



UU and You

*the monthly newsletter
of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden*

*Ours is a religion of covenant rather than creed.
Practicing Loving Community, Advancing Justice, and Nurturing Spiritual Growth
are how we seek to live this faith.*

From the Minister

As I write, I am just days away from takeoff, aboard Cathay Pacific Flight 899 to Hong Kong and then on to Ho Chi Minh City aka Saigon, roughly 18 hours airborne. It is a dream of pilgrimage, a journey of War and the Soul, the title of Dr. Edward Tick's first book on how the War in Vietnam impacted the soul and how so many U.S. veterans lost their souls in the horror of that conflict and how the fortunate ones dared to engage in the deep healing that for some occasioned a return to that land of reckoning. You know by now that I am embarking on this pilgrimage to Vietnam in the spirit of truth and healing and reconciliation, the truth that I lost one dear to me who fought on "this side," a stance which I resisted, healing that still needs to be done, and reconciliation that Ed assures us is more than possible with Vietnamese who will welcome us, including Vietnamese who fought on "the other side." Such welcoming by our hosts is the embodiment of grace. I trust that my time there will be an embodiment of gratitude.

What have you longed to resolve from years past? From what are you still yearning to heal? How have events intimate and ultimate pervaded your souls and psyches inviting you to do and be in directions that you have never done or been? As I depart, I carry you with me in my heart. I hold you in my prayers. I connect with you in my thoughts. And I promise to

share upon my return—not just photos and a few anecdotes here and there, but layered specifics of how it is never too late for a pilgrimage of heart, mind, and soul, and how such pilgrimages need not be measured in miles traveled, but in your readiness and most surely the support of those who cannot embark with you on your particular journey.

If our faith is a faith that heals, and I believe it is, I believe also that it is about a soulful journey to wholeness, a transformation fueled by an epiphany of how to move into a space of renewal and resurrection. Ironic, yes, that in this season of "ripe to sere," grace and gratitude breed also a springtime of soul.

As light is less in this part of the world, I anticipate the warmth of an Eastern sun and the illumination of paths I am ready to walk. What a gift this is, which you, dear congregants and dear family, are imparting in the form of phase two of my sabbatical. While you continue to ingest the harvest of autumn in its kaleidoscopic color and savory cuisine and hearths rekindled, might we all know a harvest of gratitude for whatever pilgrimage is ours on which to embark.

Love you
Rev. Jan

Masthead

UU and You is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden.

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The Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden is a fair-share member of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.
www.uua.org

Minster's Schedule

Phase 2 of Rev. Jan's sabbatical extends from October 23 through December 2. Her pilgrimage to Vietnam with Soldier's Heart (see www.soldiersheart.net) is from October 29 through November 17. Count on blogs posted regularly at www.pastor@uumeriden.org. Ongoing thanks to our Committee on Shared Ministry and our Worship Associates and the entire congregation for your support

From the President

Retreat: The Board of Trustees held a two-part Retreat on Friday, September 14th. We met for dinner at Sandy Duffy and Jeff May's home to get to know each other in a team-building process, have fun, and continue to develop a Board of Trustees (BOT) Covenant. What is a "Covenant" you ask? In his book, Behavioral Covenants in Congregations, Gilbert R. Rendle explains that "a behavioral covenant is a written document developed by leaders, agreed to and owned by its creators, and practiced on a daily basis as a spiritual discipline. It is a way of developing common language, common commitments, and an awareness of healthy behaviors." As a new Board of Trustees, we will learn why and how we can agree to act together as Trustees of our congregation. We will share the BOT Covenant with you when completed. It will be posted on our congregational website under the governance membership section. If anyone would like a hard copy, please contact Board President, Donna Stimpson. Prior to the retreat, each trustee viewed Dan Hotchkiss's short video on leadership based on his book, Governance and Ministry, Rethinking Board Leadership. At the retreat we discussed the leadership concepts.

Phase two of the BOT Retreat met on October 3rd at Donna Stimpson's home for dinner to

continue to refine the draft Covenant. We discussed the importance of the Board of Trustees developing strategic short term (one year) and longer term (two- to three- year) goals and objectives. We brainstormed potential goals and some objectives. At the October 18th Board meeting, a small task force was created to review these ideas and develop goals and measurable objectives to be discussed and refined by the full Board.

Board Resignation: With regret, we accept the resignation of Tracy Smith, Clerk, due to work commitments requiring him to be regularly out of state. We will miss him for his insights and his wit, and we wish him well. I will consult the Bylaws on the procedure to fill this vacancy.

