

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

November 2021

COVID UPDATE

SERVICES

Weather permitting, our November 7 All Souls service will be in person, outdoors at The Concept School. This brief service will center on our ritual of remembering ancestors and those we have loved and lost. Religious education classes for children will take place during the service, and youth are invited to a "chalice and chat." In the event of rain, a substitute service will take place online.

Beginning November 14, our services will be hybrid, with limited in-person attendance in our sanctuary. If you plan to come in person, please go to ucwc.org/sunday beginning each Wednesday to RSVP.

Advance signups will allow us to maintain distancing in the sanctuary and help keep track of who is in the building in case any contact tracing becomes necessary. We ask that all eligible people who attend in person events be vaccinated, and we require masks to be worn over mouth and nose at all times. All services will be livestreamed via YouTube Live.

EVENTS

We encourage outdoor events of any size. Please wear masks for events involving singing or children under 12, and please respect the wishes of participants who prefer masks to be worn. Indoor events may take place with masking, appropriate ventilation, social distancing, and limited numbers. We have purchased high quality air filters for the Social Room and our larger Sunday School spaces. Please no food at indoor events. Check with the **Executive Team** if you have questions.

As always, these plans and guidelines are subject to change based on current COVID 19 numbers.

Our Mission

Our mission is to:

*GROW in spirit, heart
and mind*

*LOVE through care
and community*

*SERVE beyond
ourselves*



NOTES FROM REV. DAN

We weighted the tent down. Really, we did. Wonderful members had purchased sandbags for the tent's legs. They were delivered to the congregation just in time to take them to our outdoor service on Sunday. By all measures of appropriate safety, we **Did It Right**. Thirty mile an hour gusts are significant, though, and half an hour into the service, the whole tent lifted up and started heading east.

This has been the reality of congregational life in the Fall of 2021. We do all our homework, plan carefully for every possibility, and it all goes weird anyway.

Fortunately, that isn't the end of the story. Within seconds, alert members were at the scene, carefully lifting the tent back to its original position and stationing themselves at each of the six upright supports. They stayed there for the rest of the service, literally keeping us grounded as we finished the service.

CONTINUED P. 3.



A Welcoming
Congregation

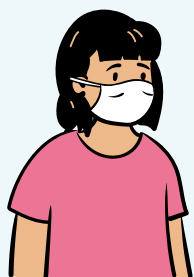
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Sunday Services



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.

For details about hybrid services (in-person and online), see p. 1.



Nov 7 10 am ALL SOULS Rev. Dan Schatz **In-Person Outdoors at The Concept School**

On All Souls Day we honor our ancestors, remember loved ones we have lost, and honor the dead. This special outdoor All Souls service will include a ritual of memory. All who come are invited to bring a photograph or a memento of someone you are remembering for the altar. In the event of rain, we will move to an online service and reschedule our ritual of memory.

NOTE: Daylight Savings Time ends this morning. Remember to set your clocks back one hour.



Nov 14 10 am HITTING THE RESET SWITCH Rev. Dan Schatz **Hybrid at UCWC and YouTube**

"Restarts" can be mixtures of hope and challenges, whether they take place in our congregation, our emotional lives, or our spiritual explorations. We expect this Sunday to be our first hybrid in person indoor service in our building. In person attendance is limited, so please go to ucwc.org/sunday and RSVP beginning Wednesday, November 10.

Nov 21 10 am HARVESTING HOPE Rev. Dan Schatz **Hybrid at UCWC and YouTube**

In this special All Ages Thanksgiving service, we will come together to harvest hope and share our abundance, in our community and across the world through the Guest at Your Table program.

(Note: Due to COVID safety, we will not be able to include a Bread Communion in this year's service. We look forward to the return of the Bread Service in future years.) In person attendance is limited, so please go to ucwc.org/sunday and RSVP beginning Wednesday, November 17.

Nov 28 10 am THE CASE AGAINST GRATITUDE Mark Bernstein **Hybrid at UCWC and YouTube**

Poets, novelists, and self-help gurus tell us to count our blessings... to be grateful for what we have, especially during this period of thanksgiving. But sometimes, gratitude doesn't work, especially when life is hard, or things aren't going our way. If we can't draw on gratitude when we're not feeling grateful, what other options do we have? In person attendance is limited, so please go to ucwc.org/sunday and RSVP beginning Wednesday, November 24.

