

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

January 2021



NOTES FROM REV. DAN

It's a new year!
Hallelujah!

Normally I'm not so enthusiastic about what, in reality, is just a date on the calendar, but this New Year honestly does seem momentous.

As we come into this month, vaccinations are beginning across the country. Yes, it will be a long process, and it may be a long time before it's safe to do things like hold services in person — but we can begin to see that the day will come. Hallelujah!

This month also marks a change in leadership for our nation. The aftermath of the 2020 election has been, to say the least, not pretty, but in the end, our Unitarian Universalist principle of the use of the democratic process will rule the day. Hallelujah!

It's good to be reminded that sometimes, our hardships do go away.

Of course, services will continue to be online for a while — and while it's not the way most of us prefer things, we've gotten pretty good at it — with an amazing library of music built up over the past several months, dedicated lay leaders, and the opportunity to hear from guest speakers all over the country (and the world, as we saw last fall). Add to that a host of newcomers who only know us from our online service, but are beginning to explore our adult programs, small groups, and the like. Hallelujah!

So I'm celebrating this New Year, and I hope you are as well. It's good to be reminded that sometimes, our hardships do go away — and that in the community we share together, we have the strength and fortitude to get through them. Sometimes, we even find joy together.

It's a new year. Hallelujah!

In faith, Dan

Our Mission

As a diverse liberal faith congregation, we make a difference in our lives, our children's lives, and the wider community by creating an environment for spiritual growth and fulfillment, for building meaningful connections, and for actively advancing peace and justice in the world.

Minister's Hours

In-person office hours are suspended during the epidemic, but Rev. Dan can be reached at email: minister or on his cell phone at 484-653-5011.

He will be away from the office from January 11 through January 17. For pastoral care during this time, please write to email: pastoral-care. For other questions, please contact email: office.

Pastoral Care

The **Pastoral Care Team** contact for this month is

Pam Seres



A Welcoming
Congregation

501 South High Street
West Chester PA 19382
610-692-5966
office@ucwc.org
www.ucwc.org

Sunday Services



We gather, aspiring to be a thriving, caring, and welcoming community that supports each person's spiritual journey, embraces diversity, challenges us to live responsibly, and is a catalyst for a just and compassionate world.

NOTE

All services are online for the foreseeable future. Links can be found [here](#).

Jan 3 10 am

SINGING YOUR SONG

Rev. Kate Rohde

This sermon is based on a metaphor from August Wilson's great play, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. Set in the African American Experience, Wilson — one of the 20th century's best American playwrights — used the particular experiences of African Americans to help us all get at universal questions. Kate Rodhe is *Minister Emerita* at UCWC.

Jan 10 10 am

HOW WE BELIEVE

Rev. Dan Schatz

Unitarian Universalists enjoy talking with each other about what we believe. Equally important is the question "How do we believe?"

Jan 17 10 am

**WHICH KING
ARE WE CELEBRATING?**

Rev. Dr. Qiyamah A. Rahman

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is primarily remembered as a non-violent civil rights activist and leader. His assassination shook the world and caused widespread rioting in over 100 American cities. In life, Dr. King spoke about how he wanted to be remembered: "I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others." Are we as Unitarian Universalists honoring his full legacy? We will explore the life of this iconic leader on the 53rd Anniversary of his death, as we seek to rededicate our vision for an inclusive, free, and just world.

Qiyamah A. Rahman, is a UU minister and resides in St. Croix, VI, where she served the UU Fellowship of St. Croix from 2012-2018. Besides her passion as a minister and writer, she is a social worker, researcher and community activist focused on social justice. Rev. Qiyamah earned her Bachelor's in Education and Masters of Social Work from the University of Michigan. She has a Masters of Divinity from Meadville Lombard Theological School and a doctorate in Africana Women's Studies from Clark Atlanta University.

Rev. Rahman devotes her research to the narratives of UU Black women and girls including research on violence against women in Ghana, South Africa and the United States. She challenges us to expand our scholarship on the presence of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Unitarian Universalists.

As **Minn's Lecturer for 2020** she presented three lectures on Black UU women and Black UU clergy women. She is currently working on an anthology on Black Unitarian Universalist Clergy Women to be published by Skinner House Books. She has just received a grant from the UU Women's Federation to create a website devoted to Black UU Women and Girls.

Jan 24 10 am

TURNING POINTS

Rev. Dan Schatz

This month represents a turning point in more ways than one. How do we navigate the turning points of our lives?

