



UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF HARTFORD

50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105

Tel: (860) 233-9897 • Email: firstunitarian@ushartford.com

Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10:00 to 3:00
or call for appointment

Revs. Cathy & Heather Rion Starr

USH -Enews - December 2, 2015

Worshipping Together Since 1830 - Sunday Service 10:30 AM



Photo: imgarcade.com

Sunday, December 6, 2015: "Get Me Through December" Rev. Heather

Rion Starr: It's a season of anticipation and longing, sparkle and sadness. How can we listen for the complexity of one another's feelings as we journey together through this marvelous and moody month?

Join us in recognizing and celebrating our newest members this Sunday.

"We beckon this good season to wait a while with us. We, Baptist and Buddhist, Methodist and Muslim, say: come, Peace. Come and fill us and our world with your majesty. We, the Jew and the Jainist, the Catholic and the Confucian, Implore you to stay a while with us, so we may learn by your shimmering light, how to look beyond complexion and see community."

—from *Amazing Peace: A Christmas Poem*, by Maya Angelou

E-News Contributors Please Take Note:

The NEW deadline for USH-Enews submissions is Tuesday at 12

Noon. Thank you for helping us get the E-news out in a timely fashion!

Upcoming Special Events and Other News: Check out our online Calendar for

Upcoming Events: <http://www.ushartford.com/events/>

(Please double check the calendar for your event 1 to 2 weeks prior to make sure it's correctly posted. Email corrections to calendarchanges@ushartford.com -

Thank you!

Sunday, November 29th Recap by Kayla Costenoble



Photos by Harriet Gardner

Finding Gratitude - Rev. Heather used a mantra by Rev. Forrest Church, longtime minister at New York's Unitarian Church of All Souls, as a theme for her reflections: "Want what you have. Do what you can. Be who you are." Rev. Church also said the phrase "wishful thinking" should be "thoughtful wishing." This is when you wish for the right thing, such as courage to bear up under pain or for the liberation that comes with forgiveness.

"Do you ever get tired of hearing about gratitude this time of year?" Rev. Heather asked. She said her family of three shares something they are grateful for each day. "It helps us reorient ourselves to the good in life." She suggested we call the Sunday after Thanksgiving "Slow Down Sunday" where we "screech to a halt, open our hearts and connect deeply to ourselves and one another."

Most of the congregation accepted her invitation to come up to the altar, choose a harvest fruit or vegetable (other than the one you brought) and share aloud "some one thing for which you are especially grateful this year." **Kayla Costenoble**



Recap of November 22nd: Our Song to Sing - We had a love-in at the Meeting House on November 22, 2015, and boy, did we enjoy it! Pulpit guest Matt Meyer, a talented musician and UU community organizer, taught us his songs, drummed, sang with us, talked to us, and taught us what surely must be his mantra—"one more time."

We sang our Gathering Song, "Come, Come Whoever You Are" at least six times (our first experience with "one more time"), first with our "regular" rhythm and then with a more syncopated beat, to get us into the right mood for a Matt Meyer-led service.

Our first hymn was a Matt Meyer composition, “Song of Alleluia”, whose chorus we were urged to sing “one more time, like you mean it this time.” Its verses suggest that it is time to be present with ourselves and who we want to be, as we gather in a spirit of celebration. We may be overwhelmed by the weight of the world, but we can find strength together for what we can’t do alone. (Note: Matt also warmed up the room with this song before Dr. Cornell West’s Ware Lecture at the 2015 General Assembly.)

For our Time for All Ages, Matt had the youth sit on the floor facing him, so he had all of us facing him as he told, sang, and drummed the Brazilian “Story of Samba.” Half of us represented the Portuguese who came to Brazil from Europe, the other half were the Aruba from West Africa. Those from Portugal were interested in harmony, those from Africa in rhythm, and for a long time they sang separately, and so did we, following Matt’s instructions. Eventually, some “radical” musicians from each side thought they could learn from one another, combined sounds, and the samba became the new style of music. And so we sang together. The moral, according to Matt, was that when we gather in community like this, we can expand beyond the borders that divide us and can change the world in ways we could never do on our own. Matt’s influence on Sunday’s service was felt in just about every part of it; we sang the youth out to their classes with a foot-stamping, drum beating version of “Go Now in Peace.”