Communication: If you have ideas, concerns, praise regarding the Board of Trustees or any other part of congregational life, please contact the President (Donna Stimpson 203-237-1323), the Vice President (Jane Dioguardi) or any of the Board of Trustees (Sandy Duffy, Trish Schneider, Randy Heath, Tina Caplan, Ann Smith, and Kathy Lindberg). It is an honor to serve this congregation.

Donna Stimpson, UUCM President.

Upcoming Services

www.uucentralct.org/worship

Please arrive by 10:20 AM and be seated by 10:25 AM, so that we may worship together as the chimes ring out.

Sunday, November 4th 10:30 AM

“Turning Back”

Worship Leader: Jeff May and John Sepples with members of the congregation
Worship Associate: Lisa Urso

Today we turn the clocks back one hour to “standard” time—even though we spend only 18 weeks of the year in “standard” time vs. 34

in daylight time. While turning the clock back an hour may disrupt our circadian rhythm once a year, the idea of going back to an earlier time in our lives is an idea that has always fascinated us and inspired our imaginations. If you could turn back the hands of time to some point in your life, or perhaps some point in history, where would the “wayback machine” take you and why? What draws you to this time? We will hear from a few of our members, and provide an opportunity for congregational sharing as well.

Sunday November 11th 10:30 AM

*“Penitents, Patients, Prophets” –
Veterans’ Day*

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Chris Antal

Worship Associate: Lisa Urso

How those who fight in armed conflict on behalf of their community have related to that community upon return has changed over time. How might U.S. Veterans better relate to U.S. society today, and why does it matter?

The Rev. Dr. Chris J. Antal is the settled minister at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Rock Tavern (NY) and staff chaplain at the Crescenz VA Medical Center (Philadelphia). He is a Veteran of the U.S. war in Afghanistan.

Second Sunday Potluck Dinner – Come enjoy this post-service time of food and fellowship directly after the service. Please use this Perfect Potluck meal planner link to let people know what you plan to bring:

<https://perfectpotluck.com/IXJS7635>. Once you take an item, everyone else who opens the link will see that others have signed up for food contributions.

Sunday November 18th 10:30 AM

*Transgender Sunday of Remembrance
“Love Beyond Gender”*

Worship Leader: Angie Swanger with Cindy Ferguson

Worship Associate: Jeff May

On this annually observed Sunday, we hold up our sisters and brothers who are transgender and who have not survived the pervasive cultural stigma that this carries. Each was a beautiful person. Each courageously said with their lives: "I am who I am." "They" are "us." Let's open our hearts and minds as we honor lives lived in beauty and grace, and celebrate the wondrous distinctiveness of each of us.

Sunday November 25th 10:30 AM
"An Attitude of Gratitude"-
Intergenerational

Worship Leader: Jennifer Richard and John Sepples

Worship Associate: Lynne Grobsky

On the Sunday following Thanksgiving fresh from the commercialism of "Black Friday" and Small Business Saturday that have come to mark the beginning of the holiday shopping season, we will help one another cultivate an attitude of gratitude through the communal singing of Sanskrit mantras and English affirmations, thanking the Divine for giving us what we need.

Calendar of Events

www.uucentralct.org/calendar

Sunday, November 18, Noon to 2:00 PM

Next Steps

Ready to consider membership? What does it mean? How can it happen?

Have you already participated in a Getting to Know U workshop? Or, are you definitely ready to take "the next steps" toward becoming a member?

Come participate in this workshop that is interactive and informational. Learn more about the faith that is Unitarian Universalism and how this congregation seeks to live it. Find out about the expectations of membership, and how you would like to tap your gifts and talents to enhance congregational life. Count on a light lunch and activity packets for children.

Ongoing Meetings/Activities

Anti-Racism Discussion

Tuesday, November 6th 6:00 PM

Meets the 1st Tuesday of every month 6-8p at UUCM. Next session is Nov. 6th, 6-8pm We will be planning for upcoming events, including the Common Read: *Justice on Earth: People of Faith Working at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Environment*, edited by Manish Mishra-Marzetti and Jennifer Nordstrom

Women Singing Circle

Tuesday, 7-8:30 PM

Come experience the joy of singing with women! We will sing songs written and sung by women, with the intention of empowering women to reach their highest potential. We are not a chorus or choir. We are women who want to sing/chant with other women. No singing experience necessary. The songs are easy to learn, and instruments will be provided. All women are welcome. Bring your friends. You don't have to be a member of UUCM to join us.

