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

Revs. Cathy & Heather Rion Starr

USH -Enews December 9, 2015

Worshipping Together Since 1830 - Sunday Service 10:30 AM

Sunday Service 10:30 AM - December 13 - Revs. Cathy & Heather Rion Starr -



Image: <http://www.jewishfolksongs.com>

"Music Sunday: The Old and The New" - Pulpit Guest: Rebecca Pacuk with Rev. Cathy Rion Starr - At this time of year when we draw on the wisdom of ancient stories, we'll celebrate both ancient and newer Hebrew music that inspires and drives us both spiritually and musically. Works include Eric Whitacre's Five Hebrew Songs in addition to a variety of solo repertoire. The offering will go to the Friends of Music Fund in the support of the greater musical works of this congregation.

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!

Sunday, December 6th Recap by Kayla Costenoble



Photos by David Newton

Get Me Through December - "What and who are you allowing to keep you company as you make your way through this world?" was a thought-provoking question Rev. Heather asked during the December 6, 2015, service. In news of our larger world, it is hard to know what to say as we struggle with the work we each have to do, focusing on what is "doable, beautiful and possible," she said.

A song she heard on the radio—Get Me Through December—motivated her to create this USH service, and to think back to the 2005-2006 winter she spent in Portland, Oregon. It rained 60 days in a row. Everything (hair, clothes, dispositions) looked and felt soggy. What sustained Rev. Heather and helped get her through this difficult time was waking each morning to a selection from Zero Church, a CD with 18 musical prayers. Here are some lines from one titled Anyway:

The good you do today, People will often forget tomorrow. Do good anyway. And the words in Get Me Through December that particularly struck and stayed with Rev. Heather were:

Faith can move mountains of that I am sure... Just get me through December
A promise I'll remember. Get me through December. So I can start again.

Before our Turning Inward part of the service, Rev. Heather read Madeleine L'Engel's poem, In the Darkness. Although it was a poem celebrating the birth of Jesus, so many of its words still apply today:

*It was a time like this, war & tumult of war, a horror in the air...
It was a time like this of fear & lust for power, license & greed and blight...
Ah! Wonderful it is with no room on the earth the stable is our heart.*

What does she, Rev. Heather, have faith in? Her list includes the sun, her partner Cathy, the dedicated people in this congregation, resistance, that we can

do better, that we can actually accomplish something, and that, as anthropologist Margaret Mead said, faith that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can indeed change the world.

Rev. Heather reminded us that we all witness constant change, life, and death. We need one another when we are in trouble and afraid; we have to swim against the current of separateness. We have to insist on greater connections to spiritual work. If this December is an especially tender time, she said, we must “spend more time together and seek out one another’s company.”

Get Me Through December also got us through the Offering of Our Gifts part of the service, as USH members Helen Koulidobrova, playing a sweet-sounding penny whistle woodwind instrument handmade for her by a friend, and Sarah Harmon McKenzie on her spirited guitar played and sang a version of the song also arranged for piano by our always-welcome guest pianist Pi-Hsun Shih. – **Kayla Costenoble**

New Members Ceremony



On Sunday, Dec 6th, USH celebrated thirteen new members joining our congregation. They included singles, young parents and seasoned grandparents, and represented a wide spectrum of backgrounds and experience. The group was made up of Jack Almeida, Aaron & Paula Bleck, Carolyn Carlson, Crystal Kelley & Jeremy Young, Edith Mwenelupembe, Cris & Steve Noble, Ed Pawlak, Kathy Payne, Carol Simpson, and Sue Tenorio. During the ceremony, both the congregation and the new members pledged their acceptance of each other and their support of this shared community. After the responsive reading of the mutual commitments, the newcomers received an enthusiastic welcome from the existing members. Following the worship service, there was a cake-and-ice-cream reception for the newest members as they signed the Membership Book and were presented with a welcome package and a yellow rose.

If you weren't present for the service, there are short introductory narratives and photographs posted in the Lower Lobby at the Meeting House. To learn more about becoming a member, speak to anyone wearing a Membership Sub-Council

nametag or contact Brian Harvey at bharvey@ushartford.com. The next membership class (UU, USH & You) is scheduled to begin in February.

This marks our third New Member ceremony since Rev. Cathy and Rev. Heather became our co-ministers last fall. During that period we have welcomed 42 new members into our congregation. - **Submitted by Brian Harvey**



Come One - Come All!



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

What a Fabulous Festival We Had!



Sid Garvais was honored at Festival of the Season for his many, many years of piano playing and participation. "For he's a jolly good fellow..." was sung by all. Holding Sid in our love and appreciation! Here pictured are: Marye Gail Harrison, Sid Garvais, Bill and Ann LaPorte-Bryan.



