

## USH E-news November 22, 2023



*Photo: Evan Williams*

### **Unitarian Society of Hartford**

*"Nourishing Spirit, Building Community, Working for Justice"*

50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105

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[www.ushartford.org](http://www.ushartford.org)

#### **Minister's Office Hours:**

Tuesdays & Thursdays 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
or by [appointment](#).

#### **Office Administrator Hours:**

Sunday 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Monday – Thursday 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Virtual Hours: Monday – Thursday, 5 – 7 p.m.

**Office Holiday Closure November 23**

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Illustration by Kahlil Gibran

***Seeking, Sharing, Soaring***  
**Sunday Morning Service 10:30 a.m.**  
**November 26, 2023**

**“Science, Healing, and Justice for All”**

**Nina Elgo, Pulpit Guest**

**Carol Simpson, Worship Associate**  
**Sam Moffett, Music**



### **Nina Elgo, Pulpit Guest**

Since joining USH in the early 1990s, Nina has served on the Board, the ministerial search committee, the Religious Education Committee, teaching the middle school RE, and working with the high school youth group. Most recently, she served as Parliamentarian for the UUA's General Assembly from 2016 through 2023. She has been a judge on the Connecticut Appellate Court since 2017, and a superior court judge since 2004. She has served on the Board of ***Playhouse on Park***, and over the years, housed over 30 actors from all over the country for their productions. She loves theater, hiking, gardening, photography, and reading.

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### **Matters of the Heart**

To have a Joy or Sorrow read from the pulpit on Sunday morning, e-mail

**[Matters of the Heart](#)**

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

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Religious Education in person 10:30 a.m.  
**[Annie Witzler](#)**, Interim RE Coordinator

Can't be here in person for worship?

**[Join us on ZOOM 10:30 a.m.](#)**

Meeting ID: 931 0388 7934

Passcode: 128493

**Virtual Coffee Hour to follow**

Worship is also streamed on **[Facebook](#)** —

follow our page and receive notifications every time we go live.

Couldn't make it to USH, and missed the livestream?  
Watch any service, anytime, here on [Vimeo](#)

## Worship Calendar

Join us, in person or online.

### Upcoming Services:

**December 3 – RE/Faith Focus; "My Muzurgu Eyes Are Improving"**, Rev. Bob/Rev. Liz James, *UU Hysterical Society*, pulpit guest/ Peter Meny, Worship Associate

**December 10 – "Savor The Season"** Rick Tsukada & Judy Robbins/Worship Leaders

**December 17 – "Music Sunday Featuring the Music of Stephen Sondheim"**, Sam Moffett, Pulpit Guest/Margaret Leicach, Worship Associate; Choir



### Winter Holidays at USH —

**Winter Solstice:** December 20, 7 p.m.

**Christmas Eve Morning:**  
December 24, 10:30 a.m.

**Christmas Eve Evening:**  
Carol sing 4:30 p.m.  
Worship 5 p.m.





***Coming December 3:  
Post-Worship Workshop***

## **The Church of Our Imagination**

*"The times, they are a-  
changing!"* Traditional church  
structures face all kinds of  
challenges. How do we think creatively

about different ways to do UUism? Drawing on the experience of Mirth and Dignity — an organization that partners with successful UU innovators — this workshop focuses on discussion, games, and stories about what's working and what we can learn from it.

Liz James is a member of the Saskatoon Unitarians, on the Canadian prairie. She runs Mirth and Dignity, an organization dedicated to UU humour, which can be found at [UUHystericalSociety.com](http://UUHystericalSociety.com). Liz also does guest preaching and can be reached through her website at [lizjameswrites.com](http://lizjameswrites.com).

Pre-registration is helpful, though not required, and there's a small incentive for giving us a heads-up, too. If you think you *might* attend (no commitment necessary) please register online [here](#). This workshop's free for all those who pre-registered, \$5 for registering on the day, so please register **now** if you think you're interested.

**Sunday, December 3, 12:30 – 3 p.m.**

*\* Please bring your own brown (or other colour) bag lunch\**



## **Thoughts from Rev. Bob...**

*I'm devouring copious amounts of gratitude this week.*

*I'm grateful for  
mountains of pumpkin pie  
and beans and sweet corn and potato mash*

*and family, on screens or in my home  
or in the ebullient parlor of my memory.  
I'm grateful for  
crisp days and books to read and nights beneath covers  
and dear friends and bustle and quiet and  
YOU. Dear one.*

*Food gets transformed into energy.  
May gratitude  
find its way to the very tips of our bodies  
and from there  
grace the world in beauty  
until  
all are fed  
and beauty  
grows up from the ground  
so abundantly  
there is nothing to do  
but feast on it*

Yours gratefully,  
Rev. Bob

## USH News



***Thanks Again —***

**Sunday, 11:30,  
in Fellowship Hall**

Yes, we give thanks on Thanksgiving, but here's a chance to give Thanks Again. Bring your holiday leftovers this Sunday, to be shared pot-luck-style in Fellowship Hall. Maybe you'll look in your fridge and re-invent what's there. Start from scratch if you must, or

come empty-handed if you choose. We will be surprised at what turns up while enjoying a meal together.