Wednesday Worship

November 7th & 21st, 7-7:45 PM

This twice-a-month gathering brings different lay leaders to share some of their spiritual practices in an informal, small-group setting. Sit in our circle and enjoy readings, chants, music, and meditations, ending with a topical conversation. For more info, contact Trish at arechair@umeriden.org

Buddhanature Gathering Group

November 18st, 2-3:30 PM

A once a month gathering where we come together to share our journey on the spiritual path. One does not need to identify as Buddhist to join us, we welcome anyone who has an interest in learning about the beliefs and practices of Buddhism.

UUCM Holiday Fair News

Friday, December 7th 4-8 PM

Saturday, December 8th 9 AM - 3 PM

Dear Members, Friends, and Visitors:

Our Holiday Fair is getting closer—Friday Dec. 7 and Saturday Dec. 8. We plan to have a variety of themed raffle baskets for our fair-goers. We are looking for items that can be built/arranged into a specific theme basket that would make an attractive prize.

Examples (but not limited to)

- Dog/cat/pet supplies-
- Children's crafts, and books for elementary school children
- Picture frames, photo albums, decorative stationery
- "Setting the Mood" theme candles, wine sipping/wine glasses, massage oils, lotions, massage certificates
- Italian theme basket: "gourmet" pasta, sauces, spices, pot holders, dish cloths, tablecloths/placemats/napkins

Other items:

- Glasses, mugs, teas, coffees
- Lotto tickets, chocolates, sports memorabilia
- Knitted items, baby supplies
- Glamour skin-care items
- Jellies and jams

To donate raffle basket items, contact Pat at Patstark0314@hotmail.com. Thank you for your

support. We welcome your ideas, and your assistance is always appreciated.

Pat Stark

Small Group Ministry

1st & 3rd Saturdays, 10 AM - Noon

We still have a few openings!

In Small Group Ministry, groups of 8-10 individuals led by trained facilitators meet twice monthly to foster friendship and caring, enhance spiritual growth, strengthen the fabric of this faith community, and provide avenues for service. In this intimate setting, we share, listen, and deepen our spiritual understanding and explore the paths we are on. What a splendid way for newcomers especially to build meaningful and lasting connections and for folks who are well seasoned in congregational life to forge new ties with all who participate. Thus far this year we have one group, co-facilitated by Steve Volpini and Kathy Lindberg and meeting on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays from 10 am to noon. To register, contact Steve at stevevolpini2@gmail.com. It's not too late to partake of this enriching experience!



Social Justice Committee

Next meeting: Sunday, Nov. 25th, 9am

If you have an interest in Social Justice issues, please join us.

The Social Justice Council receives 25% of the undesignated cash offerings from each Sunday's service.

At this meeting, we will decide how to allocate funds collected in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

Decisions on providing money to the following groups:

- Moral Monday CT
- Local Land Trust
- United Action CT

We will also provide money to UU of Greater Bridgeport to help defray the cost of a new Black Lives Matter banner.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) is the recipient of the monies collected during our annual Guest at Your Table program. We are being awarded a "Creating Justice Banner Society" Certificate for 25-49% participation of the members of our congregation. Look for the certificate, which will be hung on a wall at the church. UUSC partners with grassroots organizations around the globe, making a lasting difference in the lives of thousands. We will once again participate in Guest at Your Table, which will begin soon.

Membership Committee

Be a part of our Welcoming Ministry! You can be the fresh welcoming face of UUCM. It's easy. One Sunday a month, serve our congregation as a greeter. Help new people get name tags for the day, direct them to the DRE for the day (usually Richard Gault) if they have children, introduce newcomers to Rev. Jan or a member of the Board or the Membership Committee after worship.

You can be the fresh welcoming face of UUCM. It's easy. One Sunday a month serve our congregation as an usher. Distribute orders of service and hymnals, help people into the

Sanctuary, take the collection, count people in the service, confer with the foyer monitor, and write the number of people on the main floor in the book on the buffet.

You can be the calm steady presence in the excitement of Sunday morning. It's easy. One Sunday a month serve our congregation as the foyer monitor. Assist the Newcomer Greeter and Usher before the service, stay in the foyer through the service (there is a speaker directly above where you sit so you can listen to the service), direct people to restrooms or to the kitchen for food drop-off on Second Sunday, help people find the Nursery or rest rooms if they have to step out of the service, count the people on the main floor not in worship and report that number to the usher. .