And then there was the “Sermon”—a special combination of song and story by Matt and Worship Associate Margaret Leicach. Matt taught us our part, the chorus for “We are Climbing Jacob’s Ladder,” which we sang at least “one more time.” Jacob, who became one of the Bible’s great patriarchs, stole his older brother’s blessing and was denied the ladder to heaven. Margaret called Jacob a “UU ancestor” for his later vision and realization that all had the spark of the Divine. She said this was a preamble to our first principle, the “inherent worth and dignity of every person.” Matt reminded us that today, UU’s understand that love and grace are already here with us and we can find hope in a better world.

And so we sang: Every rung goes higher and higher. We are climbing Jacob’s ladder. If I stumble, will you catch me? We are climbing Jacob’s ladder.

I can’t end without a cheer for the USH Choir, who gave us “Bonse Aba,” a Zambian children’s folk song which, as one review said, is “sizzling with celebratory rhythmic energy.” Loosely translated, it means those that sing have the right to be called the children of God. And this performance also had Matt Meyer and his drum. - **Kayla Costenoble**



Photos by Harriet Gardner

December Rundown from the Ministers - After "Slowdown Sunday," as Rev Heather dubbed it, December is now upon us. And what a delightful and joyous mix of fun, song, and contemplation we have planned for this month here at USH!

This weekend, we have something every day for your enjoyment!

Friday evening, come to a showing of the musical Amahl and the Night Visitors. Then Saturday is our 38th Annual Festival of the Season - you won't want to miss the fun crafts, delicious food, the great company (including Santa!), and the first-ever Solstice Parade! (See full details below).

It can be hard to find peace and light in the darker days and the hectic chaos of December, so I'm leading a special candlelight contemplative chanting service on Wednesday, December 16th at 6:30pm to provide an oasis of calm beauty.

Finally, this Christmas Eve we'll be celebrating one very special service for all ages at 5pm with story and song, and of course candlelight.

Our Sundays are full of special treats too!

* This Sunday, December 6th, Rev Heather leads on "Get Me Through December", we'll welcome in new members who are joining USH and kick off our annual ReGifting Sale.

* Sunday, December 13th we're in for a special musical treat. This Music Sunday will feature Eric Whitacre's Five Hebrew Love Songs and...

* Sunday December 20th is our Annual Multigenerational Solstice Service to celebrate the sun at the darkest time of year.

* Sunday December 27th we'll have a special guest, Doug Wilson, former director of Rowe Camp and Conference Center as guest preacher.

Many thanks to the many hands and hearts who are giving of their time to create all of this!

We hope that our various worship services and fun activities will nourish your soul, buoy your spirit, and fill your belly this season. We know that the holidays can be a rough time for many - so please be gentle with yourself, and do be in touch with Rev. Heather or myself if you are struggling. **With love,**
Rev. Cathy (and Rev. Heather)

In Memory of Nancy Prentis - Longtime USH Member, Nancy West Prentis of West Hartford and Bloomfield died Sunday (November 29, 2015). She was born in 1921 in Hartford, daughter of the late Clifton C. and Lucy (Clarke) West. She leaves her nephew, Andrew W. Mitchell and his wife, JoAnne Mitchell of Bloomfield. She was predeceased by her sister, Terry West Mitchell Hall of West Hartford and Bloomfield. Nancy graduated from Hartford Public High School in 1940, and attended Green Mountain College in Asheville, North Carolina. She served in the United States Coast Guard from 1944-46. She lived in New York City for many years, working for The National Audubon Society and Life Magazine. In later years she returned to Hartford, and worked for The U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development.



Taylor & Modeen Funeral Home, West Hartford has care of arrangements. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Masonicare Hospice, 111 Founders Plaza, Suite 200, East Hartford, CT 06108. Nancy's family would like to express their gratitude to the entire Seabury Retirement Community staff for the excellent care Nancy received during her final years.

Further details of a service will be shared once they are determined.

Obituary from: <http://hosting-1512.tributes.com/obituary/show/Nancy-West-Prentis-103045782>



**The 38th Annual
Festival of the Season
Saturday, December 5th**

**A day of gingerbread houses, making wreaths,
decorating cookies, a holiday shop, music,
dinner, community and much more!**

3:30 - 5:20 Crafts in multiple classrooms,
munchies in the Chapel,
Art & Craft Gift Shop

5:30 - 6:00 Carols & messages of the season
6:00 - 7:30 Potluck dinner in Fellowship Hall





\$20 per family or \$10 per individual, but no one is turned away. Bring a side dish--entrees, desserts and drinks provided by USH. Lots of singing, lots of friends, and lots of fun. See you on Saturday!