The 2015 Festival of the Season--the 38th!--came off in grand fashion. We had a wonderful turnout from friends old and new... and we are already talking about how to make the event even more wonderful in 2016. One of the fun new aspects was the celebration of the winter solstice and the return of the sun, inspired in large part by Marye Gail Harrison, assisted by the Youth and Nina Elgo.

SO many folks helped create this spectacular event! Here are some of them who deserve our thanks. Janice Newton for chairing the Potluck portion of the evening, and Crystal Acevedo-Cruz and her sister for their essential help. David Newton for helping them. John Bengtson and Kevin Girouard for tarps and tables and the tree. Rocco Orlando for graham cracker architecture. Joanne Orlando for connecting us with our friends and neighbors from the Village. Diana Heymann for stories. Brian Harvey for inspiring signage. Ann Laporte-Bryan for wreaths. Helen David for refreshments and the Holiday Boutique. Jim and Ellie Venneman for delectable cookies. Larry Lunden, Sarah McKenzie, and Helen Koulidobrova for music. Oh, and Richard Leslie! Deb and Peter Meny for a variety of tasks including buying candy and bagging. Bill Laporte-Bryan, Joe Rubin, Tina Davies, and Edith Savage for greeting and handling the money. Rev. Cathy for the message of the season! Bob and Kerry White for undercover duties which cannot be disclosed. John Stowe, who stoically led our infamous rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas despite a hoarse voice and a creaky knee. And so many more in view and behind the scenes! Who did I forget?

We also made some money for the USH General Fund. Nearly \$800, which will be matched by our favorite Anonymous Donor and thus doubled. Hurray! And we have enough graham crackers left over to feed an army.

I'm sure lots of folks took photos, and we'd love to see them on Facebook (keeping in mind our care concerning photos of children) on the USH page. Or here, in the enews.

Thanks to all and please start thinking of what part you want to play NEXT year. Don't forget to bring in more hats and mittens for chilly children and hang them on our Mitten Tree in the lobby.



A FABULOUS TIME WAS HAD BY ALL! - Let's face it – our congregation pulled off a miracle this weekend reminding me as Chanukah begins of how only a little oil can provide a lot of light in a community of goodwill and cooperation. We can justly be so pleased.

- 1) We hosted Hartt's opera students with a touching performance of Amahl and Night Visitors Friday night.
- 2) Someone beautifully redid the chancel art for Saturday and Sunday worship.
- 3) Many people set up and cleaned up Festival of Seasons and delivered huge amounts of fun and food at the 38th FOS. Rev Cathy's enactment of the history of humans dealing with the dark and cold united us all in the sanctuary with a message of generosity and hope. Celebrating 90 year old Sid Garvais after 38 years of supporting FOS with music brought joy to many hearts.
- 4) Then Sunday Rev Heather led us in an inspiring worship service to help us through the dark cold nights, reminding us that we all need ways to touch into our centering strength and calm. And we welcomed - how many – new members? And last but not least our Green Sanctuary folks held a huge regifting sale to support the environment and our church Treasury. **Feeling very grateful, Marye Gail Harrison**

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.

The Service will be at Seabury, in the Chapel, on Thursday, December 17th at 2:00pm Obituary from: <http://hosting-1512.tributes.com/obituary/show/Nancy-West-Prentis-103045782>



"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 RevHeather 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

News You Can Use!

This week, Sunday, December 13th, the nursery will be available for infants and toddlers ages birth to 3 from 10:15-11:45AM.

The Youth Group will be meeting at 9:00AM for soup making. Please make sure you see them after service for a delicious cup of homemade soup. Only \$3 a cup.

The children will have a Time for All Ages followed by age appropriate classes. Do you have a rising star in your family! Will still have some spots available for participants in our Christmas Eve service (5:00PM) and for our December 20th service for solstice, we have some parts still available. Many of our children have shown interest, the DRE just needs to know who will be here. Please let her know. We will also have one scheduled rehearsal for both. More information to follow. - Photo: Youth Group doing yoga



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.

The Star Island Corporation is currently accepting applications for our summer staff. - If you are not already familiar with Star Island, we run a seasonal religious and educational conference center off the New Hampshire coast and hire approximately 100 college-aged people to work from mid-June to mid-September. As our roots are linked to the UU and UCC faiths, working on Star offers a unique employment opportunity for UU and UCC young adults (age 18 and older) in a beautiful location.

We hope you will help us spread the word about employment opportunities on Star Island by sharing the attached flyer with your congregation. Our application deadline is January 22 so we appreciate you posting the information as soon as possible.

