

# Unitarian Universalist Society: East

Member of the Clara Barton District of the Unitarian Universalist Association



**Unitarian Universalist Society: East** is a welcoming, open-minded, spiritual community seeking truth and meaning in its many forms. We share responsibility for building a more equitable, peaceful, and sustainable world.

Editor’s Note: due to COVID-19 precautions, UUS:E has closed the Meetinghouse for all activities. Only staff members will enter the building until further notice.

Check our website and watch for email eblast notices for updates. <http://uuse.org>

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## Sunday Services Schedule

November Ministry Theme: Healing

In November we continue to hold one virtual worship service every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM. For the time being our Sunday services will be held using Zoom. Our Zoom login and call-in information will be shared through the congregational eblast. If you are not subscribed to the congregational eblast, please send a message to [e-news@uuse.org](mailto:e-news@uuse.org) or contact Annie Gentile in the UUS:E office to arrange another method of receiving relevant information.

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### November 1: "Love of the Light in Each Other."

Beth Hudson-Hankins and Sandy Karosi come back to these words that we say each week with a focus on healing ourselves, our community and our country.

**Coordinators:** Beth Hudson-Hankins and Sandy Karosi

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### November 8: "Taking Stock, Part I."

All congregation worship. This morning is our first Sunday service following the 2020 elections. As Rev. Josh has been saying for months, there is no way to plan ahead for this service. We know we will be taking stock of the election results (if we even have them by the 8th.) How are we feeling about what has happened? What are the implications for our lives? What future can we anticipate?

**Coordinators:** Rev. Josh Pawelek and Gina Campellone

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### November 15: "Taking Stock, Part II."

Our second post-election Sunday service. We'll dive more deeply into the implications of the 2020 elections. How are Unitarian Universalists being called in this moment?

**Coordinator:** Rev. Josh Pawelek

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### November 22: TBA

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### Coordinator:

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### November 29: "On Universals and Particulars."

Is there a universal morality? That was the question UUS:E member Michael York asked after purchasing a sermon at the 2019 goods and services auction. We'll learn what Michael's answer is, and we'll learn what Rev. Josh has to say about

it in light of the moral questions generated by the coronavirus pandemic.

**Coordinator:** Rev. Josh Pawelek

(Note: this service was originally scheduled for this past February, and then again this past June, but needed to be postponed due to extenuating circumstances. We're hoping the third time's the charm!)

## 2020 – 2021 Ministry Themes

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/themes.html>

September	Renewal
October	Deep Listening
November	Healing
December	Stillness
January	Imagination
February	Beloved Community
March	Commitment
April	Becoming
May	Story
June	Play

## Community Outreach Ministry

Charitable Giving for November 2020

As always, thank you for your generosity.

"We do not gather our gifts only for ourselves, but to share with the larger community."

For the month of November, our regular community outreach offering will be dedicated to Manchester Senior, Adult, and Family Services.

The Manchester department of Senior, Adult and Family Services works to improve the quality of life and help maintain the independence of Manchester residents by offering information, referral, outreach, advocacy, assessment of needs and individual consultation on human services benefits and programs.

Please contact Louisa Graver at [lgraver163@gmail.com](mailto:lgraver163@gmail.com), David Lacoss, or Nancy Madar at [nancymadar@hotmail.com](mailto:nancymadar@hotmail.com).

Checks made out to UUS:E will be treated as follows. If the memo line:

- ✓ is blank or "pledge" is written, all will go toward your pledge.
- ✓ has "COM" or the name of the charity is on the memo line, all will go to the charity.
- ✓ has "1/2 pledge, 1/2 COM," it will be divided equally.

December: three area homeless shelters (East Hartford, Vernon/Rockville, and Hartford)

## The Minister's Column: Hallelujah!

As we approach the 2020 elections on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, life in the United States, no matter who you are, is disorienting and painful. Each day seems to bring with it a new cut, a new bruise, a new indignity, a new insult, a new threat to democracy, a new broken norm, a new spike in positive tests, a new largest fire, most damaging flood, strongest hurricane. Of course, different people are impacted differently by each new thing, but the little traumas accumulate in everyone. The loneliness of isolation grows in everyone. Patience runs thin at times in everyone.