A Special Note For the Festival of the Season! - Those who will be attending the 6 PM Potluck at the Festival of the Season on Saturday, December 5 are asked to bring potluck food (casseroles, salads, veggie, etc) in dishes marked with your name on dish and on the serving utensil. The food

should be ready to serve, as we have insufficient oven space to heat or cook carry-in food items. PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A CHANGE!! This year we are requesting you do NOT bring desserts. WE WILL SUPPLY DESSERT.

Please include a list of the ingredients in your potluck contribution to help those among us with food allergies. If you have not signed up, that is not a problem.

Just bring yourself, your family and/or friend(s), a food contribution and pay at the door.

When you come to Fellowship Hall for the potluck, please find a seat at a table.

There will be twelve tables and they will have "The Twelve Days of Christmas" posters on them. Your table will be called by number on your poster (in random order) to get your food. Please wait at your table until your number is called. If possible, please spread out so there are some folks at each table. This is important for the exciting -never seen or heard anywhere else - singing of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" led by John Stowe following the dinner. It is truly a USH exclusive.

And, please take your serving dish and utensil when you leave for home after the potluck! We will have bags for you to transport your dish home. Contact me if you have any questions. We are looking forward to having you with us. Thank you! **Janice Newton**



We Welcome the Children - This Saturday the children from The Village for Families & Children have been invited to our annual Festival of the Seasons. Although we are not sure how many will attend, we know that you will make them feel welcome and at home. Over the past three years they have become more than neighbors, they are friends. **-Joanne Orlando**



"Merry Christmas to All"

- that means You! Consider making the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at the Meeting House part of your ever-evolving tradition, this Christmas. Who might you invite to join you in coming to the Meeting House for this special service? We would really like to revitalize

and help spread the word about the warmth and welcome the Meeting House offers to people of many beliefs and backgrounds on this special night. Please plan to join us, and bring someone along with you who perhaps hasn't been to a Unitarian Universalist Christmas Eve service before!

Thursday, December 24, 5:00pm (one service only this year)

Our theme this year will be: "The Legend of the Poinsettia," based on the children's book by Tomie DePaola. A Candlelight Service for Everyone. We need cookie-bringers and a few Cookie Coordinators. We need some extra helpers--perhaps: you? Let Rev Heather know if you can make this service--truly a service to the larger community, an "alternative" spiritual gathering that welcomes everyone--part of your holiday plans this year. **RevHeather / revheather@ushartford.com / cell/text: 541-390-6052 Image: www.pinterest.com**



RE News You Can Use! This week, Sunday, December 6th, the nursery will be available for infants and toddlers ages birth to three from 10:15-11:45AM.

The children will be in Chapel from 10:30-10:45AM followed by age appropriate

classes. **-Rayla D. Mattson - Director of Religious Education Unitarian Society of Hartford** 860-233-9897 ext 104 860-839-5001 – cell I only check my email on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. If you need to reach me outside of those times, please feel free to text or call my cell.





2015 Fall Programs for Adults and Families

USH Calendar of Events: www.ushartford.com/events/
 We look forward to seeing you Sunday at the Programs Table. December offerings to sign up for are: the Friday Pizza and Movie, the Saturday Morning Salon, and the Women's Alliance and Lunch Bunch Holiday Celebration Luncheon.

Information and handouts about these programs and others offered at USH such as the Book Club, Tai Chi, and the Performing Arts will be available at the Programs Table.

We'd like to include your program, workshop, or event in the listing of the 2016 Winter/Spring Programs for Adults and Families. On Sundays, there will be handouts for your course, event, etc. at the Programs Table, for visitors as well as for members and friends. Registration for your program, course, etc. and any required payment can also be done at the Programs Table.

To obtain a Program Proposal form, you may go to www.ushartford.com. From the Building Community, pull down Menu at the top of the home page. and click on Adult & Family Programs. In the bottom right corner under Documents, click on Propose a Program Form. The form is also available at the USH office. Please attach a detailed paragraph in Microsoft Word (if possible) about the program to the completed Proposal Form that can be used for promotion. Please email the completed Proposal to Janice Newton.

You may call Janice Newton (860.677.1121) or email her at [janicecnewton\(at\)sign@gmail.com](mailto:janicecnewton(at)sign@gmail.com), for more information about the programs.

Programs:

Saturday Morning Salon: What Moves You: Saturday, December 12, 10:00 AM
 12 Noon.

Tai Chi: Wednesdays, 5:30 – 7:00 PM. Beginners welcome.

Emei Qigong: Tuesdays, Beginning Learners: 6:15 PM, Cultivation: 6:30 PM,
 Deeper Learning and Understanding: 7:15 PM. Contact Diana Heymann
 (860-461-0908).