Mark Bernstein is a former full time staff member with the Central East Region of the UUA and currently works as Adjunct Staff with the Region. He has been a grateful member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Delaware County in Media, Pennsylvania for the past 28 years.

From the President

As stronger COVID protection measures take effect, the country is seeing a surge of people invoking “religious” beliefs to avoid requirements for masking and vaccinations. They do so, even though the US versions of the vaccines have proven safe and effective after millions of doses, and leaders of many major religions – notably Catholics and Mormons – say vaccines and masking are fully consistent with their faiths.



Given our UU value of appreciating and respecting different religious beliefs, how does our faith suggest we respond?

We are not talking about followers of faiths where skepticism of modern medicine has deep roots, like Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses or the Amish. Instead, we seem to be hearing from recent converts to a faith called “No Masks and No Vaccines.” It's reasonable to suspect they are “playing the religion card” to justify a secular choice, one that will help spread a virus that has already killed more than 700,000 Americans.

I believe we UUs are not required to automatically honor this claim to “religious freedom.” Our values allow us to support applying these protection measures in this situation, because the measures are framed in a way that honors everyone's personal autonomy and therefore respects their inherent worth and dignity.

After all, no one is tying people down and jamming shots into their arms or forcibly duct-taping masks onto those who spurn them. All of us still have a choice. We are free to refuse masking or vaccines. However, doing so has consequences, because

Notes from Rev. Dan, Cont'd

This, too, is our reality. We're all holding the tent down, and it takes all of us, together, just to keep things working the way they should. Whenever we show up, offer to help where it's needed, or give a little extra, we're helping to hold our tent down. When we're good-natured, patient, and forgiving with each other, we're helping to hold the tent down. When we all work together, we're holding that tent down.

I hope we don't have too many more outdoor services quite as windy as that one was – but if we do, it's a huge relief to know that we have so many – well, you might call them pillars – with giving spirits and gentle, solid hands.

In faith, Dan



The COVID pandemic challenges us to consider how we can best protect each other with a tolerable level of disruption to personal lives and society as a whole.

On Sunday, November 7,
Daylight Savings Time ends.
Turn the clocks **BACK** one hour.



refusal makes the body a fertile breeding ground for a highly infectious and harmful virus.

Those who choose to refuse will face some new limits that help prevent them from spreading the virus to others, such as periodic COVID testing, or exclusion from businesses or their workplace. These limits are the logical consequence of how one chooses to exercise personal autonomy in this case.

The COVID pandemic challenges us to consider how we can best protect each other with a tolerable level of disruption to personal lives and society as a whole. Wearing masks when required or requested, and getting a well-established, safe, and effective vaccine when eligible, are essential strategies for ending the pandemic. When we support efforts that advance those public health measures, despite pushback based on claims of religious freedom, we show “Love through care and community” – which just happens to be part of our mission at UCWC.

Lifespan Faith Development

All we've wanted was to go back to "normal," but we're finding it's closer to a new beginning than it is to a going back.

It's Time for RE Registration

Calling all RE families! It's that time of year again. We invite you to fill out the **online registration form** for each of your children participating in our RE classes this year.

We are working to ramp up to in-person classes, so we want to verify any needs your family may have and have up to date safety information. Thank you.

REflections: Religious Education Update

This seems to be a year of new beginnings. Thus far we've already begun to attend school in-person again. Many of our jobs are coming back to in-person (if they were virtual). We've recognized the Jewish Holy Days of Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur, and we've celebrated the Pagan new year with Samhain.

It seems strange that all we've wanted to do during this pandemic was to go back to what we knew of as "normal," but as we ramp back up we're finding it's closer to a new beginning than it is to a going back. We are faced with new realities, and we're creating a hybrid of what we used to know and what mitigations are necessary for right now. So, we just have to try things out and be flexible.

This November we are ramping up to a new beginning of being back in our building again for services and classes and meetings and events. We are very excited, but not only is it a slow ramp up, but it's causing us to try things out and adapt as we go.

Basically, we are on an adventure. We're going to pack our bags with the tools we know we'll need, and we'll have to change them out and pick up new ones as we go exploring. Unlike with a quest, we don't have a specific destination we're aiming for, but we're taking things one step at a time.