Be a part of our Welcoming Ministry. Help members, friends, visitors and guests experience the warmth and grace of Unitarian Universalism every time they come through the door on Sunday morning. The commitment is once a month in the role of your choice on the Sunday of the month that you choose. If you cannot make your usual week, reach out to the other people on your team (greeters, ushers, or monitors) or the alternate list to switch or arrange a substitute. Training provided. Contacts for everyone who is a part of our Welcoming Ministry will be provided. Once we fill out the teams (greeters, ushers, or monitors), we will have a recognition breakfast for all members of our Welcoming Ministry.

What's your preference of role? What's your preference of Sunday (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th)? RSVP to Membership@uumeriden.org or see Rev. Jan, Kathy Lindberg, or Jeff May in person

Chalice Sanctuary Team

October has been a busy month for the Chalice Sanctuary Team. The highlight was the observance of the one-year anniversary of

Sujitno and Dahlia's residence with us. It has been a long time to live in confinement, and we admire their strength and fortitude in enduring what is essentially incarceration in our church. The one-year anniversary was very well attended. There were many members from Sujitno and Dahlia's mosque. The Imam delivered some opening words and a prayer. Their goddaughter did a traditional Southeast Asian dance. There were musical contributions from a soloist, Nathalie Vereira, the Elm City Girls' Choir, and our own Sacred Singing Circle. Many people from different supportive groups spoke. There was good media attendance. While we cannot "celebrate" one year in sanctuary, this was a wonderful observance of this anniversary.

UUCM also hosted a gathering of clergy and lay representatives from sanctuary congregations in Connecticut. Rev. Paul Fleck chaired the meeting. Paul is a valuable member of the Chalice Sanctuary Team and heads up New Sanctuary Connecticut, an interfaith group involved in immigrants' rights and the sanctuary movement. The member congregations are exploring how we can all work together and support each other.

Rev. Jan Carlsson-Bull and I participated and were speakers at a march and rally in Hartford for immigrants. We joined in this walk in support of efforts by a gentleman who has been walking for weeks in support of just reform of our immigration policy and rights for all immigrants.

Our sister congregation, the Unitarian Society of New Haven, has continued to be very supportive of our efforts, both monetarily and by giving time and effort to the cause. We greatly appreciate their support. They have asked what else they can do to help us, and a team member, Maureen Muir, is working closely with representatives of the congregation

to continue to find ways to increase their involvement.

We have lost a few members of our team due to moves, health or work issues. We would love to welcome additional members to the team. As they say, "Many hands make light work." Any member or friend of UUCM who would like to become more involved is invited to join us. We don't have set meeting times. We figure out at each meeting when we will meet next. However, the meetings are posted on our church calendar. Anyone interested is welcome to attend a meeting or contact me with questions or for information. While there is work and effort needed to do this, it is generally not overwhelming, and it is certainly gratifying and educational. It is one way UU's can walk the talk and live our faith.

Nancy Burton, Coordinator of the Chalice Sanctuary Team
203-671-4482
nburtoncnm@gmail.com

Finance Committee

Next meeting 11/08/18 – all welcome!

Have you ever wondered what the Finance Committee does? I will confess I had no interest in what the Finance Committee did when I first came to UU Meriden. I was a parent with a young child, so my main focus was on the CYRE program. In the last six years, I've developed more of an interest in how UU Meriden comes up with a budget, as well as what the Finance Committee does. I started asking myself questions. Where does our income come from? How are our expenses recorded and tracked? Perhaps you have similar questions. As the Treasurer, I will be sharing the church's finances in the newsletter.

In answer to the first question: We have three major sources of income: pledges and Sunday collection, fundraising, and rentals. The Finance

Committee is responsible for recording and tracking the expenses. Below is how we did in the first quarter of fiscal year '18-'19.

In the first quarter, we brought in \$29,977.54 for total income. Income during the first quarter of the fiscal year runs low for two reasons. Pledges run low in the first quarter because people are away during the summer. Second, our major fundraisers are late in the fiscal year. Therefore, income was at 23% of budget. Below is the breakdown of income:

- Pledges (current year and prior year): \$26,586.15
- Collection Plate \$989.39 (25% of the \$989.39 goes to the Social Justice Council)
- Fundraising: \$57 from the Drumming Circle. Our first major fundraising event, the Holiday Fair, is set for December 7th and 8th.
- Rentals: \$2345.

Historically, expenses also run low in the first quarter of the fiscal year, mainly because we don't run many programs during the summer months. This has been true for the first quarter of FY '18-'19. Total Expenses were \$ 25,540.71. Our expenses were at 20% of budget.