Emei Qigong: Wednesdays, Tutorial: 4:45 PM, Internal Cultivation/Practice: 5:00
 PM.
 Contact Diana Heymann (860-461-0908).

Meditation and Dharma Gathering: Wednesdays, 5:45 – 7:00 PM.

Authentic Connection & Communication:
An NVC Practice Group, Wednesdays, 7:15 PM.

USH DINNER & MOVIE SERIES - DECEMBER 11 MOVIE WITH BELLY LAUGHS! On Friday, December 11, all are invited to watch the 1997 international comedy hit "The Full Monty"

"Such pure, naked joy is utterly contagious."*

You can watch a trailer here

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=CWZBdTCsRCY>. The film is rated R for language and some nudity, is about 90 minutes long, and, while in British English, will be shown with subtitles.



We will gather on Dec 11 for popcorn and libations at 5:30 PM, with pizza and salad dinner at 6, movie at 7, followed by optional discussion.

To reserve (\$10 each), please call Janice at 860-677-1121 by Wednesday, Dec 9. Leave a message on the answering machine, being sure to specify number of reservations and veg or meat pizza topping choices, then pay (cash or check) at the event. Remember, you can invite non-USH folks to attend with you.

If on Friday, Dec 11, you find you cannot attend, please call before noon and leave a message on this cell phone - 860-380-7062 - so the pizza order can be adjusted. *From IMDb site -**Submitted by Nita Hansen**

Unitarian Society of Hartford
Performing Arts Series
2015-2016 All events are on Saturday at 7:30 PM unless otherwise noted.

50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105 - At the intersection of Routes 44 & 189

HARTT STUDENTS PERFORM

Amahl
and the Night Visitors



Friday, December 4th: A Special Presentation of:

Join us for this beloved seasonal musical about faith and miracles, suitable for families and children of all ages.

Friday, December 4, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Unitarian Society of Hartford

50 Bloomfield Avenue

FREE Goodwill offering of \$15 per family suggested www.USHartford.com

Patrice Fitzgerald for the Performing Arts Sub-Council



January 2, 2016

John & Katie Jensensky in Concert– Talented USH favorites Katie and John come back to perform for us and kick off the new year.

March 5, 2016 – **Concert Pro Femina**

Inspired by the 15th year of the Hartford Women Composers Festival, this concert brings a dazzling array of classical music written by women, featuring chamber groups, solo voices, and choral works.



Sunday, March 20, 2016 – **Classical and Broadway Vocal Concert**

immediately after the service 12:30 P.M. Come hear some great vocal music... including some performed by our choral scholars and featuring our new accompanist.

April 2 or 16, 2016 - **Jacques Lamarre Play Reading Premiere**

Don't miss another exciting new play premiere penned by USH friend and supporter Jacques Lamarre.



Only \$90 for six events at the standard ticket price! Premium ticket price \$180.

Sales benefit the USH General Fund.

Tickets also sold at door. USH children under 18 free, always!

The USH Book Club Meets in David's Den On Thursdays From 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Please talk to Richard Groothuis if you have any questions.
[860-678-1030](tel:860-678-1030); rgroopofus@comcast.net

Meetings are generally held between 5:30 PM and 7:30 PM on the first Thursday of each month in David's Den at the Church.

USH BOOK CLUB - THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3 5:30 PM

All Cry Chaos, a debut thriller by the immensely gifted Leonard Rosen, is a masterful and gripping tale that literally reaches for the heavens. The action begins when mathematician James Fenster is assassinated on the eve of a long-scheduled speech at a World Trade Organization meeting. The hit is as elegant as it is bizarre. Fenster's Amsterdam hotel room is incinerated, yet the rest of the building remains intact. The murder trail leads veteran Interpol agent Henri Poincare on a high-stakes, world-crossing quest for answers. **(From Amazon.com) Submitted by Richard Groothuis**

Upcoming Special Events and Other News

New Member Sunday – December 6th, 2015



New Members Are Joining

We will be welcoming new members into our congregation during the worship service this week. This is a joyous occasion for our church. We will also have a celebration cake during Coffee Hour after the service. Please take this opportunity to greet our newest additions to USH.



Alani Willett Has a New Address - Alani Willett, Lee Way, 40 Albert Street, New Haven, CT 06511 His email address remains the same: alaniwillett@att.net Cards, notes and emails would be welcome.