Part of the beauty of a new beginning is that we are all starting at this point, and we have been given the opportunity to create the space we want and need for ourselves, for one another, and for the community at large. Some of this will take hard work, but some of this can just be speaking up and listening as we hold space and create a place where we all can truly Belong.

— Cassie Lengel
email: **DLFD**



Religious Education Opportunities for Children and Youth 2021-22

Please join us on November 7 outside at The Concept School as we have a special All Souls Service together — children and youth are invited to begin separately in their RE space and Chalice and Chat.

We are also very excited to be introducing indoor RE at our congregation again this November. Since vaccinations for children ages 5-11 are still rolling out, and to protect everyone involved in our classes, we are still requiring masks, social distancing,

vaccinations (for those able to receive them), and we have new air filters to help mitigate any safety concerns.

All are invited to sign up to attend our services at 10 am on Sunday mornings, with RE classes available from about 10:15 to 11:00 am. RE classes will meet on November 14 and 28 as we begin to explore our World Religions theme. We will have a special intergenerational service on November 21 as we

are "Harvesting Hope" together and introducing this year's Guest at Your Table Program. Our OWL youth in eighth and ninth grades will continue to meet on Sunday evenings on November 7, 14, and 21 at 7 pm.

We look forward to when our children can be fully vaccinated as our next turning point on this ramp up to RE. For now, we ask that our parents to please fill out our **registration form** on our website.

UU History and Theologies

Tuesday, November 30



What's the difference between a Unitarian and a Universalist? Who were the Socinians? What does Count Dracula have in common with the Unitarianism? Who was Pete Seeger's favorite circuit riding Universalist preacher? What does it mean to be a religious liberal? Could it be that UUs actually have a theological tradition of our own?

We'll cover this and more in Rev. Dan Schatz's Zoom class on Unitarian Universalist History and Theologies on Tuesday, November 30 from 6:30-8:30 pm. There will be stories, new perspectives, and some mind-blowing theology.

Bring your questions and invite a friend if you know someone who is interested in learning more about our "Faith of the Free." The class is open to all – newcomers as well as those who would like to grow in their understanding of Unitarian Universalism. "Walk-ins" are welcome, but it is extra helpful to RSVP in advance to email: **minister**.

The Good Place



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. RSVP to email: **Adult-RE** or join us for any session. We are currently in Season 3. We can lend you the DVDs to help you catch up.

Adult RE

An Exploration of World Religions

This year we will meet each month to explore a different religion and how we engage them as UUs. This curriculum is based on Stephen Prothero's book, *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World*, and the podcast "Interfaith Voices." So, RSVP to email: **Adult-RE** for our next session about Islam on November 16 at 7 pm, via Zoom. And check out *Connections* for a video about Prothero.



Clean Up the Congregation!

Join us on November 6 to clean up and prepare our building for indoor worship and RE again. We've got big jobs and little tasks for everyone to help with, from dusting to hanging up posters to moving some chairs/tables and more.

We are so excited to be getting back together in our building, and now's the time to make it sparkle. Please RSVP to email: **DLFD**.



Men's Group

The Tuesday evening men's group will meet on November 2 at 7:00 pm via Zoom. 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 or Dirk at email: **mens-group**.

Pastoral Care

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



Stones in the Wall: Social Justice

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

What is Love Calling You to Do?

Side with Love is a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love's power to stop oppression. It is sponsored by the **Unitarian Universalist Association**, and all are welcome to join. **Subscribe** to get updates.

At the **Action Center** you can learn about, host, or join **upcoming events**. These events are often related to the work of our own Social Justice Sub-Committees/Teams.



If you are inspired to start an action, see the **UCWC website** to find out if it is related to one of our existing sub-committees (teams). If so, please contact the chair or that team. If not, you can contact the **Social Justice Committee chair** to learn how to get Social Justice Committee approval to lead an **ad hoc** action or event or start a new team or project. Email me at email: **social-justice**.

— Linda Sander

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 also 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.

The West Chester Food Cupboard commits to provide a variety of fresh and nonperishable healthy food items to anyone who resides in the West Chester school district...because no one should go hungry!