Our ministry theme for November is healing. As I sit down to write these words in mid-October, I confess I am finding it challenging to contemplate healing. Healing from what? The list is long: healing from all the interrelated health, economic, educational and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic; from our nation's foundational sin of racism; from persistent and pervasive sexism that has also become glaringly visible during the pandemic (most notably in the Labor Department's early October report that women have lost work at four times the rate of men since March); healing from profound ideological polarization in our nation, from vitriolic campaign rhetoric and misinformation campaigns; from blatant abuses of political power; from all the ways our democratic systems and institutions have been harmed by attacks on voting rights, the census, and the postal service, just to name a few; from natural disasters with heightened severity clearly due to human-caused climate change on planet earth.

Ughhh. You know this list. I trust you understand why I am finding it challenging to contemplate healing at this moment. Where is one to even begin?

Maybe healing begins with us. With our community. With our principles. With our covenant. Maybe healing begins with us being available to each other for simple connection and conversation. Available to hear each other's frustration and anger; to witness each other's tears without shying away; to offer virtual hugs, because so many of us miss physical touch so much. Maybe healing begins with us being present to each other as we each search for our sources of inward calm, peace, strength, resolve—our inner voice.

I'm contemplating ways we can be more connected. Three thoughts:

First, I encourage every one of you—every UUS:E member and friend—to reach out to me for connection and conversation. While it isn't always

easy—or wise—to meet in person; and while Zoom or the phone are inevitably poor substitutes for face-to-face engagement, there is immense value in meeting however we can. I've spoken to many of you in person, by Zoom or by phone since the pandemic began, but certainly not all of you. I mean this from the bottom of my heart: I want to hear from you! You don't have to be in crisis to contact me. You don't need to have anything pressing or urgent in order to reach out to me (even conversation about the mundane events of our lives is a good thing in these trying times). You certainly won't be bothering me if you reach out for conversation! I am available!

Second, because the election is upon us, and because we have no idea what will happen on and immediately after November 3<sup>rd</sup>, we are organizing two, virtual post-election vigils on November 5<sup>th</sup>—the first at 1:00, the second at 7:00. Watch the eblast for login information. No matter what happens, we will have a space to be together as a spiritual community in the wake of this very high-stakes election.

Finally, one of the things I love about UUS:E is that so many of you are in touch with each other. So many of you are watching out for each other, listening to each other, caring for each other. When I hear stories about the kinds of support you offer to each other, it warms my heart. It reminds me of the many strengths of our congregation. Keep doing that! Do it even more. Connect with people you may only know a little bit. Get to know them better.

We have much healing ahead of us – as people, as members of local communities, as citizens and residents of a nation, as members of the global community. Our capacity to heal begins with strong relationships. No matter what happens in the world around us, and no matter what other activities call for our attention, let's take the coming months to focus on our UUS:E relationships. Reach out. Connect. And when the time is right, heal.

Amen and blessed be.

With love,

—Rev. Josh



## Membership News

### Meet the Church



Sunday, November 15 at 11:30 AM

Are you a newcomer to UUS:E? Would you like to know a little more about who we are and our programs?

Visitors are invited to meet virtually (via Zoom) with the Rev. Josh for a brief overview of UUS:E, followed by a virtual tour of the building and grounds.

There will be time for your questions as well.

An RSVP is not required, though we would like to know if you're coming. Contact the UUS:E office at [uuseoffice@uuse.org](mailto:uuseoffice@uuse.org) to let us know. Just stay on the Sunday service Zoom link following the November 15<sup>th</sup> service that starts at 10:00 AM, or log back in at 11:30.

If you are interested and do not have a Zoom link to the service, please contact Annie Gentile at 860-646-5151 or [uuseoffice@uuse.org](mailto:uuseoffice@uuse.org).

We look forward to meeting you!