UPDATE ON CHANGING ROLE AT USH FOR BRIAN MULLEN - Thank you for your support this past year with my transition to reduced working hours at USH. It's been a wonderful experience for me and I believe a beneficial situation for USH as well.

As was mentioned in some E-News submissions this past September, the marketing firm (gem-advertising.com) I have been working with (when I'm not at the Meeting House) has been growing by leaps and bounds. I'm finding that the best options for my future lay with putting more of my work time with this firm and thus reducing my presence with USH.

Since October 1, 2015, I have been working 16 hours per week at USH (full days Tuesday & Thursday). Beginning January 1, 2016, in my new role as USH Bookkeeper, most weeks I will average somewhere between 8 and 12 hours per week. I will hold 2 consistent weekly office hours through March 2016, and will perform all my other tasks as needed as time is available to me in the evenings, weekends, at home or at the Meetinghouse. I will of course continue to be available via email.

Linda Clark has done a wonderful job in taking on the added task of the creation of this weekly E-News. She has also been compiling the weekly Orders of Service as well as maintaining the online USH calendar (both tasks that I had previously done). Beginning January 1, 2016, Linda will be your contact for all things related to the USH office.

Thank you so much for the overwhelming support you have given me during my stay at USH. I look forward to your questions / concerns as we continue crafting this mutually beneficial relationship for the Unitarian Society of Hartford.

A P.S. from Rev Heather --

I want to thank Brian Mullen, so much, for his thoughtfulness, his concern about what makes sense for USH, and his forward-planning. We are all so glad that he will continue his invaluable work tending to the USH finances. And we are also glad that this shift in staffing has meant that we have been able to increase Office Administrator Linda Clark's hours, role, and responsibilities. Please consider whether you can volunteer in the USH Office or help out in other ways around the Meeting House (there is always more to do!). We appreciate your understanding and patience as we make our way through this transition. Change is inevitable, of course, so we make our way through it together, as gently as possible. If you have questions about USH Office Staffing that you wish to discuss with me as the Lead Minister for USH Administration, please give me a call or send me an e-mail. Warmly -- Rev Heather

1st Sunday CONNECTIONS

For Visitors & Newcomers

Each month we host an informal gathering for visitors and newcomers to learn more about UU, USH, our mission, education program and membership. Ask questions, share your concerns, and meet others.

We meet "Under the Stairs" (Lower Lobby)
15 minutes after the end of the service.

Attend as many times as you wish.

Upcoming Meetings
December 6, 2015

Free Childcare Provided

Board Business - The USH Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, December 8, 2015, at 7:00 in the library. All are welcome to attend.

The major topics of discussion will be:

1. A discussion of different options for when child care is provided. This is necessary because we are projected to be over budget for child care. We will be considering scheduling events that require child care only on specific days.
2. Working towards establishing 2016-2017 budget goals for the Congregation, which can be used in the stewardship campaign. This is an important first step as we try to coordinate better between the stewardship campaign and what we, as a Congregation, want to accomplish in the coming year. To that end, each subcouncil has been asked what goals they have for their work looking at what they would do to 1) maintain the status quo, 2) stretch a little, and 3) accomplish a big dream. The Board will pick one or more of these to be goals of the

stewardship campaign. EVERYONE in the Congregation is invited to be part of this dreaming, even if you are not currently active with a committee. Please submit your ideas to the appropriate council chair (John Clapp for Administration, Tina Davies for Community Within, Gloria Francesca Mengual and Vanessa Gonzalez-Rivera for Social Justice, and Martha Bradley for Spiritual Life). If you don't know where your idea fits in, you can give it to Louise Schmoll, Treasurer. In addition to these major discussion topics, we will get brief updates on:

1. Becoming an Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry (AIM) congregation (AIM accreditation is similar to our accreditation as a Green Sanctuary) (Bill LaPorte-Bryan)
2. 2016-2017 stewardship campaign (Peter Meny)
3. Review and reflection of what administrative staffing will best meet the needs of the Congregation
4. A new New England conversation on "Innovation Learning Circles" exploring what it means to be a "relevant" congregation able to listen, reflect, respond, and adapt to changes in culture, spiritual needs, etc. We will share more about this as we get clarification of what, exactly, it is. - **Submitted by Virginia deLima**

Great Discussions will have our FINAL meeting of the year this coming Sunday, December 6th at 9:00 am - Ed Savage will give a talk on another refugee problem -- SLAVERY... it has not yet ended in the USA, among other places. If you can't come to the meeting, you may take action on the topic by checking out some of the articles in the Christian Science Monitor. Here is a link to one action agenda: 3 ways you can combat sex trafficking

We will also decide on whether to meet in January at this gathering. Remember, the 2016 FPA Briefing books will arrive soon. Here are the topics that folks may sign up to research: Middle East Alliances == The Rise of ISIS == The Future of Kurdistan ==

Migration == The Koreas == The United Nations ==

First week in February: Climate Change == Cuba and the U.S. == Paula Jones and Kevin Gough date tba.