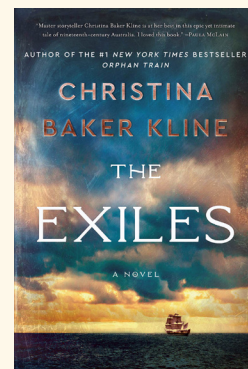
Diversity Book Group Sunday • November 14 7:00-8:30 pm Leader: Pam Seres

***The Exiles* by Christina Baker Kline** (author of *Orphan Train* and *A Piece of the World*). The story of Australia unfolds through the eyes of three women bound together in common hardship and experience, as they fight for redemption and freedom in a new society.

Evangeline, a 19th century London governess, naïve, young, and pregnant, lands in the notorious Newgate Prison. She is sentenced to "the land beyond the seas," Van Diemen's Land, a penal colony in Australia.

Nothing is certain for Evangeline, except that the child she is carrying will be born on the months-long voyage. While life in Australia is punishing and often brutally unfair, it is also — for some — an opportunity for redemption, a new way of life, and unimagined freedom.

Contact Debby Kern at email: **diversity-book-group**. All are welcome.



UCWC



CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM Team

Criminal Justice Reform Events

The Criminal Justice Reform Team general meeting is Tuesday November 2, at 4:30 pm. If you cannot make this meeting but want to learn more about current CJ reform issues in Pennsylvania, or if you want to get involved in our team's efforts to assist people in our community impacted by incarceration, please contact us at email: criminal-justice.

The next Criminal Justice Reform Team program is Monday, November 15 at 7:30 pm: "How Criminal Justice Reform Can Help Us Overcome Fear and Fascism". This TED talk features Zach Norris, the author of *Defund Fear: Safety Without Policing, Prisons, and Punishment*, the 2021-2022 UUA Common Read. Discussion will follow. We hope you'll join us and get excited about participating in the Common Read.

Defenders of Democracy

The DOD group has decided to disband. We are proud of the work we have contributed:

- Holding a UCWC-sanctioned meeting at the congregation with **March on Harrisburg**
- Doing a Sunday service this past March
- Spearheading UUtheVote in the 2020 election
- Keeping the congregation informed of all the attacks on our democracy.

DOD was one important way that we as a congregation used our Seven Principals as a guide to action.

For those who are interested in keeping informed of all issues related to protecting our democracy, please contact Tom Ulrich, the head of **UUJusticePA's Good Government** group. They have a bimonthly meeting and twice a month email updates of democracy-related issues and activities all across Pennsylvania. Email Tom at tomulrich41@gmail.com to get on his list.

Thanks to all who have participated in DOD. We have no doubt that you will continue to do what you can to help protect our democracy.



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 November 21 (third Sunday of the month), **Baby Food Fund**.



Since its inception in 2014, Baby Food Fund has delivered over 3,500 pounds of baby food to the Chester County Food Bank. Mary Hyson, daughter of congregation members Chris and Sarah Hyson, started collecting funds to help people living in food insecurity when she was six years old.

Her decision to focus on babies and create Baby Food Fund was to help those, "too small to help themselves," and to make sure "everyone could get

an equal start in life." Her commitment is to eradicate food insecurity for babies, first in Chester County, then all of Pennsylvania, and someday worldwide.

Please note the following as you prepare your donation:

- All checks should be payable to "UCWC".
- Checks with memo "All to charity" or similar go to the charity. Clearest is "All to Baby Food Fund".
- 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 September recipient, The Family Center, in the amount of \$840.

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Vigil

November 20

7:00 pm at UCWC

Each year our congregation partners with community organizations to host a Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil. We will honor and share the names of transgender people who have lost their lives to violence in the past year and have an opportunity for conversation and sharing.

UUSC Update

Tell the Government We Need a Just Response to Climate Migration

As people of conscience, we demand that our government respond to global challenges in ways that uplift human dignity and honor human rights. That's why UUSC has long invested in **community-driven grassroots responses to climate-forced displacement**. It's also why our President, Rev. Mary Katherine Morn, recently joined a **task force of distinguished stakeholders** in issuing comprehensive guidance to elected officials on how to uplift human rights in our response to climate change.

Join us in calling on your members of Congress to endorse the task force's recommendations, including our five-point plan for a human-rights-based response to global climate migration.



