

Unitarian Universalist Society: East

Member of the Clara Barton District of the Unitarian Universalist Association

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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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Follow us on Twitter @uuseast. Check out #uuseast.
Find us on Facebook at /UUSEast.



Sunday Services Schedule

February Ministry Theme: Beloved Community

In February 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 or contact Annie Gentile in the UUS:E office to arrange another method of receiving relevant information.

February 7: "What if..."

Imagination as an instrument of the greater good is not particularly valued these days, unless you are a "creative type." It's not practical. What if it can be such an instrument and has been all along? Come explore the magic of imagination's light, in the simple question "What if...?"

Creator and Speaker: Jeannette LeSure

Coordinator: Martha Larson

February 14: "Love of the Light in Each Other."

In response to our February ministry theme of **beloved community**, we explore the meaning of those words from our weekly closing circle, "love of the light in each other." As members and friends of UUS:E, we've cast our lots together. We care for one another. We need one another. We love one another. We're gonna talk about it!

Coordinators: Gina Campellone and Rev. Josh Pawelek

February 21: "Beloved Community in Our Lives."

What is "beloved community?" Is it limited to faith communities? Can it be found, created and nurtured in other parts of our lives? Join us as members of our congregation share their thoughts and feelings about these questions, and more.

Coordinators: Alan Ayers and Marsha Howland

February 28: "Preemptive Radical Inclusion, Part II."

This morning we welcome C.B. Beal back to our virtual pulpit to continue our conversation about preemptive radical inclusion. How can we live up to our promise of being a truly welcoming, inclusive congregation?

Coordinators: Gina Campellone and Rev. Josh Pawelek

Special note: C.B. will return to UUS:E (via Zoom) for a special workshop on preemptive radical inclusion on Saturday morning, March 13 from 10 to noon. Watch our March newsletter and weekly eblasts for more information.

March 7: "I Have No Secret Knowledge!"

As we kick off our 2021 Annual Appeal, Rev. Josh reflects on the spiritual gifts we receive from Unitarian Universalism...and the ones we don't.

Coordinator: Rev. Josh Pawelek

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 February 2021

As always, thank you for your generosity.

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

Continuing our practice of sharing our gifts with the community beyond our walls, fifty percent of our Sunday plate collections for the month of February will go to Operation Fuel.

Please contact Louisa Graver at lgraver163@gmail.com, David Lacoss, or Nancy Madar at 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.

The Minister's Column: Hallelujah!

Dear Ones,

Our ministry theme for February is **beloved community**. Upon realizing this, and mindful that February is Black History Month, I found and re-familiarized myself with a book I'd read for a class in seminary, bell hooks' 1995 **Killing Rage: Ending Racism**. In the final chapter, called "Beloved Community," hooks critiques Martin Luther King's vision of beloved community. King argued that the United States would become a beloved community only when race had been transcended, forgotten, when no one "saw" color anymore. Hooks disagreed. She argued instead that:

Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world. To form beloved community we do not surrender ties to precious origins.... The notion that differences of skin color, class background, and cultural heritage must be erased for justice and equality to prevail is a brand of popular false consciousness that helps keep racist thinking and action intact.

Still powerful words.

I think it's important for us as a congregation to ask, always, whether our UU church culture tends to erase differences or emphasize and celebrate them. If we tend to erase our differences (for the sake of always getting along, reducing conflict, being "like-minded") then it's possible that some of us are keeping important pieces of ourselves out of our community. Is it really safe to talk about one's mental illness? Or about one's hidden (or visible) disability? Or about what it's really like to be an elder (or a youth) in U.S. society? Or about what it's really like to be a person of color (or a white person) in U.S. society? Or about growing up poor (or wealthy)? Or about coming from a conservative political family? Or from a conservative religious family? Obviously, if there are aspects of ourselves we can't bring fully into congregational life, that's not good. It may enable us to avoid conflict and difficult conversations, but I think bell hooks is right: it's not beloved community.

We are not beginners when it comes to being a beloved community. I can think of many Sunday services, programs, committee meetings and small group meetings over the years when we've dug deeply into our differences; when we've tried to emphasize and celebrate different perspectives, different cultural backgrounds, different racial identities, different understandings of gender and sexuality, different life experiences. And, of course, we can and must continue to grow in this critical aspect of congregational life. I want UUS:E to be a place where no part of ourselves is left out. Furthermore, I hope we can learn to anticipate the kinds of human differences (different languages, for example) that aren't currently present at UUS:E. How can we prepare to welcome people whose differences may be keeping them away? (That's the topic of our February 28 Sunday service with C.B. Beal: "Preemptive Radical Inclusion.")

No, we're not beginners when it comes to being a beloved community. But we don't want to become complacent either. Let's not underestimate the power of our differences to deepen and strengthen our community. Thanks for the reminder bell hooks!

With love,
—Rev. Josh



Enter, rejoice, and come in!