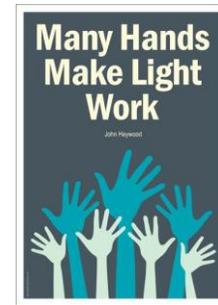
### UU Connect with You

Would you like another way to connect with others at UUS:E? Members of the Pastoral Friends Committee would like to invite you to join us on November 12 at 4 PM for a Zoom gathering just to chat. This is for any members or friends who would like to have a chance to visit. There is no specific topic; we just wanted to reach out. We'd like to do this once a month on different days and at different times. Please join us for this first meeting.

### New Directories Available

The new Directory of Members and Friends for 2020 – 2021 is now available. Members and friends are welcome to pick up a copy at the Meetinghouse. We will have a stack on the little table outside the office-side front door during office hours (8:00 – 4:00 M – F), so feel free to pick one up. We will mail you a copy or email you a PDF version upon request. Just call or email Annie in the office at 860-646-5151 or [uuseoffice@uuse.org](mailto:uuseoffice@uuse.org), and she will get one out to you.

## Sunday Services Crew Needed



How would you like to become involved in the inner workings of our Sunday services from the comfort of your home? Join Rev. Josh and the Sunday Services Committee, in conjunction with the Streaming Advisory Team in continuing to produce high quality virtual Sunday Services.

It takes many hours to put together a UUS:E streaming service each Sunday morning. You would work closely with Rev Josh, Jane, and/or coordinators from the Sunday Service Committee to create and facilitate services.

Can you support the team in the following areas? We will provide training to volunteers and you can do all or most of the work at home in advance.

- Create slideshows to enhance specific services. Software such as PowerPoint, iMovie, etc. can be used.
- Create themed videos to enhance services. iMovie or any video editing app can be used.
- Provide music videos or perform live music for a service in coordination with Mary Bopp, Music Director.
- Assist Gina, with special RE related services.
- Volunteer, in person, at the meetinghouse with both software and hardware setup, and control during a Sunday service. One to two people on a rotating basis are needed. Masks and social distancing protocols are maintained.

If you can help, please call the office 860-646-5151

## Green Sanctuary News

FREE Home Energy Savings Products (and Audit)! UUS:E members recently got free LED bulbs, low-flow shower heads, hot water tank insulation, and caulking of their leaky windows and doors, which will save them hundreds of dollars in your energy bills. Plus they got access to rebates worth thousands of dollars for insulation, appliances, and heat pumps (mini-splits). EnergizeCT offers these for free until the end of the year. In-home services are being done with COVID-19 health and safety guidelines in place.

<https://www.energizect.com/your-home/solutions-list/home-energy-solutions-core-services>

### Gardeners:

A) Thursday, Oct. 29, 7 PM. IREJN is providing a webinar on preparing your garden for winter:

<https://irejn.org/putting-your-garden-to-bed/>

B) Thursday, Nov. 12, 7 – 8:30 PM. IREJN is providing a webinar on planting wildflowers from seeds:

<https://irejn.org/thursday-november-12-propogating-native-wildflowers-from-seed/>

C) No seeds? No problem! Mary Lawrence has hundreds of free perennial seeds for pollinators (Black-eyed Susan, Purple Coneflower, Shasta Daisy, Feverfew, and Queen Anne's Lace). Just email her for some free seeds:

[WellOnWheels@hotmail.com](mailto:WellOnWheels@hotmail.com).

## Change is Hard In Good Times and Bad

Anne Carr

The end of year this calendar year looms: the election is upon us. And the monumental changes we all experienced in 2020 will continue (hopefully with less crisis) as change is ever present in our lives and the life of our beloved UUS:E community.

How do I/we face change? I can be so be entrenched in my ways, refusing to face the changes I need to make until the pain of not changing overtakes me. Choosing the known path is much easier than the looming unknowns of a different path. Change is inevitable and how I embrace it is my decision. It can be said there is joy in the journey when I allow myself to embrace it.

UUS:E is in its infancy when compared to other UU congregations. Fifty-one years ago, a group of individuals started, nurtured and still nurture our community. I am deeply grateful to these women and men. Who comes behind them to maintain the vibrancy of UUS:E?

How do those of us in our 60s, 70s and 80s embrace these younger folks. Oh, my goodness, the changes made in the last 50 years is unbelievable. I remember telephone operators; black and white television and my first car had a choke. The concerns and challenges of today's young adults (anyone under 55 from POV) are very different.

