

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

February 2022



NOTES FROM REV. DAN

I recognize it's not normal to begin a newsletter column with a gripe, but these are unusual times, so here goes: I am weary of writing about COVID-19, starting and stopping online or hybrid services, vaccinations, face masks, grieving losses, fear for loved ones, making do, and the like. Possibly this does not come as a shock.

With that said, I take the good along with the bad, and as tired as I am of COVID and its impacts, this congregation has provided plenty of bright spots, even through the hardest times.

Here's what I'm not tired of:

I'm not a bit tired of a congregation that has proven its resiliency over and over, that has adapted, changed, and deepened, despite the difficulties.

I'm not a bit tired of a staff that serves with love and creativity, that has shown dedication again and again, met sudden changes of plan with equanimity, and risen to every challenge.

I'm not a bit tired of lay leaders who are clear eyed about the present but also look to the

future, who aren't afraid to ask big questions, and who imagine days ahead that are far beyond what came before.

I'm not a bit tired of members and friends who reach out in care to one another, who step up when needed, and who ask for support when in need, knowing they will be held by this community.

I'm not a bit tired of a congregation which has been patient, flexible, loving, and forgiving, and which has held to our covenant — even when disappointed.

I'm not a bit tired of children and youth who pick up right where they left off, enjoying each other's company, learning and growing together, and welcoming each new kid that comes along.

Times haven't been easy, these last two years — but it is in such times that we measure the true quality of a community — and this one stands as the highest.

Here's to healing and wholeness, to moving forward together, and to all the possibilities to come.

— In faith, Dan

*Here's to
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Our Mission

Our mission is to:

GROW in spirit, heart
and mind

LOVE through care
and community

SERVE beyond
ourselves



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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.

Feb 6 10 am SPRIGS OF HOPE Rev. Dan Schatz

In deepest winter, sometimes it's hard to see our way to Spring. But Groundhog Day is when things begin to turn around.

**Feb 13 10 am LOVE SONGS Rev. Dan Schatz
Miriam Davidson
and UCWC Musicians**

On this Valentine's Weekend, we celebrate the many kinds of love in a special service of songs, readings, and reflection. (Please note – the Feast of Decadent Chocolate has been postponed until March 6.)

Feb 20 10 am WHY IS THERE SOMETHING RATHER THAN NOTHING? Rev. Dave Hunter

Is this the Ultimate Question or simply a pointless diversion? What would the "nothing" alternative look like? Have the theologians or the cosmologists come up with any good answers? Will this forever remain an unanswered and unanswerable question? Rev. Dave will share his thoughts.

Rev. Dave Hunter and his wife, the Rev. Kerry Mueller, are officially retired Unitarian Universalist ministers, now serving as co-consulting ministers for the UU Fellowship of Pottstown. Dave and Kerry live at White Horse Village, a retirement community adjacent to Ridley Creek State Park. Dave is a graduate of Princeton University, the Harvard Law School, and Wesley Theological Seminary; he was an attorney at the Department of Justice, in the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division, from 1975 to 2000.

Feb 27 10 am CHOICE AND A CULTURE OF LOVE Rev. Dan Schatz

At a time when reproductive rights are under threat, what is our calling as Unitarian Universalists?

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**.

Note About Services

As COVID numbers shift, we continue to adjust, and will return to hybrid services as soon as it is reasonably safe to do so. Please look for updates on Sunday plans in your email or check the website.

Minister's Office Hours

During the current COVID surge, office hours are changeable. Rev. Dan is available for appointments on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. He can be reached at email: **minister** or by cell phone.

From the President

I've been thinking a lot lately about what it's like to be a "leader" of a community of Unitarian Universalists. We UUs are proudly independent-minded bunch. We don't do something just because someone in authority tells us to do so. When I was on the board of my UU fellowship in Alaska, I often said that (trying) to lead UUs was like herding cats. In a twist on a famous Will Rogers quote, I've been known to say, "I'm not a member of any organized religion – I'm a Unitarian."