*~ Rick Tsukada, Chair, Council on Spiritual Life*

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## ***WHERE'S MY NAME TAG??!***

(Answer: Check at the Welcome Table.)

Elves have been at work; they have been moving things around, and objects may not be in their accustomed homes. Chancel Arts has its own room. Fellowship Hall has been scrubbed and classrooms have been re-organized.

The lobby is another focus. More than 300 name tags were in the racks, including tags for many one-time visitors. Members and friends may have had duplicate tags, and there's been a bit of culling.

There were 150+ opportunities for mistakes to occur in sorting all these, so if your tag is missing it is probably at the Welcome Table in the lobby. When you leave, just put it back in the main rack (alphabetical by first letter of your last name please). (UUs can be unconventional, but we still — pretty much — adhere to alphabetical order.)

The name tag rack may gravitate to different spots over the next few weeks as we experiment with various locations. Reducing congestion as people enter the sanctuary is the objective here.

Questions? Suggestions? Ideas for improvement? Talk to the Welcome Table host or Laurie Kelliher or email [larkkelliher@gmail.com](mailto:larkkelliher@gmail.com)

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## ***Sewer Pump Replacement Complete Before 2024***

As many of our faithful readers remember, we had a 'situation' last summer, where one of the pumps residing in a sewer pit, in a storage room on the west side of Fellowship Hall, failed. Alerted to this fact, we summoned Eastern Water Solutions, a company specializing in repairs of that sort required.

Because there are two pumps in such a pit, and their purpose is to periodically empty the pit of accumulated wastewater from the building, failure of one pump produces a rather urgent situation: if the second pump also failed, sewage would soon be flowing into places you would not wish to find it!

The contractor did a good job of extracting the dead pump from the pit. However, the pumps obtained for replacement purposes were constructed to run on three-phase voltage — different than what we happen to have in the building. We add, parenthetically here, the error was caused because a voltage label on the existing equipment was not accurate; thus, the presumed voltage was not actually in use.

Consequently, there was a delay while the single working pump continued its faithful pumping while new pumps were ordered for the actual voltage available. The pumps arrived, were installed, and tested. They worked well. Then, in the silence when they completed their cycle, the sewage in the pipes rising to street level could be heard sloshing back through the old check valve — the purpose of which is to prevent that exact reversal from happening.



So, next step: two new check valves were obtained and successfully installed and tested last Wednesday (11/15). To effect this, the pit was cleaned out, two new pumps were installed and made responsive to a new control panel, and the job is finished! It has been, it could be said, a long, strange trip, but the system should be good for many years, as was the old one.

(The picture above is of the finished project. Who knew of such things!)

In the photo, you can see two pipes arising from the pit. At the foot of each, a new pump awaits its summons to action. The two pipes attach to the new blue check valves, and then to manual gate valves. The gate valves can be closed manually during system repairs. The pipes converge from each pump and rise to the sewer main located in front of the building. The new control panel on the wall can summon help with a loud sound and flashing red light when necessary. The probability of a prolonged power outage coinciding with a full building (with lots of simultaneous flushing) is unlikely. (Should that occur, we might think about purchasing a sheaf of lottery tickets...)

And that, finally, is the rest of the story!

*~ David Newton, Chair, Building and Grounds*



## **Support USH and Help the Planet**

***Come shop, December 3 & 10  
at the USH ReGifting Sale!***

The ReGifting Sale is returning — Find a new home for your forgotten, outgrown, redundant, or simply unwanted items (*GOOD STUFF*—new, or like new, please!)

The last day to drop off your items is this Sunday, November 26. There's a box in the lobby, for your convenience.

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## *Message in a Bauble*

**Sunday, December 10**  
**Join us during Coffee**  
**Hour for Bulb**  
**decorating in fellowship**  
**hall.**



## *Giftworthy Books For The Holidays!*

NOW is a great time to look over your book collection and DONATE books that would make great HOLIDAY GIFTS for all ages. We are especially interested in new (or like new) COFFEE TABLE BOOKS that will be available for sale at the

REGIFTING SALE on DEC. 3 and 10 in Fellowship Hall.

## **Gatherings**

For information on our weekly and monthly gatherings, click [here](#).

# Social Justice

Click [HERE](#) for October's Meeting Minutes



## November GNO: *IRIS*

Our Good Neighbor Offering for November will benefit IRIS — Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services.

IRIS has been serving refugee populations in Connecticut since 1982 when it organized to resettle refugees who had fled the Vietnam conflict. It then supported refugees from Sudan, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Nicaragua, and, more recently, Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and undocumented immigrants from around the globe.

IRIS operates out of offices in Hartford and New Haven. It has played a leadership role, both in CT and nationally, in developing programs to guide and train community volunteers through the process of resettling a refugee family. Please give generously throughout the month of November.