How has/does UUS:E embrace the changes needed to stay current with today's climate. Are we inviting, nurturing and encouraging newer members to step into leadership roles? If you have offered a special skill or role at UUS:E for many years, are you looking for someone to take the reins when you are ready to step down? I enjoy my role on the Policy Board especially because we actively think about change. We have talked about Roberts Rules of Order, Black Lives Matter and our roots in a white privilege culture. The Policy Board is a very diverse group of members, our opinions are just as diverse. Yet we come together to make sound decisions for the future of UUS:E. As a member of this community how are you nurturing UUS:E's future?

## Samhain Ritual

Join the UUS:E Pagan Study Group  
Sunday November 1, 6:00 PM via Zoom  
All are Welcome!



Please join the UUS:E Pagan Study Group as we celebrate Samhain. We will celebrate the last food harvest and honor the ancestors, via Zoom. Peggy Gagne will host by casting a circle at her own altar and include in her circle all who wish to join the celebration as the Wheel of the Year turns. We will have a little history, along with an opportunity to remember those who have gone before us.

Please plan on having a small snack and drink of some kind on hand so we can all share in cakes and ale.

Also, plan on having on hand for the ritual—any items that remind you of special ones that have passed, related or not, 2 legged, 4 legged or otherwise. If you don't have any items or photos, put something together that reminds you of them to share with others, and that you can use as a basis of an ancestor altar in your home. Also suggested: small black, red & white candles.

Please contact the UUS:E office for the Zoom link at 860-646-5151.

Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance

## Virtual Public Action



The Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) will hold a large, virtual public action on Thursday evening, November 12, 7:00 PM. We are committed to registering at least 75 UUS:E members to attend this event. Registration is required. For registration information, please see our Wednesday eblast, or contact the UUS:E office at [uuseoffice@uuse.org](mailto:uuseoffice@uuse.org) or 860-646-5151.

The purpose of this action is to reignite and secure more specific commitments from legislators and Governor Lamont on GHIAA's legislative agenda following last season's mid-session COVID-19 shut down of the legislature. Our agenda for Nov. 12 will include:

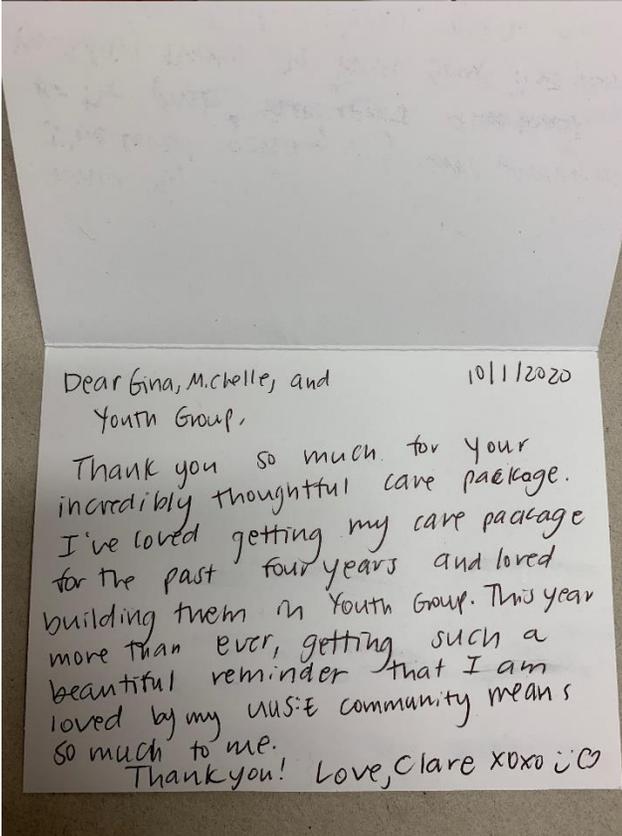
1. Repealing welfare liens
2. Passing Clean Slate legislation
3. Declaring racism a public health crisis

**Turnout is Critical!** Power comes in two forms: Organized Money and Organized People! On November 12, we need organized people. **Please watch our UUS:E eblasts for registration information.**

Questions: Contact Rev. Josh Pawelek at [minister@uuse.org](mailto:minister@uuse.org) or 860-652-8961. Or visit GHIAA at the Center for Leadership and Justice website, <http://cljct.org/>, or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2882577878422392>.

