate contributions — both to USH and to the GNO recipients. While yet early, the results so far tend to support this claim.

For the months of September through December 2022, donations collected for our monthly good neighbors have been averaging more than \$1,000, and the USH portion has been \$435/month.

Around half the number of donations are designated to be 100% for our GNO. For the entire 21/22 budget year Sunday non-pledge offerings totaled \$2,900, and for our FY 22/23 we had budgeted \$4,000 for Sunday collections. At the current rate, the year's Sunday offering is projected to approach \$5,000.

Further, last year our GNO contributions were just under \$7,400; we are presently on target to donate about 30% *more* than that by employing the 50/50 weekly "share" method. Not only are we benefitting, we have been able to increase our support of neighbor organizations.

~ Jon Covault, Treasurer

Looking for a Minister ~

In early January we posted our ad for a one-year contract minister. Contract ministers, unlike interims, are eligible for long-term hire if both the minister and the congregation feel they are a good fit. We hope to find a candidate who will be a full-time minister and part-time preacher. The Worship Associates will fill the pulpit on Sundays when the minister is not preaching. This is the type of shared ministry that Rev Josh Pawelek has at UUS:E in Manchester and it has worked well for 20 years. You can hear Rev. Josh's nteresting sermon on this topic by going to the sermon archives on the USHwebsite and scrolling down to October 22, 2022.

We've had a few applicants so far but we expect everything to be up in the air for at least another month or two, perhaps longer. At the semi-annual meeting on February 19, you will be invited to say what you would like in a minister. Watch the eNews for updates as we move through this process!

~ Submitted by Judy Robbins, Chair of the Review Committee.



Around the Meeting House

Does this look familiar? Do you recognize this closet — withoutall the impedimentia (folding chairs, canes, lawn signs, random equipment) that has long shared occupancy with a Sunday influx of coats, jackets, and umbrellas which arrive and then (mostly) leave? Nancy Kemmerer pondered the assortment of... stuff... recently when struggling to extract her coat from the crowded space. The next day, she got to work relocating those non-apparel items which, crammed in as

they were, had left scant room for coats. Now, mid-week, the closet houses only three coats, seemingly left behind by their owners. (If you're missing a jacket, take a look next time you're here.) The canes, signs, chairs, etc. have all been 're-homed' into other storage areas and the presumed users, when applicable, have been notified of their whereabouts.

BRAVA, Nancy, for seeing a project just begging to be tackled — and taking it on. Small steps often lead to big improvements!

Invitation to a Connecticut UU "Unconference"

Dear Connecticut Sibling Congregation —

YOU are invited...

COME UNCONFERENCE with the UU CHURCH IN MERIDEN,

CT! http://www.eventbrite.com/e/506628869587

Saturday, March 11, from 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Congregational leaders and staff from around the state will gather to make connections, inspire each other, learn and teach leadership skills, and discuss Unitarian Universalism and congregational life. We'll use the UNCONFERENCE Model, an open-space approach where those in attendance determine the teaching and learning opportunities. More info online at our Facebook Event: CT UU UNCONFERENCE at https://fb.me/e/5GxrUJJqA The event is FREE, but we'd appreciate people registering for the day via Eventbrite here: www.eventbrite.com/e/506628869587

We also request that all those attending bring something to share for the potluck lunch (how UU does this get??!) If weather or Covid cancels the in-person event, it will move online and all those registered through Eventbrite will be sent the Zoom link via their registration email.

~ The Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden

Social Justice

GHIAA CALL TO ACTION ON EDUCATION:

The **first** public hearing on one of GHIAA's issues has been announced for this Friday, February 3 at 11 a.m. The hearing will be held in Room 2C of the

Legislative Office Building (LOB), 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, as well as via Zoom. During our December 7 Assembly, GHIAA asked for an investment of \$275 million new dollars to fully fund the Education Cost Sharing Formula to address CT's racial funding gap. Legislative leaders listened!

This hearing is for the education funding bill, HB5003. The Education Committee and Appropriations Committee will hold a joint public hearing on one single bill – HB5003 – all day. **This is our issue!**

Before the public hearing there will be a press conference at 10 a.m. in Room 1E of the LOB. As partners in the fight for education funding equity, GHIAA will be there, supporting this press conference. A good turnout helps to show legislators a broad base of support behind a particular issue — if you have a GHIAA shirt, please wear it.

Cori Mackey, Executive Director of the Center for Leadership and Justice, sends this reminder: "In the midst of the rush and busyness of this legislative session, what stands in the balance is whether or not kids get the education they deserve regardless of their race and zip code. This is to say, err on the side of submitting testimony that is flawed or that you're insecure about versus not speaking out at all. You don't need to feel like an expert to demand justice and dignity for our kids."