I've come to see that being a UU leader does not mean pushing for a particular outcome. Instead, it means getting people to engage thoughtfully on necessary questions or challenges and to seek a constructive agreement on a solution or path forward. In short, get the wisdom of the group and ensure appropriate follow-through.

As a UCWC leader, I realize we mean many things to many different people. We are a soft place to land, a refuge amid a world of turmoil. We offer solace for grief and support for those facing unfair treatment from society or government. Here, we can recharge and renew our spirits, explore stimulating questions of faith and meaning, and find fellow allies in working for social justice.

Our mission – grow in spirit, heart and mind; love through care and community; serve beyond ourselves – covers a wide range of possibilities. Pursuing that mission means we each have a role beyond what UCWC does for us as individuals. We pledge our financial contributions – they form the bedrock for everything we do. We give service in the myriad of ways needed to keep our community thriving. We reach out to fellow members and others who need support. We strive to be informed, engaged citizens and put our UU values into wider action.

We are entering stewardship season, and recruitment will begin for positions that are elected at our annual meeting in June (Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee). Our hospitality and membership efforts need new energy – dare I say, leadership. Each of us is at a different stage of life and has a different capacity to contribute. Please consider how you may grow by serving – in those roles or others. It will enrich your experience with us and help all of us grow stronger together.

– Matt Zencey

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Are You Thinking About Membership?

If you are new to our congregation or have been around for a while and are considering membership, Rev. Dan would love to connect with you. He can be reached at email: **minister**. In addition, please look for these programs coming up in March and April (exact dates to be announced). You can also let the organizers know in advance that you are interested.

Explorations. Explorations is an opportunity for newcomers and longtime UUs to come together and talk about Unitarian Universalism, our own lives, our beliefs and spiritual practices. This 5 or 6 session, small group

ministry based program will meet every two weeks in March and April. Topics covered include The UU Principles, Our Beliefs, and more. Contact email: **DLFD** to learn more.

Path to Membership. This single session class is a great way to learn more about our congregation and what membership is all about. Contact email: **minister** for more information.

Unitarian Universalist History and Theologies. This evening with Rev. Dan gives a broad overview of our history, theologies, and stories. For more information write to email: **minister**.



Lifespan Faith Development

We are here at UCWC to offer you a shoulder, to stand side by side, and to hold you up.

February Forecast for Religious Education

Dear friends and families, thank you so much for your continued patience and flexibility as we adapt with the times throughout this year. We are watching the numbers from the Omicron variant closely, and we expect to be back to hybrid worship and RE classes sometime in February.

To help offset some of the uncertainty, we will plan for in-person RE in the afternoon on January 30 (to invite family pods to work on a service project) and February 13 (activity TBA). We hope to be back to our regular classes and RE rooms by February 27, but a definitive decision will be made closer to the date. Our OWL class will continue to meet every Sunday evening.

REflections: Religious Education Update

Do you remember those little candy hearts everyone passes around on Valentines Day? You know, they're small, are in pastel colors, have cute messages printed on them, and kinda taste like chalk...I LOVE these candies! (Just not to eat...)

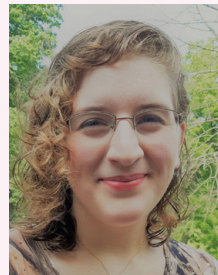
These candies use wonderfully witty, pithy statements to share our love with one another. And this isn't the mushy, romantic kind of love, but that of friendship. Honestly, anyone who gives you these candies in seriousness does not love you and your taste buds, but between friends they are passed with smiles and laughter as they create a bond between you.

I am a firm believer that you can taste love in food, and that might be the only thing keeping these candies in circulation. With each bite you take in messages: someone loves you, you're cool, be mine, my friend, smile, hug me, so sweet, and countless more.

As we are still stuck and existing in this pandemic, with all its struggles, I wonder what messages we are putting into our bodies? If I had hearts for you, they would say be gentle, love you, take rest, breathe, laugh more, and self care.

Many of us have had a rough month with the ups and downs of the Omicron variant and its effects on the holidays, school, travel, work, and our physical/mental/emotional health. We are not here, at UCWC, to add to your stressors, but instead to offer you a shoulder, to stand side by side, and to hold you up. Sending love and positive energy! Be mine, UCWC.