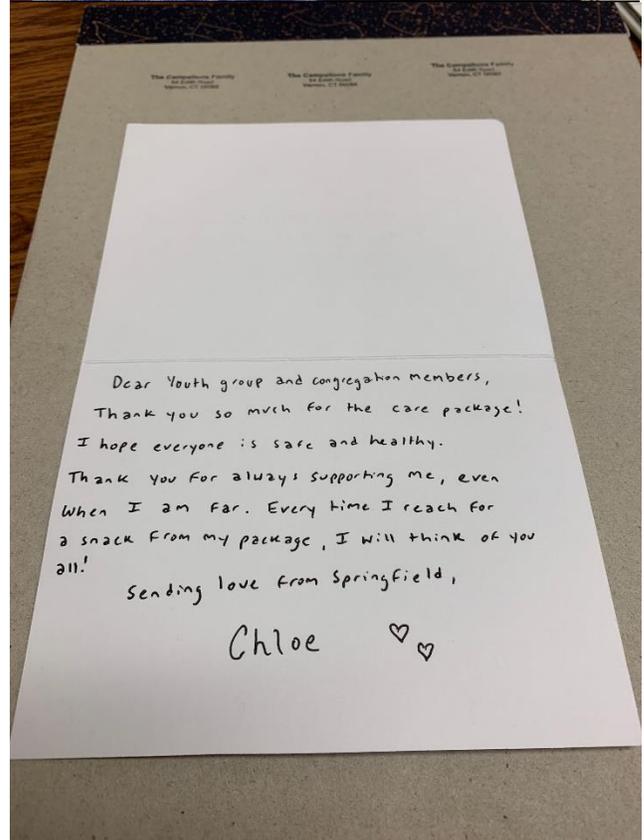
## Thank You Notes from our Young Adults

We are pleased to share the following thank you notes from our young adults who recently received Care Packages from our generous congregation!



Claire DiMaiolo: "Thank you and so so so much love to all the amazing UUS:E people who make

these possible each year." (plus thank you note pictured)



Chloe Campellone (thank you note pictured)

## Members and Friends UU the Vote Big Time!

By Maude McGovern

More than 35 members and friends of UUS:E wrote a total of 5,960 letters (yes, almost 6,000!) to under-represented voters in swing states urging them to vote as part of the denomination-wide effort to UU the Vote. We worked with a partner organization, Vote Forward, which provided lists of voters and printable form letters that we customized with heartfelt handwritten messages about the importance of every citizen making their voice heard at the polls. We hand addressed each envelope, stuck on our own stamps (eye-catching ones were encouraged), and tucked them away for The Big Send, aka the mailing date of Saturday, October 17.

Things started slowly, particularly because the springtime shutdown meant that our plans, like everything else, had to be rethought and adapted for safety's sake. Would we get to 4,000 letters? OK, that happened. How about 5,000? Boy, it would be great if we wrote 5,000 letters! That looked like a stretch, but in the last few weeks before the Big Send, things picked up. More and more people got involved. Some participants said they were done and then were moved to write another five, perhaps another twenty letters. The group crashed through the 5,000 goal and kept on cruising right up to October 17 when we showed up at our local post offices and mailboxes with bunches and boxes of letters, 5,960 of them!

Our champion letter writers were Al Benford (over 2,000) and Paul Reinstein (over 1,000), but thanks and appreciation go to everyone who helped including Anne Vogel, Barbara Hamilton, Beth Zambrano Curtin, Brent Curtin, Carolyn Emerson, Christie Sanders, Deb Dauphinais, Ollie Cohen, Ida Gales, Janet Heller, Jay Stewart, Jean Mamones, Jennifer Klee, Jim Adams, Sylvia Öunpuu, June Bray, Kathleen Eaton-Robb, Laurie Semperbon, Lisa Sementilli, Liz Garmise, Louise Krippenstapel, Lynn Dove, Marysa

Semperbon, Maude McGovern, Maureen Flanigan, Monica van Beusekom, Nancy Pappas, Paul Cocuzzo, Phil Sawyer, Robin Byrne, Sharon Gresk, Stacey Musulin, and Susan Gabriele. (Apologies if I missed anyone or misspelled your name.)