A Religious Education message from Gina

Dear Friends,

I write this on the afternoon of January 20, having just watched the inauguration of President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. Glenn and I, along with two of our kids, clustered around the television—something that rarely happens on a weekday at noon—and together we smiled, laughed, sang, clapped, cheered, hugged, and shed tears of joy and relief. As a nation we have much work ahead of us, and we must not lose sight of that. But today my heart feels celebratory, and grateful for the hope that has begun to bloom within it once again.

Watching the inauguration ceremony was an experience I shared not just with my family, but with friends, as well. While the COVID-19 pandemic rules out in person gatherings, I felt very connected to members of UUS:E as we communicated with one another throughout the entire inauguration via text messages and social media posts. Although nothing beats being together face to face, the opportunity to exchange virtual hugs and high-fives and whoops of, “Hallelujah” meant a lot to me. Today was yet another reminder of how deeply grateful I am to be part of a beloved community. And “Beloved Community” just happens to be the ministry theme for the month of February.

I often use the words beloved community to describe our congregation, because I have never known a community more loving and more generous of spirit than UUS:E. But the concept of Beloved Community, popularized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, encompasses a great deal more. King described Beloved Community as a society based on equal opportunity, justice, and love of one’s fellow human beings; a society in which all are embraced and included; a society without racism, discrimination, or prejudice. King envisioned Beloved Community as expansive, reaching far beyond the walls of a church, the gates of a neighborhood, or the oceans dividing continents.

And so, the way I see it, UUS:E is a beloved community (in lower case) whose purpose is to work for the equity and justice needed in order for

everyone, all people, to truly become a BELOVED COMMUNITY (in capitals).

King’s vision of Beloved Community is a call to action, and being a part of UUS:E’s beloved community inspires and emboldens me to heed that call. Something tells me you all might feel that way, too!

With love and hope,
Gina



UU Connect with You

Members of the Pastoral Friends Committee would like to invite you to join us on February 10, 2021 at 10:00 AM 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 want to reach out. We're doing this once a month on different days and at different times. Please join us.

Music Salon

The next UUS:E virtual Music Salon Unplugged happens on Friday February 26 at 6:30 PM! It will be virtual, so recordings of musicians will be presented, but the musician will be there “in-person.” Musicians of all levels are invited to perform. We will be on Zoom, enjoying each other’s music and having fun. Bring your favorite beverage and relax! As always, listeners will be welcome. If you would like to participate as a musician or listener, or if you simply want more information, contact Peggy Webbe at peggywebbe@gmail.com or 860-871-8035. Or contact Mary at Bopp@verizon.net. A day or so prior to the event, we will send Zoom sign-in information to those who have contacted us.

Membership News

We Are UUs!

UUnpeeling the Layers

A series to learn more about each other



This month of February seems most timely to feature a couple of sweethearts who are now nonagenarians (in their nineties), Lynn and Roland Chirico.

When asked to what they might attribute their longevity, Roland could provide no explanation. However, people who have known them for long enough might speculate. Perhaps it is their longstanding relationship with the game of Scrabble, which they still love. Roland reports that very early in their relationship Lynn showed up at his door with a Scrabble game in tow. Is Roland's secret for longevity his near daily practicing his trumpet? (He has played since age 14.). Is Lynn's secret her love of learning, reading and writing? And genuine curiosity about the lives of others, their stories?

Roland and Lynn Chirico both love travel. Lynn worked as a travel agent for years. She was living in Spain with her children, when a friend named Addie introduced her to Roland. He was a teacher at Manchester Community College at the time. They had both been married previously. Their adult children and grandchildren maintain regular contact.

The couple were married in 1993 at UUS:E by Reverend Connie Sternberg. Roland had been a charter member and his children attended classes in the religious education program. He introduced Lynn to the society.

Roland's adult daughter Marisa Chirico is currently living in their home, since the pandemic arrived.

She helps with grocery shopping and cooking. (Roland claims no talent in the kitchen and Lynn's eyesight is compromised by advanced macular degeneration.) Also living in the house is "Kitty," a rescued feline who was called "Sugar Plum" by a previous owner.

Lynn continues to be an active member of a UUS:E Small Group Ministry, and a writer's group. She wrote a book titled **This Book is Not About Spain**. The book is however a memoir of time spent in Spain in the era of Franco. Another of her books is a novel set at the Jersey Shore, where she spent many summers.

Lynn's more recent book is a series of stories about the homes of various friends. One such home is the Nathan Hale Homestead, where another UUS:E member Naomi Zima had lived as a young child.

Despite daily practicing, Roland is currently not able to play any gigs due to the pandemic. Roland has encouraged aspiring musicians at UUS:E over many years and has often played his trumpet during Sunday services.

For many years, Roland was the unofficial organizer of an informal lunch gathering at local restaurants following the 11 AM Sunday service.

He and Lynn appreciate the shared liberal beliefs/principles of members in the congregation. They look forward to the time when we can gather again at the Meetinghouse.

And we look forward to again seeing Lynn's smiling eyes, and hearing Roland playing his trumpet.