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## ***Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance Information***

### **GHIAA Core Team Trainings (registration required)**

Learn more, and register by visiting: <https://cljct.org/ghiaa/trainings/>

- **Winter Session** (remote): Thursday evenings, February 15, 22, 29, and March 7, 6:30-8:30 pm, via Zoom

For more information, speak with [Diana Heymann](#) in person or via email.



**The Thanksgiving Food drive has ended. Thank you so much for your generosity. (USH raised \$570 for the food pantry.)**

**The Horace Bushnell Food Pantry Still Needs Your Help**

Food is always needed. Remember to buy extra when you grocery shop. Every bit of healthy food helps keep folks nourished and warm. Bring your food donations with you on Sunday, or stop by the office during the week.



***Coat Drive Extended: All Winter***

All sizes for men, women, and children are needed...  
Donate new or gently-used coats to support the community of Horace Bushnell food pantry. Please place donations in the bin located in the lobby

**RE and Chalice Clubhouse**



## *Join the fun at USH —*

Looking for a supportive, inclusive, non-judgmental home for your family's spiritual needs? Let USH be yours! Visit and learn about Unitarian Universalism, our congregation, and how USH can foster your

family's religious or spiritual journeys.

Sign up for Sundays [here](#) online or in person at the welcome table. Questions? Reach out to our Interim Religious Education Coordinator [Annie Witzler](#) for more information.



This week, children and youth are invited to join in with various activities to enrich their spiritual lives. Chalice Clubhouse (grades K – 5) will meet to hear a story connected to our Seven UU Principles and make a craft inspired by our story. The USH Youth Group (grades 6 – 12) will be assisting with various roles around Sunday morning service and post-service activities under the guidance of their youth leaders. See you

around the Meeting House!

[Click HERE for this week's RE Newsletter](#)

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# USH Resources

Flu and Covid seasons are upon us; pharmacies, clinics, and local health departments offer vaccines. Please protect yourself and those around you.

Masks are available at the Welcome Table for anyone who wants one. We have both children's and adult sizes.

If you ever come to a USH event and test positive for Covid in the week following, we ask you to please let the office, or Rev. Bob, know. These things happen – as we know, many of us have had the virus once or twice – and we just want to keep people informed **and** care for you, if needed.

## **2023 – 2024 USH Board of Directors**

**Dana Donovan:** President

**Nancy Kemmerer:** President-Elect

**Jon Covault:** Treasurer

**Gloria Mengual:** Secretary

**Jim Venneman:** Finance Council Chair

**Rick Tsukada:** Spiritual Life Council Chair

**Paul Cipriano:** Administration Council Chair

**Judy Sullivan:** Social Justice Council Chair

**Tina Davies:** Community Within Council Chair

**Laurie Kelliher:** Membership Council Chair

Have a question or comment for the board? Send an email to: [ushboardofdirectors@gmail.com](mailto:ushboardofdirectors@gmail.com).

## **Board Meeting**

**The next board meeting is Tuesday, December 12**

**6:30 p.m. Hybrid**

**[Zoom Link HERE](#)**

**The latest financial reports for FY 2023-2024 have been posted;** click [HERE](#) to view.

See the 2022/23 Annual Report [HERE](#)

The [Board Meeting Minutes](#) for October 2023 have been posted.



Click [HERE](#) to view the USH Directory, Reports, and other church business information online. Contact [Karolina Wojtysko](#) for the username and password.

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## USH Staff:

**Rev. Bob Janis**, Minister  
[ushminister@gmail.com](mailto:ushminister@gmail.com) | 860-233-9897 ext. 103

**Annie Witzler**, Interim Religious Education Coordinator  
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**Sam Moffett**, Director of Music  
[smoffettuu@gmail.com](mailto:smoffettuu@gmail.com)

**Patty Peck**, Bookkeeper  
[ushtreasurer50@gmail.com](mailto:ushtreasurer50@gmail.com)

**Karolina Wojtysko**, Office Administrator & Building Rentals  
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The deadline for USH E-news submissions is  
**Tuesday at Noon.**

**Please write in the 'Subject' field "USH Enews", and include the dates that your submission should be featured.** Announcements about upcoming events appear for two consecutive weeks **maximum**, unless other arrangements have been made with the editorial team.

When forwarding information concerning an "outside" event or organization, **please pre-edit your copy** in order to keep the piece to 200 words or less. Note that all material is subject to editing prior to publication.

Articles should be sent as email file attachments, (MS Word preferred) and images need to be sent separately as jpeg, jpg, png, tiff, bmp, or gif files.

Thank you for your submission!

**Scheduling Information: *NO E-News will be published December 27. Contributors, please send all year-end submissions no later than Monday, December 18 in order to have them published in the Dec. 20 edition.*** (Note: Worship Reminders will continue to be sent for all services during the holiday period.)

[Email Your Submission](#)

[Missed Last Week's Enews? Click HERE](#)

[Want to Donate Online? Click Here](#)

## USH Calendar of Events

The calendar for December **2023** can be viewed [HERE](#).

Please consult our Online Calendar regularly for all upcoming events coordinated by the Unitarian Society of Hartford

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



Unitarian Society of Hartford | 50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105 Phone: 860-233-9897

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