Status of the USH Archives - With the recent passing of Margaret Sax, I think it will benefit many in knowing the hard work she performed in the USH Archives will not be forgotten. Starting in 2016 I will be working with Rev. Heather to pick up where Margaret left off; it is my hope to begin by surveying the collection, weeding any duplicates we decide do not need preservation, and incorporate newer material into the archives (including a growing collection of audiovisual and electronic material). Ultimately this project will be ongoing and sustain the growth of the Congregation's history through the records we decide to keep. As the end of my Masters in Library Science program approaches next year, I would like to reach out to those who might be interested in helping with this project either through a donation of church materials or volunteering time. Do you have any items from your congregational life at USH you'd be willing to part with? Are you interested in helping survey what we have? Re-boxing materials? Help

prepare a record retention policy or archive guidelines? **Please contact me directly (ZMirecki@comcast.net or call/text 860-916-9014. -Zac Mirecki**



POTLUCK HOLIDAY CELEBRATION DEC. 15 - All are invited to join us in Fellowship Hall at noon on Tuesday, December 15 for a pot luck luncheon, coordinated by the Women's Alliance. Traditionally the Alliance and the Lunch Bunch join forces for this special event and welcome all guests. Sign up at the program table telling us how many will come and what you plan to bring. Cost is \$1 per person payable at the lunch. Our tradition is to bring holiday gifts for Interval House or The Open Hearth. Gift Cards are always a good choice or you

can go on line and check the wish list for these organizations.

Alternatively, you can support Meeting House members and friends with checks made out to the USH, Ministers' Discretionary Fund.

We will read our traditional "A Visit from St. Nicholas to a Liberated Household" and ask you to bring a short reading to share, if you wish.

If you can help set and decorate tables at 10:30, or help with clean up after lunch, please contact Louise Schmoll at 860-242-2953.



Vespers Service

Wednesday Dec 16th - 6:30 PM

Join Rev. Cathy for a special mid-week service of chanting, silence, and beauty. Rev Cathy is seeking instrumentalists to join in the music making. There will be one brief rehearsal (likely Sunday December 12th after worship), and there's a part for everyone.

If you play an instrument - whether tambourine, oboe, or guitar, please let Rev. Cathy know if you'd like to join in! Revcathy@ushartford.com / 541-390-7553

★ USH ReGifting Sale ★

Drop-off Dates: Nov 15, 22, 29 Box in the Lobby
Sale Dates: Dec. 6 and 13, 2015



Find a new home for all your unwanted items (New, or like new, preferably smaller than a breadbox. ★ Do your holiday shopping. ★ Delight someone else who may love your item. ★ Gently Used Items ★ Help the environment / conserve resources. ★ Make money for USH

★ Look for new environmentally friendly products you can give as gifts this year.

★ **Sponsored by the Green Sanctuary Sub-council**



The Refugee Settlement Project Concert - A Wonderful Night of Music



Left to right: Cihan Yücel, Sarah Puckett, Marko Stuparevic, Veronica O'Brien, John Birt, Windsor Johnson, Jessa Sahl, Spencer Hamlin, Matthew Dupree, Luca Antonucci, and Isaac Reguera.

The Refugee Settlement Project Concert held on Saturday, November 21, succeeded on many levels. First, nearly \$2000 was raised through on-line pledges and donations at the concert with 86 people attending and another 12 around the country checking in on the video live stream. Particularly touching music bookended the event from Carlo, a Serbian who had experienced the

Bosnian crisis up close and Cihan, who wrote and spoke from a deeply felt experience with the current flood of refugees as viewed from his home city of Ankara, Turkey.

Secondly, despite technical problems, the Meeting House supported a live-streamed version of the concert and Faithify.org donation site. You can still access the raw version of the concert through links at Faithify and make donations to help the project reach the goal of \$600. The deal with Faithify is “all or nothing”; that is, unless pledges get to the goal, none of the money comes to the project.