Mason Pawelek: "You guys are too nice. Thanks."



Amelia Cunningham: "Dear Michelle and UUS:E Congregation, Thank you so much for the care package! I really appreciate the thoughtfulness of my gifts and it makes me feel at home in my new off campus house. I consider myself very blessed to have such a great congregation to support me. Here is a picture of me with it! Peace and love, Amelia Cunningham"

## Books, Classes, and Discussions

Adult Religious Education



### Book Lovers

The Book Lovers meets second Tuesdays at 3:30 on Zoom. Ask Martha Larson ([marlar@wordshard.com](mailto:marlar@wordshard.com)) for the Zoom sign in.

- November 10: **Eternal Life**, a novel by Dara Horn
- December 8: **Wait Till Next Year**, a memoir by Doris Kearns Goodwin
- January 5: **American Dirt**, by Jeanine Cummins

### Virtual Piano Bash 2020

Wednesday, November 18 at 7 PM

Just a reminder: Virtual Piano Bash 2020 will be on Wednesday, November 18 at 7 PM. It's not too late to join! This is a special invitation to pianists of all ages, from beginners to professionals. If you want to perform, tell Mary Bopp at [music@uuse.org](mailto:music@uuse.org) so she can reserve a place for you on the program. All videos must be submitted to Mary by November 13. Whether you play Chopsticks or a Beethoven Sonata you will be included! Audience is welcome. For further details contact Mary Bopp at [music@uuse.org](mailto:music@uuse.org).

### Holiday Videos

The December holidays are coming soon. This is an invitation to musicians and music lovers to contribute your own holiday music videos. These will be presented at the holiday music service and other December services. It can be an instrumental or vocal solo, even just your family singing a holiday song—anything goes! If interested contact Mary Bopp at [music@uuse.org](mailto:music@uuse.org)

## UUS:E Post-Election Virtual Vigils



National elections take place on November 3. No matter the outcome—or even if we don't yet know the outcome—let's plan to spend time in community on November 5. UUS:E will hold two vigils, the first at 1:00 PM, the second at 7:00 PM. All are welcome. Watch our regular eblasts for login information. Or contact out office at 860-646-5151.

### Seasonal Help for Verplanck School

The pandemic has really hit the families of our partner school, Verplanck Elementary in Manchester. It was already a "high need" school where the majority of children are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. Our contact, the Family Resource Coordinator (FRC), tells us that things have gotten worse this year, as parents lose jobs or see their hours cut drastically.

Instead of groceries or individually wrapped gifts, this year we've been asked to contribute \$25 gift cards for Shop-Rite, Stop & Shop, Walmart or Target. Here's how you can help: 1) If you feel comfortable shopping, then buy one or more cards and mail them or stop them off to the UUS:E Office. 2) If you don't feel comfortable shopping, then send a check to UUS:E with Verplanck in the memo line. We will have someone buy gift cards with all the donations that come in. The gift cards or checks need to be received by November 16 or December 14.

Here is a bit of the note we received from Rachael Clarke, FRC: I truly appreciate all you and the church have been doing to help our school community. Please stay safe and know that we hold you in our hearts!

## **Some Helpful Charitable Tax Benefits!**

The last few months of 2020 are a good time to look at a couple of tax benefits that can help both you and UUS:E.

The first is the Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) for people age 70 1/2 or older who have an IRA. IRA withdrawals are normally taxed as income to the owner. However, if you make a QCD contribution to a charity such as UUS:E from an IRA, those distributions are considered free from income tax. This is especially beneficial to those who use the standard deduction, and don't itemize deductions. QCDs also count toward any annual required minimum distribution (RMD) from an IRA. So if you don't need your full (and taxable) RMD in any year, you can reduce it by making QCDs. In fact, it can make great sense to make all your charitable contributions through QCDs if you don't itemize and are 70 1/2.