For more information about working on Star Island, please visit our website (<http://starisland.org/working/seasonal/>) or feel free to contact me with questions - Kate Brady, Office Manager, Star Island Corporation, 30 Middle Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801, (603) 430-6272.

Please contact the DRE for assistance with the application process.



2015 Fall Programs for Adults and Families

USH Calendar of Events: www.ushartford.com/events/

Stop by the Programs Table after the service on Sunday to sign up for the Women's Alliance and Lunch Bunch Holiday Celebration Tuesday, December 15.

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

Now that the Fall Programs are ending, have you been thinking about a workshop or program that you would like to offer this Winter or Spring?

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, 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, for more information about the programs.

Programs:

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

January 23, February 13, March 26, April 23, May 14, June 11

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. .



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;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.

Upcoming Books:

Feb 4: Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End- Atul Gawade

Mar 3: The Last Death of Jack Harbin- Terry Shames

Apr 7: The Shell Collectors: Stories- Anthony Doerr

May 5: The Little Friend- Donna Tartt

June 2: Spring Chicken: Stay Young Forever (or Die Trying) - Bill Gifford

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



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**

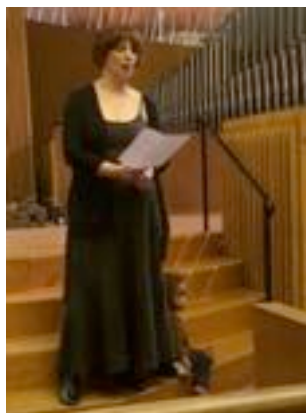
Don't miss another exciting new play premiere penned by USH friend and supporter Jacques Lamarre.



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!



A Beautiful Evening of Seasonal Opera - We were privileged to see the marvelous Hartt Opera Theater production of Gian-Carlo Menotti's "Amahl and the Night Visitors" on Friday. This was a gift that the Hartt students brought to us. What wonderful neighbors and friends!

Nearly 80 folks attended, and goodwill donations totaling more than \$500 were collected, which will go into the USH General Fund and be matched by our ever-appreciated Anonymous Donor.

It is our hope that this moving opera about miracles and faith will become an annual event here at the Meetinghouse. Thanks to Doris Lang Kosloff and all of the students involved. Note that Doris, who introduced the opera, was joined by a small musical enthusiast as she gave us a synopsis. - **Patrice Fitzgerald for the Performing Arts Sub-Council**

Annual "Coming Home" concert at the Unitarian Meeting House.

"Coming Home with John and Katie LaPorta Jesensky" featuring Megan LaPorta Sherry and Mia Scarpa.

Saturday, January 2, 2016 at 7:00pm
\$15 tickets, \$ 10 students with ID.

Katherine LaPorta Jesensky, a professional opera singer, and her husband, pianist and vocalist, John Jesensky return from Los Angeles to their home state of Connecticut to perform songs inspired by family. Both husband and wife will perform songs ranging from Simon and Garfunkel to Leonard Bernstein—including many genres of music. There will be sure to be something for everyone!

The Jesensk's make their annual return to sing for their former home at the Unitarian Society of Hartford and bring with them an array of talented singers from the local area. The concert will include one of central Connecticut's most in-demand sopranos and member of the critically acclaimed Voce Inc, Megan Sherry. And fresh off her starring role in "Hello Dolly!" and one-woman show singing the songs of Judy Garland, mezzo-soprano, Mia Scarpa.

In 2012, Katie LaPorta Jesensky relocated from a lifetime on the east coast to Los Angeles, California, and she has already been establishing a flourishing career on the west coast. Ms. Jesensky was most recently heard singing the role of Blondchen in Mozart's Die Entführung aus dem Serail with Angel City Opera and in Center Stage Opera's Classics Concert featuring opera arias with the Center Stage Orchestra. This season she also reprised the role of Gretel in Hansel and Gretel with Black Tie Opera and sang the role of Annina in La Traviata with Center Stage Opera. In Ms. Jesensky's short time in Los Angeles, she has also performed the roles of Olympia (Les Contes d'Hoffmann), Valencienne (The Merry Widow), Die Königin der Nacht (Die Zauberflöte), Mrs.



Nordstrom (A Little Night Music), Giannetta (L'Elisir d'Amore), and Suor Infermiera (Suor Angelica). Up next will be the role of Despina in Mozart's Cosi fan tutte with Center Stage Opera this spring!