Help put UU values to work around the world by joining UUSC **here**. Any donation makes you a proud member, and don't miss the annual Guest at Your Table Kick-off at the November 21 Sunday service, where you can be inspired by the actions of UUSC's partners and their stories of hope.

— Linda Sander and Charlot Barker

Fun & Fellowship

Fun and Fellowship

We have begun to see each other in person, and that means it's time for some fun. The Fun and Fellowship Committee is working on planning outdoor activities such as hiking, and indoor activities such as Crafting Together and Game Night. We have also detected some interest in playing pickleball.

Let us know what kind of activities you would like to see. Better yet, join the committee. We are looking for more active volunteers.

Take a Hike with Fun and Fellowship. On October 31 join UCWC-ers in a hike at 12:00 noon at Ockehocking Preserve. Bring a packed lunch/snack and water and enjoy adult conversation as you explore this farm-like setting.

We will meet at the entrance off Delchester Road. From the service (Concept School) or West Chester, take Route 3 east (towards Philadelphia) and turn left onto Delchester Road. The entrance is on the left. Attendance is limited so please RSVP to Christie Judge to reserve your spot.

2021 Auction a Success

Thank you to everyone for your generous participation in our auction. We made around \$6,200 for UCWC.

If you won a place at a group event (meal, party, workshop, etc.), the donor should be in contact with you. Donors can go to the silent auction links and see the winners highlighted in yellow.



If you won a service, it is your responsibility to contact the donor to make arrangements. Your invoice has contact information. This should be done within a year unless otherwise specified.

Invoice questions should be addressed to Steve Sander, email: **auction-donations**; for other auction-related questions, contact Nancy Artus at email: **auction**.

Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

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

Minister's Office Hours Return

As we begin hybrid services, Rev. Dan is returning to regular office hours. Because plans can shift suddenly, it is a good idea to email or call before coming in.

Mon: 1:00-3:00 pm

Tue: By appointment

Wed: 1:00-3:00 pm
(There will be no office hours on November 24.)

Thu: Minister's writing day

Fri: Minister's sabbath

In addition, Dan is available by appointment Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, and can be reached by email or cell phone at any time.

Oct 31	Sun	Halloween Trunk or Treat. 11:00 am. The Concept School. See <i>October Fellowtarian</i> , p. 3. Take a Hike with Fun and Fellowship. Noon. Ockehocking Preserve. See p. 8.
Nov 2	Tue	Criminal Justice Reform Team. 4:30 pm. See p. 7. Men's Group. 7:00 pm. See p. 5. Executive Team. 7:00 pm. Email: executive-team .
Nov 3	Wed	Adult RE: The Good Place. 7:00 pm. See p. 5.
Nov 6	Sat	Clean Up the Congregation. See p. 5.
Nov 7	Sun	Daylight Savings Time Ends. Set clock back one hour. First Sunday Food Collection. See p. 6.
Nov 8	Mon	Religious Services Committee. 6:30 pm.
Nov 9	Tue	Program Council. 7:00 pm.
Nov 14	Sun	Diversity Book Group. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 6.
Nov 15	Mon	Criminal Justice Reform Team Program. 7:30 pm. See p. 7.
Nov 16	Tue	Adult RE Committee. 4:30 pm. Email: adult-re . Board Meeting. 6:30 pm. All are welcome. Adult RE: Exploration of World Religions. 7:00 pm. See p. 5.
Nov 17	Wed	Adult RE: The Good Place. 7:00 pm. See p. 5. Black Lives Matter Committee. 3:00 pm. Contact Sandra Schaal, email: black-lives-matter .
Nov 18	Thu	Religious Education Committee. 7:00 pm. Email: RE .
Nov 20	Sat	Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil. 7:00 pm. At UCWC. See p. 8.
Nov 21	Sun	Share-the-Plate Sunday. Benefits Baby Food Fund. See p. 7.
Nov 23	Tue	Committee on Ministry. 6:30 pm. Email: COM .
Nov 30	Tue	UU History and Theologies Class. 6:30 pm. See p. 5.



EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:

Most Thursdays	Spirit Singers Practice. at 7:15 pm. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: choir .
Saturdays	Open Zoom Session. 7:00 pm.
Various Dates	Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups). See web calendar or contact email: SGM .

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