Donate now at <http://www.faithify.org/projects/refugee-settlement-concert-support/>

We are only \$ 100.00 away from our goal ! Every donation will help, no matter how small. And not the least, thanks to Sarah Puckett, our talented accompanist, Rev Cathy, and Richard Groothuis for taking the initiative for our Hartford County faith communities’ efforts to help refugees settle in our area. Key technical help came from Everett Prairie, a freshman musician at the Hartt School, who is also singing in the choir; and many other new and familiar faces filled out the staffing of the concert setup and cleanup. Finally, lesson learned: we need a major upgrade in our internet and sound systems to move our web presence into this century. The suggested capital fund-raising project might well be expanded beyond solar to sound and sight!

Photos below: Harriet Gardner



Refugee Settlement Update - USH presented a benefit concert Saturday night to assist refugee settlement in the United States.

The following are remarks delivered at the concert: Refugee families are not migrants who leave their country for any reason.

A refugee is any person who is outside the country of such person’s nationality . . . and who is unable or

unwilling to return to . . . that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion...”

It takes 18 months to three years for refugees to be screened by the United Nations and the United States before a refugee family qualifies for admission to the United States. Syrian families usually come from refugee camps in Jordan or Lebanon where they have been for 2 or 3 years.

In Syria, 11 million people have been displaced and 4 million have been forced to leave the country. In 2014, the United States admitted 105 Syrian refugees. In 2013, the United States admitted 36. Historically, the United States refused to open our doors to Jewish refugees in the 1930s and more recently we failed to take action in Rwanda.

Refugees also flee political violence in Central America, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Eritrea and Burma. Today, our moral values call on us to help these families now.

Just this week, a Syrian family was denied sanctuary in Indiana. They were welcomed in New Haven, sponsored by IRIS- the Integrated Refugee and Immigration Service. A number of faith communities in our area- including the Unitarian Society of Hartford- are exploring how we can help refugees begin a new life in America. As ALL of us descended from immigrants, AS we value human life, the concert proceeds -totaling in excess of \$2000-will go to IRIS to support this vital refugee settlement work.

If you want to know more about helping refugees please contact Richard Groothuis, Mike Winterfield, Vanessa Gonzalez-Rivera or Gloria Francesca-Mengual.

Help bring solar power to USH!



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A limited liability company (LLC) is a business structure that 1) passes tax obligations (and credits) through to the members and 2) has limited liability, as does a corporation.

Accredited Investor is one with an income of at least \$200,000 per year over the most recent two years OR assets of over \$1 million, excluding a home.

Background

In keeping with the Unitarian Society of Hartford's commitment to be a Green Sanctuary and to our 7th principle, an ad hoc group, the Solar Stewardship Work Group, is researching the technical and financial possibility of purchasing a solar

system for USH. This information sheet will review our understanding and vision as of November 2015. We invite you to join us!

Technical Considerations

We have been advised that it is feasible to have a free-standing, ground-based solar system located between the Memorial Garden and the wooded area. Hartford zoning rules permit a ground-based system as long as it is not in front of the building and its area is less than 50% of the footprint of the building. Our system would meet these conditions.

The Building and Grounds Committee has passed a motion supporting such an installation. In addition, Rayla has confirmed the location will not impinge on the children's outdoor play area.

Financial Considerations

All members and friends of USH will have an opportunity to contribute to this project; we will need many people to help fund it! The project to install a system large enough to provide an amount of electricity equivalent to that which USH uses in a year will cost approximately \$160,000 to \$195,000 (including associated fees); therefore, we will need some people to make substantial contributions.

Many solar installations are eligible for a 30% federal tax credit that is not available to a non-profit such as the USH. Therefore, we are exploring the formation of an LLC in order to get the maximum possible benefits to USH at the minimum cost to the individuals making large contributions to the project. The LLC would initially own the equipment and the power it generates. The solar power generated would be donated to USH at no or minimal cost. In approximately five years, the LLC and the equipment would be donated to USH. The individual members of an LLC can apply the solar-installation tax credit to their personal tax returns. In addition, the LLC may be able to sell Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) to the electric utility as well as take depreciation on the system.

Even with these advantages, the members of the LLC will be making a considerable contribution to USH. We anticipate that the financial incentive—enabling a larger contribution at less expense—will encourage individuals to contribute to this project in addition to their contributions to the annual stewardship drive.

Members in an LLC must be “accredited investors.” Increasing the number of members increases accountant fees, disclosure documents, etc., so it is desirable to keep the group small. An Accredited Investor is one with an income of at least \$200,000 per year over the most recent two years OR assets of over \$1 million, excluding a home.