<http://www.johnjesensky.com/#!audio/c1pb6>

<http://www.katherinejesensky.com/#!media/cnp3>

Huffington Post on John Jesensky

"Olympia was charmingly sung by Katherine LaPorta Jesensky, with spectacular coloratura and customized fioritura which significantly extended the already extraordinarily high range of the aria." -Singerpreneur on her April 2014 performance of Olympia in "Les Contes d'Hoffmann"

"Jesensky's sparkling soprano was a highlight in an evening already full of good singing." -Singerpreneur on her January 2014 performance of Valencienne in "The Merry Widow"

"Katherine LaPorta Jesensky easily maneuvered the stratosphere in "Olympia's Aria" with many surprising optional high notes that delighted the audience." - Singerpreneur on her November 2013 Concert

"Katie's voice has a glorious sound, and her technique lets her hit the highest pitches in rapid-fire with astonishing accuracy...plus her acting ability and depth of feeling move us to tears." -USH News on her August 2011 Recital

-Submitted by Ed Savage

Upcoming Special Events and Other News

★ **USH ReGifting Sale** ★

Dec. 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**



POTLUCK HOLIDAY CELEBRATION DEC. 15

Please Note: The last chance to sign up for December 15th Holiday Luncheon is this Sunday, December 13th.

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.

Be part of the Exciting Project to Add Solar Power to USH! - Everyone is invited to be part of the solar project at USH. All contributions—large and small—will be through the Endowment Fund. Please contribute what you are able and together we can save money for USH over the long term, help the environment, and be true to our 7th principle!



Our official kickoff will be during the SOLSTICE service on December 20, when we will celebrate the return of the sun by using the offering to help collect the sun's rays. All money in the collection baskets will go towards the project, but this is only one of many ways you can contribute.

Your contribution can be by check (with "endowment/solar project" on the memo line), cash (in an envelope designated as for the endowment/solar project), or gifts of stock directly to the endowment (talk to Jim Venneman if you are interested in this option). Your contribution can be part of the collection on the 20th—so we can get off to a start—or as soon as possible after that, preferably by the end of December. (We do understand that some people may need to wait until the beginning of the 2016 tax year.)

All contributions—large and small—will help make this project a success and all contributors will be recognized as having participated. In addition, you can be proud of what you and your congregation are doing.

Please remember that we encourage your contribution to the solar project only if it's possible for you to do so in addition to what you planned to contribute to the annual stewardship campaign.

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**



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**
Photo: Heather Rion Starr

Refugee Update Meeting This Sunday, December 13th

We will have a short meeting after service on Sunday December 13 at 11:50AM in the Ballou for an update on work with other congregations, a meeting that will be at 1PM on December 20 at Universalist Church with members of area churches and IRIS and to discuss various tasks which must be undertaken. Please bring your questions and ideas. Please contact Richard Groothuis for more information: rgroopofus@icloud.com **-Submitted by Richard Groothuis**



Refugee Settlement Update - 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.

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



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>

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 days before your scheduled Sunday. **Questions or Comments? Contact Kathy Payne at kthpayne@gmail.com**

A Call for Office Volunteers!

Could that possibly be YOU? We are in need of volunteers to maintain a friendly office presence. Easy work - or bring a book, knitting and a smile for any visitors or phone calls the office may receive. Please contact Linda Clark (at: [ushlindaclark \[at\] gmail \[dot\] com](mailto:ushlindaclark@gmail.com) or phone the office at 860-233-9897 and let her know if you can spend a few hours a week in the USH Office to help us keep our Friendly and efficient office going!



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.



Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace and Unity Planned for Dec. 16 - Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace and Unity Planned for Dec. 16? With the growing number of violent incidents globally that target innocent people in the East and the West, from domestic incidents of gun violence, police brutality, to shunned refugees, to vicious terrorist organizations, and subsequent fear and hateful backlash

towards American Muslims, Hartford Seminary students feel the need to come together in prayer, dialogue, and community to bring light and hope to the spreading darkness. The Seminary will host an Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace and Unity at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 16, in the Meeting Room at 77 Sherman St. Student organizers had this message: "When violent perpetrators want to induce fear, hate, and scorn we must redouble our efforts as faith communities and people of principles to determine our own future and challenge ourselves to live up to our professed ideals as American citizens and practitioners of our respective and civilly protected faiths. We also believe we will benefit from a prayerful gathering that remembers and recognizes victims worldwide and their suffering, offer our prayers for healing and prosperity, particularly at the advent of a Holy season for many of our fellow students and local community members." The program is expected to take about an hour. It will include a welcoming speech by President Heidi Hadsell, speeches by several student leaders, readings from letters by family members of recent victims, an interfaith prayer, song and spoken word poetry. Guests will be invited to sign a board with a pledge for peace and unity. Article and photo: <http://www.hartsem.edu/2015/12/interfaith-prayer-vigil-for-peace-and-unity-planned-for-dec-16/> **For more information contact Julie Grace: jgbuko@yahoo.com-Submitted by Julie Grace**

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.