Should you feel a call to provide testimony, there are guidelines and deadlines to observe — and the deadline is imminent. Please **do** contact your state representative to share your thoughts! And, please take a minute to review the legislators who sit on the Education and Appropriations Committees. If you have a legislator on one or both of these committees, reach out to them personally and encourage them to vote this bill out of committee!

Appropriations committee members: https://www.cga.ct.gov/app/
Education committee members: https://www.cga.ct.gov/ed/
For specific questions please contact GHIAA organizer Marika Stewart at mstewart@clict.org.

Thanks for all you do! Let's show up for education justice this Friday! Peace

~ Shared on behalf of GHIAA by Diana Heymann



February Good Neighbor Offering The REACH Fund of CT (Reproductive Equity,

Access, and Choice)

The REACH Fund of Connecticut was founded in 2021 by a group of individuals who believe that healthcare is a human right and that abortion is an essential part of healthcare. They are an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to reduce financial barriers to abortion care in Connecticut by providing financial assistance to those who receive care here.

The Values of the REACH Fund embrace those of our Unitarian Universalist faith: Compassion, Inclusivity, Intersectionality, Equity, and Autonomy.

They recognize and acknowledge the ways in which decades of systemic racism and white supremacy have and continue to perpetuate harm and violence towards Black folks, Indigenous folks, and communities of color.

They are committed to addressing the ways in which racism, economic insecurity, and

immigration status multiply the massive barriers to abortion care — and work to center and follow the leadership of communities that are disproportionately impacted by reproductive oppression towards solutions that transform abortion access alongside true racial, economic, and immigrant justice.

West Hartford Food Bank Information

The West Hartford Food Bank is located at West Hartford Town Hall.

Here are this week's needs:

Tuna – almost out Canned chicken Baked beans

Rice – 1 lb. packages Pasta.

Check your local needs by going online. Some towns have multiple donation sites.

Please give as you are able! Thanks!

Grocery bags are now being collected outside the office door.

~Diana Heymann

Monthly Gatherings

Pizza and Movie Nights – Join us, Friday February 10, 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 February feature,, just in time for Valentine's Day, is *I'm Your Man:* a 2021 release which might be categorized as a sci-fi-AI-fantasy-rom-com. It's a German film, with English sub-titles, and is rated "R" (with adult content). Sign up at the Caring Network table at coffee hour, or email <u>Janice Newton</u> to register. \$15 covers pizza, salad, dessert, non-alcoholic beverages. Feel free to bring your own beer or wine, if that's your preference.

Generally, we begin gathering at 5 for libations and conversation. The pizza arrives at 5:30; we aim to start the movie about 6:15.

Second Saturday Sing-Along – Looking Ahead to February 11

Depending on Hartford-area Covid statistics, February's Sing-Along Event will, we hope, take place. That hope is subject to change, so please stay tuned for updates.

Contact: Fred Louis (FlLouis@yahoo.com) or Ed Savage 860-966-8155 (mobile) (EdSavage03@yahoo.com) for more information.

The Lunch Bunch – Our next gathering is Tuesday, FEBRUARY 21, at NOON in Fellowship Hall. Please brown-bag *your own* lunch and beverage... you'll ensure having something you enjoy! We plan to talk about AI (artificial intelligence) and how its ubiquity is changing how educators are fashioning their classroom activities. Please contact janicecnewton@gmail.com to sign up so we can arrange enough places at the table.

Social Justice – Interested in justice work? Come meet with us to learn the latest about ongoing activities and discover new initiatives. Our next ZOOM meeting is **Tuesday**, **FEBRUARY 21**, 7 – 8 p.m. Everyone's invited... contact <u>Judy Sullivan</u> for information.

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 860-904-7768.



Newcomers

Join an informal gathering Under the Stairs on February 5 following our service. Bring your coffee or tea for conversation about Unitarian Universalism, the Unitarian Society of

Hartford, and most of all to consider the wondering question...What brought you here today?

Whether it is your first time or you've been coming and curious for a while, join us. Members and friends are always welcome and broaden their insights into our very special faith. Cookies and fruit and conversation...and you...join us Under the Stairs.

Thanks, Laurie

INVITATION FROM THE BOOK GROUP

Our UU Book Group invites you to join us in reading our February selection – Thhe Premonition by Michael Lewis (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, February 9th at 2:30, by Zoom.

Please contact Ginny Allen at <u>fiddlenurse1@gmail.com</u> 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 mont

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 February selection:

The Premonition by Michael Lewis

For those who could read between the lines, the censored news out of China was terrifying. But the president insisted there was nothing to worry about. Fortunately, we are still a nation of skeptics. Fortunately, there are those among us who study pandemics and are willing to look unflinchingly at worst-case scenarios.