Issues Addressed

1. The ethics of the LLC taking tax credits when USH is a non-profit has been addressed by Reverends Cathy and Heather in consultation with their colleagues who have done this at other UU congregations.

2. The Endowment Committee has concluded that any possible loss of contributions would be offset by the possible reduction in operating expenses to which the endowment continues to contribute.
3. The Board of Directors approved a proposal from the Solar Stewardship Workgroup at its November meeting, signaling approval of the concept and its willingness to enter into an agreement with an LLC when it is formed.

Next Steps

Stu Spence, David Newton, and Jeff Howard have selected an installer. They are working with the company representative to determine what the final layout will be. Also, they will determine what details will need to be included in an agreement between the provider and the LLC. Richard Groothuis, David Newton, and Jim Venneman are working with lawyers and accountants to research the formation of an LLC—and the associated tax, RECs, and depreciation implications—and to develop agreements between the LLC, USH, and the solar installer.

How Can YOU Be Involved?

If you have legal, accounting, solar-design or other expertise that could be useful as we pursue this opportunity, please contact David Newton immediately. If you are interested in participating in the LLC, please contact Jean Groothuis. If you are interested in a general solicitation towards the solar project (which would be in addition to your stewardship pledge), please write a check to USH with “solar project” in the memo line. If possible, please make this charitable contribution by the end of the calendar year so the project can move forward for installation in the spring. If you have general concerns, please contact Virginia de Lima.

USH can save money and protect the environment! **Work group: Virginia de Lima, Jeff Howard, Jean and Richard Groothuis, David and Janice Newton, Stu Spence, and Jim Venneman.**

Seeking Chalice Lighters!

Lighting the chalice on Sunday morning as an individual, a couple or a family is a way for you to take a small part in our shared worship service. It's also a way for all of us to see each other more fully and help everyone remember names more easily! Thanks for signing up to engage in this especially Unitarian Universalist ritual that begins our services.



If you haven't lit the chalice before, please plan to arrive by 10:10am so we can show you the routine before the service begins.

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050b45a5ae2baa8-chalice>



Black Lives Matter Lawn Signs: If you'd like a lawn or window sign for your home, please come get one at the office! If you take one, please do 3 things: 1) Be sure to put your name on the sign-up sheet so we know you took one. 2) Leave a donation in Rev. Cathy's box with a note to help pay for the sign (\$5-20, pay what you can) 3) Have at least 3 conversations with neighbors or friends about why you put the sign up and why racial justice is important to you.

More Black Lives Matter Signs are available in the Library with a suggested donation of \$20.00. Please stop in during office hours to pick one up: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10am-2 pm. Or pick one up on Sunday after the service.



Food and fellowship build communities-Please consider signing up to supply snacks for an occasional coffee hour following our Sunday service.

Any food item you would like to share would be welcome. Bring something that would give you joy in sharing it with others. You don't have to please everyone.

The youth group will continue to serve soup on the third Sunday of the month; no additional snacks needed that day. And our wonderful Sunday Sexton, Crystal, will continue to provide coffee & beverages. We're just looking for some extra snacks for those who would like! Sign up by clicking on the link below~<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0c4faeae2ea3f58-Sunday>. Once you sign-up, you will receive an email reminder two day before your scheduled Sunday. **Questions or Comments? Contact Kathy Payne at kthpayne@gmail.com**

New Web Up and Functioning:

For the username and password for the Members Only section, please email Linda Clark at ushlindaclark@gmail.com

Special Note: Hi Everyone! Please check the online calendar to make sure the Room and Time you wish to reserve is still available before you make a request. This will help in planning your event.

Thank you! Linda Clark, Office Administrator

For events for the online calendar please include the following information:

(Cut and Paste from the E news will work)

Please Note: New information added at the bottom: "Is Childcare Provided"

Put in the Subject: 'Calendar'

Event Title:

Room:

Time:

Date(s):

Contact Person:

A Short Description:

Cost: (if applicable)

Is Childcare Provided?: (Note if childcare is provided please confirm with the DRE.)

Email Calendar Events to: calendarchanges@ushartford.com Thank you.

The NEW deadline for USH-Enews submissions is Tuesday at 12 Noon

Email to: ushenews@ushartford.com

Please note in the subject line, USH-Enews.

Peace – as we come to the close of the USH-Enews week.

Be kind to others – and to yourself.

Nuts and Bolts: The member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association covenant to affirm and promote: the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregations; a free and responsible search for truth and meaning; the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process, within our congregations and in society at large; the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all; respect for the interdependent web of all existence, of which we are a part.