— Cassie Lengel, Email: DLFD



Religious Education Service Project for Families

Were you looking forward to our Martin Luther King Day of service? Were you sad that you had other commitments? Well good news! We're rescheduling.

All our RE families of children and youth ages five and up are invited to join us on January 30 from 1:00-2:30 pm, as we work together to write notes of gratitude and support to our healthcare workers and make blankets and scarves to fight the cold. Right now we are limiting this to only RE families for safety. Please RSVP to email: DLFD if you know you can attend, though walk-ins are welcome as well.



Wrapping Up "The Good Place"

Join us for our final session of this adult RE discussion group based on "The Good Place." We have met for about a year working our way through the ethical quandaries in Seasons 1, 2, and 3, and we will wrap up with the final episodes of Season 3 on February 2.

RSVP to email: **Adult-RE** or join us on zoom. For any who could not join us or would like to finish the show, we can loan you the DVD copies to enjoy. Thanks for making this a great study together.

Men's Group

Who do you want to be when you grow up? Last month, we asked "what" you want to be when you grow up" to start a conversation about life during retirement. Now, we wonder, 'who' do you want to be? Were you defined by your work? After you retired, did you have to redefine who you were? Did you want to? Did others redefine you? What is the difference between the work 'you' and the home 'you'?



We meet Tuesday, February 1. 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**.

OWL Facilitator Training Opportunity

Do you want to help us, as Unitarian Universalists, in our quest to teach healthy sexuality? Become a trained OWL facilitator. This is a great curriculum called "Our Whole Lives" developed by the UUA and UCC churches to teach a healthy relationship to your body and your sexuality at every age. Here at our congregation we offer this class to our eighth and ninth grade students every other year, so our next classes will be 2023-24.

After a long hiatus due to safety concerns from the pandemic, in person trainings are again being offered. This March there will be a training at Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon. Our region offers several trainings each year, but this one is particularly close to home for us. Sign up now, since spots are going quickly. Contact email: **DLFD** if you are interested or have any questions.

Join Us This Spring for "Explorations" A Program for Beginning and Deepening our UU Journeys

Come one, come all, whether you're new to Unitarian Universalism or you've been with us for years, join "Explorations". This is a small-group-style program that is a great way to make some connections and deepen your relationships with others as you engage some guided readings and discussion questions together.

This program examines what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist through weekly topics that bring us together as we delve into our common faith and our individual experiences. Let's grow together our spiritual practices and make new friends. "Explorations" will begin in March. Details and dates will be announced soon in *Connections*.

Adult RE: An Exploration of World Religions

This year we will meet each month to explore a different religion and how we engage it 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." RSVP to email: **Adult-RE** for our next session as we continue learning about Confucianism on February 15 at 7 pm, via Zoom.



Stones in the Wall: Social Justice

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

UUSC Update

I invite you to look at the UUSC webpage where it features an article about Haiti, "**Grassroots Groups Are Pivotal to Haiti Recovery**". Haiti has endured an earthquake in 2010, followed by another in 2021, when they weren't fully recovered from the previous one. So many people live in such poverty, getting clean water to drink is a dire and most basic need and unmet for many. The president was assassinated a month before the most recent earthquake. How can you muster up hope?



And yet, UUSC does and offers their support. Not just now, but they have for years. Your support to UUSC now and over the years means you have supported the people of Haiti too. In 2016 I visited Haiti on a service trip sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist College of Social Justice (UUCSJ), in collaboration with UUSC. Staying in a hostel, seeing the work of local groups who UUSC supports to help the community, getting to know Haitians we met changed some of the focus of my life. You're invited to also help by joining UUSC with whatever donation you can make. Thanks so much.