Jan 31 10 am

ON HUMAN NATURE

Rev. Dan Schatz

It is easy to look at the world and become pessimistic about human nature. But there is another story, too often untold.

From the President

As I sat to write this, the landscape outside my window was covered with several inches of snow and my driveway was a blissfully clear swath of black asphalt. (A great invention, the snowblower!) A planting bed full of dark brown sedum stalks, tall tan grasses, and tufts of other bushes made a pleasant contrast against the wide, white lawn. A cardinal, a darting dot of red, popped around here and there.



I was struck by how much brighter the snow makes the winter landscape, even at night.

The snow amplifies the lights of civilization as they reflect off a nighttime blanket of clouds. On clear nights, a gentle moonlight makes the scene glow brighter.

The world and our corner of it is looking a bit brighter too, as we head into a new year.

COVID vaccines bring hope for a return to some version of semi-normal life, where we can meet family and friends in person again, sharing handshakes, hugs and kisses, and we at UCWC can gather back in the sanctuary again, catching up with friends, singing and sharing the warmth of our physical presence together.

We can be thankful that our country's democracy survived a stress test this year. We held a free and fair election during a pandemic, then upheld the results against a firehose of lies, propaganda, and machinations from the most prominent losing candidate. The country now has a leader who wants to bridge our divides, not inflame them. A second wave of economic relief finally came from Congress, after months of stalling by anti-government ideologues indifferent to the suffering of fellow Americans.

Amid those hopeful signs, there is still much work to do. We still face months when we need to wear masks in public, keep social distance, and forego large gatherings, especially indoors. More than ten million people have lost jobs and can't find work. Among them are millions facing a time when the sheriff will show up with an eviction order, haul their belongings to the curb, and change the locks. Medical catastrophes inflicted by the pandemic will push many Americans to the edge of bankruptcy. The country's long-overdue reckoning with racial oppression has lost momentum. A new wave of voter suppression is sure to come. With climate change, the world is poised on a teetering ledge of catastrophe, as the ground relentlessly cracks and crumbles underneath.

Now more than ever, our community, our nation and the world need what we offer. As we head into the new year, let us resolve to continue putting our UU values into action, standing on the side of truth, steadfastly seeking justice, offering compassion, embracing diversity, with love and respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all.

— Matt

UU Q&A..?

Sunday, January 10, at 11 am
During Zoom Coffee Hour

*Do you have questions
about Unitarian
Universalism or UCWC?*

When you "arrive" at Zoom
coffee hour, either "raise
your hand" or mention that
you'd like to go to the Q&A.

*We're looking forward
to chatting with you.*



Ethical Discussion Group Based on "The Good Place"

This Adult RE discussion group will meet the first and third Wednesday of each month to watch and discuss an episode(s) of the hit TV show on NBC, "The Good Place," and discuss its ethical questions.

This show is hilarious, and it offers a fun way to discuss and explore our morals and values. How do we form beliefs, and how do they stand up to time and testing? How do we decide to live a moral life, what are the ramifications, and what about an afterlife? How do we incorporate the inherent worth and dignity of ourselves and others into how we act? And so much more! For more information contact Cassie at email: DLFD.

Lifespan Faith Development

RE Teacher Recruitment

We want you to join our RE teaching team. We have some truly dedicated teachers helping to shape the minds of our children and youth, and we are looking for a few more to join us. No prior teaching experience is required, and since we are virtual, you don't even have to miss the service.

You get the choice of when you can teach, have lesson plans delivered to your inbox, and join your class at 9 am on zoom. If you are interested in joining our RE Team, please contact Cassie at email: DLFD for the next steps.

Reflections

Happy New Year! We're finally leaving 2020 behind us as we move into a fresh start, one where the biggest changes we'll see are to our perspectives. The new year is a time for reflection, as we think about the past year and look forward to what we want in the new one.

Well, I've been thinking about that for RE as well. I joined this congregation just a few short months ago, a new beginning for me and another start to a new RE year. We've done so many things in the past few months, trying new ways to stay in touch and continue RE classes.

And yet during this time of reflection and renewal, we in RE are ready to rethink too. This 2020-21 RE year is so different from before, and we are taking steps every day to learn better how to do it and lean into being virtual.

As we begin this new 2021 year, RE has a few changes to make as well. I hope you will read through the RE events we are hosting and consider joining us as we continually remake ourselves in the best versions we can be — together.