Annual Appeal

We hope everyone is safe and well. The Stewardship Committee is planning our 2021 Annual Appeal and things will be different this year! There will be no Leadership Appreciation Dinner, there will be no potlucks, there will be no in-person meetings and yet...we will succeed in providing the funds we need to sustain our many ministries and programs. Our Annual Appeal theme this year is "Giving Heals the Soul." Rev. Josh will kick off the Annual Appeal with a Sunday service on March 7. Each member and friend will receive a letter with information on our accomplishments of the year past and our aspirations for the next fiscal year (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022). Our approach this year is to ask each member and friend to fill out the enclosed pledge form and electronic funds transfer (EFT) form if desired and return to the church office. The Annual Appeal ends April 1 and those who have not responded will be contacted by a steward. We hope this safe approach will generate the spirit of generosity that has made UUS:E the vibrant, spiritual home for many of us.

The Stewardship Committee: Adam Bender, Chair, Phil Sawyer, Louisa Graver, Larry Lunden and Stan McMillen

Stop & Shop Cards

Stop & Shop cards can still be purchased despite the pandemic. Anyone who is interested in buying a card can contact Annie, our office administrator. Cards come in \$50, \$100 and \$250 amounts. The money raised from this effort goes into the general fund. And they make great holiday gifts! If you need any help with this or more information, contact Sandy Johnson at 860-888-9673.

Food & Supplies

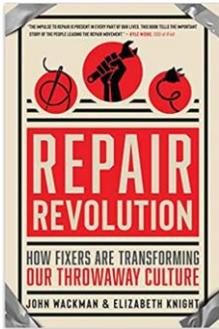


UUS:E Provides Much Needed Food/Supplies to Area Families

In a coordinated drive in the spring/summer of 2020, UUS:E members and friends helped provide much needed food and household supplies for area families with donations totaling \$2735 and over 1000 food and household supply items. These donations were critical to many area families during the ongoing COVID 19 crisis. The monetary donations were split between the Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC) and the CT Mutual Aid East of the River, while the food and household supplies were provided to CT Mutual Aid East of the River. Thank you to all of those who participated.

CT Mutual Aid: East of the River includes a diverse group of people, members of the African American & Black Affairs Council (AABAC) and Uniting for A Safe Inclusive Community - Manchester (USIC). The two groups have been partnering together over the past few years on policy advocacy for our community and came together at this time to develop this new Mutual Aid network as a direct response to the needs of our community during the COVID-19 crisis.

Green Sanctuary News



Repair Revolution

We live in a “throw-away society” where products are manufactured, used up, and discarded. But the reality is there is no “away”—this waste ends up in landfills, often polluting low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. To

remedy this situation, volunteer tinkerers and “fixperts” are forging the Repair Revolution, choosing to repair broken items instead of tossing them out. Do you have a household item that needs fixing? The SLC hopes to host an online Zoom “Repair Cafe” where simple repairs are discussed and demonstrated. Let us know what needs fixing and we’ll do the research! Contact Jay Stewart for more information:

jstewart@hartford.edu.

Climate Conversations

IREJN (Inter-religious Eco-Justice Network) will be hosting an online “Climate Conversation with Rev. Lennox Yearwood and Dr. Katherine Hayhoe” on Thursday, February 4, 7:00 – 8:30 PM. This event is part of an ongoing series of discussions and workshops related to climate change. The talk will focus on individual and collective action that participants can take within their communities. Rev. Yearwood has been successfully bridging the gap between communities of color and environmental issue advocacy while Dr. Katharine Hayhoe co-directs the Climate Center at Texas Tech where her research focuses on evaluating the impacts of climate change on human society and the natural environment. To register, visit:

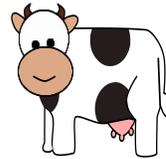
<https://irejn.org/climate-conversations-with-rev-lennox-yearwood-and-dr-katherine-hayhoe-thursday-feb-4/> Be sure to check Inter-religious Eco-Justice Network’s website for upcoming webinars: <https://www.irejn.org>

Climate Emergency Resolution

Citizens Climate Lobby is working with Connecticut cities and towns to help them draft Climate Emergency Resolutions—documents that declare there is a climate emergency and describe actions the cities and towns will take to help mitigate, halt,

or reverse climate change. CCL encourages the municipalities to include support for carbon fee and dividend legislation, such as HR 763 (Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act) in the Resolutions. The Climate Emergency Resolutions will be used to promote state climate legislation and Congressional support for HR 763 or similar legislation.

Fun Food Fact: Holy Cow!



According to the Environmental Protection Agency, a dairy farm with 2,500 cows produces the same amount of waste as a city of 411,000 people. (source: “Risk

Assessment Evaluation for Confined Animal Feeding Operations,” EPA, May 2004.)

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) for the Zoom sign in.

- February 9: **Talking to Strangers**, by Malcolm Gladwell
- March 9: **The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris**, by David McCullough

Buddhist Group



The Buddhist Group meets via Zoom at 7 PM Tuesday, Jan. 5, for meditation and discussion of the February ministry theme, **Beloved Community**. All are welcome; no meditation experience necessary. Contact Nancy Thompson at nancythompson123@yahoo.com for the Zoom info.

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

Minister: Rev. Joshua Pawelek 860-652-8961, minister@uuse.org

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

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The 20th of Each Month

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