Michael Lewis's taut and brilliant nonfiction thriller pits a band of medical visionaries against the wall of ignorance that was the official response of the Trump administration to the outbreak of COVID-19.

The characters you will meet in these pages are as fascinating as they are unexpected. Michael Lewis is not shy about calling these people heroes for their refusal to follow directives that they know to be based on misinformation and bad science.

RE and Chalice Clubhouse



It's wintertime here in Connecticut and the fun is always at USH! We have exciting opportunities available for ages 0-18! Signup online here or on Sundays in person at the welcome table!

Please note that children and youth who wish to participate in RE programming should report directly to their classes when they arrive. Locations for all classes are indicated in red under each category!

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!

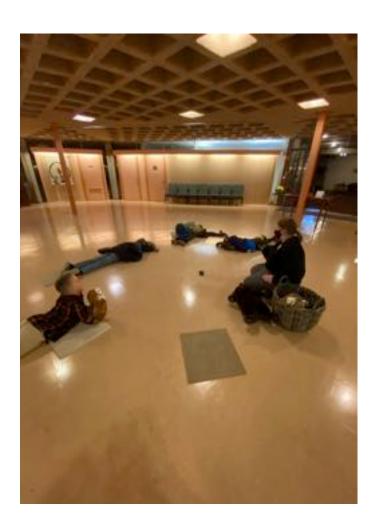
We have dedicated personnel and volunteers to supervise every week and the best part? You can now listen and participate in the service while you're there! Nursery go-ers can listen to the service and even participate in our Candles of Memory and Hope ritual!

Come visit any Sunday and never miss a single sermon! Located downstairs adjacent to Fellowship Hall.



In The Chalice Clubhouse (Grades K-6th):

Last weekend, our clubhouse goers explored the topics of meditation, inner peace, and being present. Together, we experienced different meditation techniques and discussed how each felt unique and how it could be used in our daily lives. This activity is connected to our third Unitarian Universalist principle: acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregations. Even though we all did the same meditations, we all had very different ways of performing the activity and reflecting on it as a group afterward.



Next weekend, February 5th, we will be having Valentine's Daythemed story and activity!

We hope to see you in Fellowship Hall at 10:30 am!

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



This weekend, Sunday, February 5th, our Youth Group will meet for their fourth session of 2023! (And there will be snacks!) They will be continuing to work on their new youth room, Classroom C in Fellowship Hall, and holding a discussion forum.

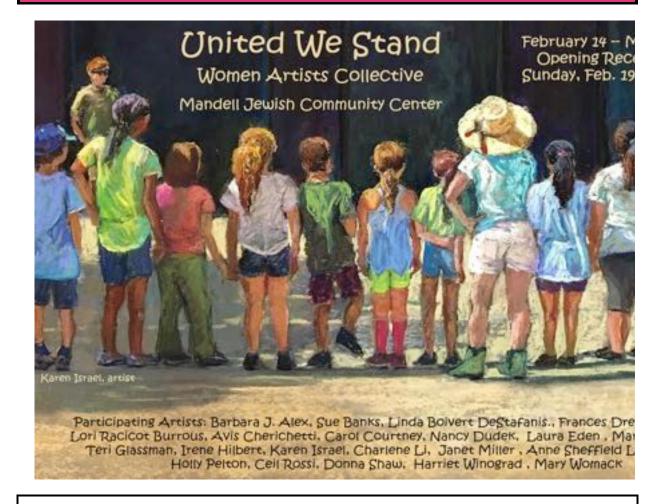
We hope to see you downstairs in Fellowship Hall at 10:30 am!

Caring Network

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. Please also know there is a wide range of community services available to those in need by calling the Community Info Line at 211, and the Nationwide Mental Health Crisis and Suicide Prevention hotline is available by calling or texting 988, where you can speak with a counselor.

~Janice Newton, Chair

In and Around Greater Hartford



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 **November and December 2022, and January 2023** have been posted. To view the USH Directory, Reports, meeting minutes and other church business information online, click <u>HERE</u>. Contact Karolina Wojtyska 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 February 2023 board meeting is Monday, February 13, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom link <u>HERE</u> and in the USH calendar via this <u>LINK</u>

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 <u>HERE</u>.

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 note: The deadline for USH E-News submissions is *Tuesday at 12 Noon*. Please include the dates that your submission should be featured 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 **re4ush@gmail.com** | 860-233-9897 ext. 104

Patty Peck, Bookkeeper, Office or Phone by Appointment **ushtreasurer50@gmail.com** 860-233-9897 ext. 102

Karolina Wojtysko, Office Administrator & Building Rentals hartforduusociety@gmail.com | 860-233-9897 ext. 100



USH Calendar of Events

The calendar for February 2023 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