Qualified Charitable Deductions have some conditions. You can make as many QCDs as you want in any amount and to any number of charitable organizations, but the total of all your QCDs in a calendar year can't be more than \$100,000. In addition, a QCD check must be made out to the charitable organization, not the IRA owner, or it will be considered a taxable distribution. And, as mentioned, you must have reached age 70 1/2. If you're that age and still have a 401k or 403b, you could convert all or a portion of that to an IRA in order to take advantage of QCDs

To donate through a QCD you need to contact your IRA administrator or custodian and they will tell you how to go about making one. Since it may take some time to issue a QCD check, you should contact your administrator no later than early December so that such donations count for 2020.

The CARES Act passed earlier this year to provide pandemic relief also contains a provision to help taxpayers. For 2020, even if you don't itemize, you can nevertheless deduct up to \$300 in charitable contributions. This isn't a huge benefit, but it will usually save some tax dollars for those who file a return. This \$300 charitable deduction is also available to those who make QCDs, but don't itemize.

It's always best to contact your professional advisor when making tax and financial decisions. Should you have any general questions or comments about

this article, please contact UUS:E member Hal Reed or Annie at the church office.

## **Deepening Connections through Small Group Ministry**

What is Small Group Ministry? A network of small groups (maximum size 8 – 10) whose main objective is to create an open and safe environment for mutual ministry and spiritual growth. Groups meet monthly, have a regular format, develop a covenant, and explore mutually agreed to topics that promote UU principles and spiritual development. This is not just small talk but an opportunity to explore meaningful topics such as trust, compassion, good and evil, or mindful living. Each group has a facilitator, but group members share responsibility by participating fully to deepen their connections to one another, to UUS:E, and to the denomination as a whole.

UUS:E has participated in small group ministry for about twenty years. There are currently groups that meet in the afternoon and evening. There are some spaces available in existing groups. Additional groups could be formed if there is an interest and we can provide training for new facilitators. At this time groups are meeting virtually using Zoom.

For more information contact: Louisa Graver, [lgraver163@gmail.com](mailto:lgraver163@gmail.com).

## **Stop & Shop Cards**

UUS:E is still selling Stop & Shop gift cards in increments of \$250, \$100 and \$50.

If you do your weekly grocery shopping or even just occasional shopping at Stop & Shop, buying these cards is a GREAT way to support the church without it costing you a cent. Cards are purchased at face value, and, in return, Stop & Shop gives the church 5 percent of the sales. If you would like to purchase cards, please contact Annie in the office to arrange to drop off payment and pick them up.

## **Recycling**

UUS:E continues to collect and recycle used inkjet cartridges through Planet Green Recycle. Bringing your spent cartridges to UUS:E helps twofold, by both raising cash for the church and keeping them out of the landfill. It's a win-win! If you would like to drop off any of your used cartridges, please contact Annie in the office to make arrangements.

**UUS:E GENERAL INFORMATION**

**UUS:E Office Schedule:** Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

**Meetinghouse Office:** 860-646-5151

**Office Administrator:** Annie Gentile email: [uuseoffice@uuse.org](mailto:uuseoffice@uuse.org)

**Minister:** Rev. Joshua Pawelek 860-652-8961, [minister@uuse.org](mailto:minister@uuse.org)

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday 10 AM to 7 PM and Thursday 10 AM to 4 PM

**President:** Rob Stolzman, 907-268-1871, [robandtammylee@yahoo.com](mailto:robandtammylee@yahoo.com)

**Director of Religious Education:**

Gina Campellone, 860-875-8468, [redirector@uuse.org](mailto:redirector@uuse.org)

**Newsletter Editor:** Paul Cocuzzo, 978-270-2056, [newsletter@uuse.org](mailto:newsletter@uuse.org)

**Website Coordinator:** Carol Marion 860-643-8765, [uuse.web@uuse.org](mailto:uuse.web@uuse.org)

**World Wide Web address:** <http://uuse.org>

Newsletter Deadline:  
The 20<sup>th</sup> of Each Month

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Manchester, CT 06042