— Cassie Lengel
Email: DLFD



Elementary Kid's Activity Group

Our children and youth through 5th grade are invited to join us this January for periodic fun activity sessions. These will include games, crafts, and group activities to offer a creative and fun outlet during this otherwise stressful time.

All sessions will be held on Zoom and will strive to be inclusive in regard to materials. See **Connections** for more information and to help us choose a good time.



High School Youth

This spring we are adapting our format for High School Youth. We will have their RE Class based on "The Good Place" Season Two every other week, and Youth Group on the off-weeks. All High School Youth offerings will now begin at 11 am regardless of whether it is RE or Youth Group that week. We will shift our format in Youth Group to a more small group feel, as we delve into check-ins and discuss weekly topics together. We hope to see you there.

Minecraft Regional Play

We have been invited to join our local Unitarian Universalist RE programs to a regional Minecraft experience for community building as well as learning about sacred architecture and our own "spiritual homes." Groups will be split by age range, with one group running from second to fifth grade (ages 7 to 11) and the other group running from sixth grade (age 11) and up.

The groups will meet every other week on Sunday afternoons at 3 pm — exact dates to be announced. Youth would need access to a device that supports the Minecraft game and Zoom access for audio conversations.

For more information, if you are interested in participating, or if you would like to register, click [here](#).



Men's Group

The Tuesday evening men's group will meet on January 5 at 7:00 pm via Zoom. The topic will be "Happy Hour — BYOB and commiserate about 2020". All men are welcome.

The Zoom link will be sent out directly via email. If you are interested in participating but are not yet on the email distribution list, please reach out to Mark Matteson or Dirk Troitenier at email: mens-group.



Women's Retreat

We were fortunate to hold our 2020 Women's Retreat the weekend of February 20, just before gatherings became too risky.

While we will not be able to gather at Temenos in 2021, we would like to offer a virtual version in the new year, with discussion and fun.

If you would like to take part in planning, please contact Sarah Hyson and Cassie Lengel at email: womens-retreat.



End of Life Planning for Mid-Life People A Four Week Class on Zoom

6:30 pm on January 18 and 25, February 15 and 22

It's never too early to begin thinking about what you want at the end of life — for yourself or someone else. This class will provide a safe space to discuss, share, and ponder the various choices and options for the end-of-life experience in today's modern and complicated world.

Combining group discussions, documentaries, and teaching by Rev. Carin M. Bonifacino, each week will explore a different topic related to death and dying. In addition, each participant will receive a workbook that they can use to fill in their instructions and wishes for end-of-life care.

The cost for the class and workbook combined will come to \$90. Limited financial assistance is available on a first come-first serve basis — if needed please reach out to email: Adult-RE. For more information check out this [video](#). To register, click [here](#).

Discussion of the Yoga Sûtras of Patanjali

What is the Yoga Sûtra of Patanjali? Or should we say the Yoga Sûtras of Patanjali? Yoga has eight limbs, who knew? What are the yamas and the niyamas?

Keep your eye on *Connections* in January to get more detail about a one-time session briefly exploring these questions and others. The session is scheduled for February 1 at 7 pm and will be repeated on February 3.



Small Group Ministry

During the epidemic, our Small Group Ministries are meeting by Zoom. Small Group Ministry is a way to gather with other Unitarian Universalists twice a month for community, conversation, and connection.

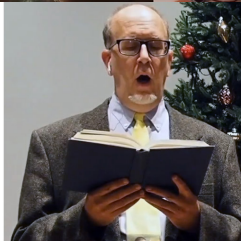
Each session is organized around a theme and includes a chalice lighting, readings, and questions to spark discussion. Groups are led by trained facilitators who meet regularly with Rev. Dan.

Currently, our congregation has five groups which meet at different times and places. If you are interested in joining a group, please contact email: SGM.

CHRISTMAS EVE 2020

ALL-AGES SERVICE

EVENING SERVICE



Stones in the Wall: Social Justice

*Each event, each action is
another stone in the wall
of social justice.*

Black Lives Matter

The UCWC Black Lives Matter Committee is committed to keeping alive the momentum of the racial equality movement. On Sunday, January 17, at 7 pm we will host a zoom meeting to discuss a TED talk featuring the founders of Black Lives Matter. The TED talk can be found [here](#). You can get the link for the Zoom discussion by contacting the committee [here](#).

BLM Committee also encourages everyone to patronize local black-owned businesses. Click [here](#) for a list. It is an easy way to show your support and benefit yourself as well as these hard-working members of our community.