To learn more about UU Meriden's finances, talk to me or to a member of the Finance Committee.

Trish Schneider, Treasurer

Communications Committee

Social Media Expertise Wanted

Do you have knowledge of how to use Social Media, i.e., Face Book, Twitter, Instagram, etc.? We need your skills, not to do but to provide your skills to interested persons. This would be a very short term project, and we will provide you help in setting up and delivering the

information, or will present the information that you provide to a skilled trainer, who will do the training. If you are willing to lend us a hand, please contact Angie Swanger at angmart1@comcast.net or 860-888-3293.

In Memory of Megumi

As you know, we all have a heavy broken heart at the loss of our dear member and friend Megumi Yamamoto who died unexpectedly at the age of 47. She was a very active member of our congregation, as a Past President of the Board of Trustees, former Chair of Children and Youth Religious Education, and Worship Associate. I am sure many of you have memories of her as her children grew up. We will miss her smile, her laugh, her compassion and energy. Thank you for those of you who took the time to attend Megumi's visitation and/or Memorial Service. She will remain in our hearts. Please send your condolences to her husband, Lenny Fritz, and her children, Zoe and Asher.

Donna Stimpson, President



Kudos and Thank You to:

All who have led our October worship services:

October 7 – “Braided” – Intergenerational worship led by Rev. Jan with Worship Associate Lisa Urso and honoring Indigenous Peoples Sunday.

October 14 – “Reverie for the Time That Is” led by Rev. Jan with Jeff May as Worship Associate.

October 21 – “Black Lives Matter” – A worship experience led by Rev. Jan and Angie Swanger for which Bishop John Selders was at the pulpit with a mesmerizing sermon. We are ever grateful to the wisdom and counsel of Bishop John Selders and Lady Pamela Selders, who were key in working with us to plan this service. Thanks also to Worship Associate Lynne Grobsky, soloist and guitarist Carole Capen Kargher, and worship participants Diane Szymaszek, Tina Caplan, and Donna Stimpson. And YES to the banner we installed on the front of our Meeting House directly after this service!

October 28 – “In the Middle” led by Jeff May with John Sepples, both Worship Associates.

Randy Heath, Donna Stimpson, and all the members of our Property Committee who do so much to maintain and improve our facilities inside and out!

All who brought dinners for the Kline family during Barbara’s recent hospitalization and in the aftermath of her surgery.

All who made possible our ongoing ministry of sanctuary as we continue to host Sujitno Sajuti and his wife, Dahlia. Ongoing kudos to our Chalice Sanctuary Team, with the stellar leadership of Nancy Burton and the continuing legal savvy of Alok Bhatt of the Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance (CIRA), Rev. Paul Fleck of New Sanctuary CT, and the New Haven Legal Aid Assistance (NHLAA).

The **Women’s Sacred Singing Circle**, so enthusiastically led by Lynne Grobsky, and which brings joy to all who participate and music to the One-Year Anniversary Observance of Sujitno in Sanctuary.

Our **Committee on Shared Ministry** thoughtfully chaired by Tim O’Brien and including Pat Stark and Bob Reutenauer. This group addresses the connectedness of the congregation’s mission and its various

ministries and seeks to raise congregational awareness of this. This group also serves as Rev. Jan’s sabbatical committee.

For all who should have been cited and were overlooked.

Loving Wishes to:

The family of Megumi Yamamoto, our beloved member, whom we lost on October 3. Our hearts open to her husband, Lenny Fritz, and children Zoe and Asher Fritz, and mother, Andrea Hoslett, and Uncle John Hoslett and sister Mika Yamamoto. Many of us were present for the celebration of Megumi’s life on October 10 and the graveside rites, both led by Rev. Jan and planned with her family.

Barbara Kline, who is now recovering at home from October 9 open heart surgery for a valve replacement at Hartford Hospital.

Daniel Bull, who is recovering from his second cataract surgery October 23.

Scott Barnard, who continues to receive treatment for lung cancer and cope with ALS.

Ad Sternberg, who turned 93 in May and is in residence at Kensington Village in Meriden, yet comes regularly to Sunday services.

Dorothy Farkas, who turned 96 on July 7, and welcomes visitors. Dorothy is completely blind. You can reach her directly at 203-265-1405.

All who are moving through difficult times.

If you know someone who has contributed to this church in a distinctive way in the recent past or someone whose life happenings call for special wishes, please let Maureen Leahy know at office@uumeriden.org.

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden

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