At a conference in 2017 of UU ministers, UU leaders of color were asked to share their insights into how the UUA could continue moving forward in the midst of another racially charged moment. There has been extensive work done on this project since that time and our members are researching the UUA's curriculum of "Widening the Circle of Concern" to determine how some of the ideas could be incorporated into our UCWC congregation. We suggest going [here](#) to find a point of interest for you and to share your ideas and thoughts with us.

Share-the-Plate Generosity

The Social Justice Committee's **Share-the-Plate program** raises money to give to local non-profit organizations working to improve life for Chester County residents. We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient for January 17 (third Sunday of the month), Healthy Start.

The overarching goals of **MCHC's Healthy Start** program are to improve birth outcomes by providing prenatal and postnatal home-visiting as well as pre and postnatal socio-emotional strengthening support, parenting education, and health education; reduce health disparities by providing insurance and benefit enrollment assistance and food stability for children and their families; ensure children are prepared for kindergarten and have the tools to succeed in school and beyond, and that families of children entering kindergarten are engaged in their child's education and in their communities. You can **donate online** or send a check.



If donating by check:

- All checks should be payable to "UCWC".
- Checks with memo "All to charity" go to the charity. Clearest is "All to Healthy Start".
- Checks with memo "plate", "donation", "STP", or "share the plate" are split 50/50. Clearest is "STP 50/50".
- All other checks go 100% to UCWC, unless otherwise indicated.

Thank you for your generosity to November recipient, Baby Food Fund, in the amount of \$320.

Diversity Book Group

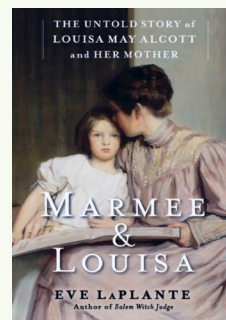
Sun, Jan 10 7:00 - 8:30 pm Zoom

Leader: Lorrie McKinley

This month: **Marmee and Louisa: The Untold Story of Louis May Alcott and Her Mother** by Eve Marie Plante .

Named by NPR as one of the best books of 2012, this is a symbiotic portrait of Louisa May Alcott and her mother, the real "Marmee" we all know, or thought we did, from **Little Women**.

Based on the Alcotts' intimate diaries and private papers, here is the remarkable but untold story of Abigail May Alcott — long dismissed from history as quiet, self-effacing background figure to a famous husband and even more famous daughter — who was in her own right a gifted intellectual, a talented writer, and a feminist way ahead of her time who advocated for an end to slavery, for women's suffrage, and universal civil rights. Her husband, Bronson, has received most of the credit for inspiring Louisa's intellectual development and her writing career, but it turns out it was her mother all along.



Criminal Justice Reform

News from Harrisburg. First the harsh background news: in Pennsylvania clemency remains the only avenue for release for about 5,400 Pennsylvanians serving life sentences without parole. This is the second-largest such population in the nation.



The good news. The Board of Pardons met last week and recommended clemency for several people serving life without parole including Dennis and Lee Horton. Click [here](#) for a short editorial by Lt. Governor Fetterman and FAMM staffer Celeste Trust for a good summary of the Horton brothers story, an excellent example of justice gone awry. [This link](#), which may require an *Inquirer* subscription, describes the powerful and touching scene when the Board of Pardons voted for clemency.

Opportunities. To learn about the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship's prison outreach and ministry project to reach UU's in prison, click [here](#). To learn how to get involved in various ways, including getting a pen pal, click [here](#).

Contact Robin Garret at email: [criminal-justice](#) to learn more about getting involved in criminal justice reform and to help plan programs for UCWC in 2021.

UUSC Update

Our thanks go to the 28% of the UCWC congregation that donated to UUSC as part of Guest at Your Table or by going to [uusc.org](#) and to "Donate". We would love to see that percentage increase — you can do that now. We'll report on the membership from UCWC as we go forward. Rest easy that your money will be well and carefully used.



UUSC increased their programs and funding to meet the unprecedented needs of 2020. While continuing all their existing partnerships during the pandemic, they were also able to provide 17 of their partners with additional emergency funding for COVID-19 relief. In addition, they were able to provide rapid emergency grants to our partners following Hurricane Laura in the Gulf Coast as well as Hurricanes Eta and Iota in Central America, where we helped support access to clean water, medicines, and shelter.

Safe Harbor Volunteers Needed

UCWC volunteers are again providing meals at Safe Harbor on Matlack Street in West Chester.

Dinner meals for 15+ people are being prepared by 2-3 scheduled volunteers twice a month. Currently volunteers prepare and drop off the dinners at the Safe Harbor front door each second Wednesday and second Sunday, between 5:30-6:00 pm. We are not currently serving meals — only preparing and dropping off our meals.



This is where we need your help: Frequency of providing meals for each volunteer depends on the number of volunteers we have for the year. In the past, volunteers have provided their time and talent up to four times per year. With more volunteers, the less frequent meal prep is needed per volunteer annually.

This is a valuable service that does not take a lot of your time, so please consider volunteering by contacting new coordinator Gerry Giess at email: [safe-harbor](#). Our 2020 schedule runs through February, and a new schedule is being developed for the 2021-22 year, beginning in March. We would love to see you on this schedule. Contact Gerry and ask how you can help the residents in need at Safe Harbor.



First Sunday Food Collection

In this time of social distancing, we are not collecting food on the first Sunday of each month. However, as always, you can still make a financial donation with no personal contact on your part. We will buy grocery store gift cards and give them to the Food Cupboard.



Please make your check out to "UCWC" and write "Food Cupboard" in the memo line. Mail your check to:

Unitarian Congregation of West Chester
501 South High Street
West Chester, PA 19382

You can donate to the Food Cupboard on the UCWC donation web page — click [here](#) and select "Grocery Cards for Food Cupboard." Contact Cyndy Bullaughey, email: [grocery-program](#), for more information.

Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

Click [HERE](#) to access our
website main calendar,
which includes late
December events.

MLK Baby Food Fund Drive

Each year on Martin Luther King Day we join with our community in caring for one another in a day of service. This year we will not be able to come together in person, but there is still so much work to be done.



Right now, our communities are struggling with food insecurity, and families with infants are no exception. That is why the RE Committee is teaming up with Social Justice to support the Baby Food Fund, created by one of our very own youth.

We will take the next few weeks to gather food for a drive, and we will collect it at the congregation on Sunday, January 17, from 1-3 pm. You can also order food online [here](#) and have it shipped for contactless participation in this fundraiser. Please consider donating to help a family in need. For more information contact email: [RE](#).

Jan 3	Sun	First Sunday Food Collection. See p. 8.
Jan 4	Mon	Defenders of Democracy. 7:00 pm. Zoom.
Jan 5	Tue	Executive Committee. 6:30 pm.
Jan 6	Tue	Men's Group. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 5.
Jan 6	Wed	Small GROUP Facilitators Meeting. 7 pm. Zoom.
		Ethical Discussion Group. 7 pm. Zoom. See p. 3.
Jan 10	Sun	Q and A. 11 am. See p. 3.
		Diversity Book Group. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 7.
Jan 11	Mon	Religious Services Committee. 6 :00 pm.
Jan 12	Tue	Program Council Meeting. 7:00 pm. Zoom.
Jan 17	Sun	Share-the-Plate Sunday. Benefits Healthy Start. See p. 7.
		MLK Day of Service Baby Food Fund Food Collection. 1:00-3:00 pm. See left.
		Black Lives Matter Racial Equity Discussion. 7:00 pm. See p. 7.
Jan 18	Mon	End of Life Planning Class. 6:30 pm. Zoom. See p. 5.
Jan 19	Tue	Board Meeting. 6:30 pm. Zoom.
Jan 20	Wed	Religious Education Committee. 7:00 pm. Zoom.
		Ethical Discussion Group. 7 pm. Zoom. See p. 3.
Jan 25	Mon	End of Life Planning Class. 6:30 pm. Zoom. See p. 5.
Jan 26	Tue	Committee on Ministry. 6:30 pm.

EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:

Tuesdays	Women's Kaffeeklatsch. 9:00 am. Zoom.
Most Thursdays	Spirit Singers Practice. at 7:15 pm. Zoom. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: choir .
Fridays	Women's Corona Cocktail Party. 7:00-8:30 pm. Zoom.
Various Dates	Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups). See web calendar or contact email: SGM . See p. 5.

What is Zoom?

Zoom is a web conferencing service that allows us to see and hear each other without being in the same room. It is a wonderful way for us to stay connected when we are physically apart, and most of our classes, meetings and other smaller events have moved to this platform. For easy instructions, click [here](#).

The Fellowtarian is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester



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