— Charlot Barker

Criminal Justice Reform

There is no Criminal Justice Reform Zoom program this month. We fervently hope you will find time to do one or more of the following:

- Take three minutes to watch **this video**, which examines the criminal justice system from an ethical perspective.
- Visit **this website** to learn how you can advocate for the sentencing reforms so badly needed here in Pennsylvania.
- Contact us at email: **criminal-justice** to learn about the UU Church of the Larger Fellowship's program promoting postal mail correspondence (being a "penpal") with UU's currently incarcerated here in the United States. If you prefer, you can learn about this yourself at **Worthy Now** and explore the "Deepen and Connect" section there. The pen pal program is one of several projects within Worthy Now.

UCWC



CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM Team

The monthly team planning meeting is on Tuesday, February 1, at 4:30 pm. The Zoom link will be on the UCWC.org Zoom links page.

Calling All Social Justice Warriors and Supporters

UUJusticePA is the statewide organization that advocates in Harrisburg for social justice causes that UU's care about. From climate change to criminal justice reform and economic justice; from the proliferation of gun violence to attacks on women's reproductive health and attacks on our very democracy, UU social justice work is needed now as much as any time in recent memory.



UUJusticePA
Unitarian Universalist Justice Pennsylvania

UUJusticePA is starting the new year afresh, looking for supporters and participants. To learn more about our work, please check out our updated website: **UUJusticePA.org**. And please consider learning about the issues and participating in monthly Zoom calls and calls to action.

Membership is \$40 per calendar year. To add your financial support to UUJusticePA, click **here**.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Our world needs the voices and conscience of UU's now more than ever.

— Sincerely, Tom Buglio, UUJusticePA Liaison

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 people who reside in the West Chester school district...because no one should go hungry!

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 February 20 (third Sunday of the month), **LCH Health and Community Services**.

LCH was founded as La Comunidad Hispana in 1973 by Kennett Square residents, clergy, and advocates as a bilingual social services agency to serve the primarily immigrant community working in the local mushroom industry. Since then, it has continued to grow and evolve into a multifaceted Federally Qualified Health Center serving southern Chester County.



They provide healthcare to anyone, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Their healthcare services include primary care, pediatrics, women’s health, dental care, and behavioral health care. In addition to healthcare, they provide free ESL classes, citizenship classes, and workforce development classes. Finally, they have a robust social assistance department, which provides a free legal clinic, assistance with public benefits, case management, and transportation. Although they receive federal funding, more than half of their annual budget relies on donations.

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 LCH”.
- 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 December recipient, Safe Harbor, in the amount of \$1,330.



Diversity Book Group

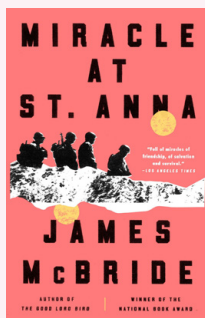
Feb 13 7:00-8:30 pm Zoom

Miracle of Santa Anna by James McBride.

A little-known historic event late in World War II is the inspiration for this universal tale of courage and redemption.

Risking their lives for a country that treats them with less respect than the enemy they are fighting, four Buffalo Soldiers from the Army’s Negro 92nd Division, separated from their unit and behind enemy lines, discover humanity in the small Tuscan village of St. Anna di Stazzema, in the peasants who shelter them, in the unspoken affection of an orphaned child, and a newfound faith in fellow man.

Even in the face of unspeakable tragedy, they – and we – learn to see the small miracles of life. Leader: Lorrie McKinley.

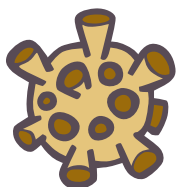


Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

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

Venues, times, and other details may change.



Please watch for emails and announcements on the website and in *Connections*.

Pastoral Care

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



- Jan 30 Sun **Religious Education Service Project.** 1:00-2:30 pm. See p. 4.
- Feb 1 Tue **Criminal Justice Reform Team.** 4:30 pm. See p. 6.
Men's Group. 7:00 pm. See p. 5.
- Feb 2 Wed **Small Group Facilitators Meeting.** 7:00 am.
Adult RE: The Good Place. 7:00 pm. See p. 5.
- Feb 6 Sun **First Sunday Food Collection.** See p. 7.
- Feb 7 Mon **Executive Team.** 7:00 pm. Email: [executive-team](#).
- Feb 8 Tue **Program Council.** 7:00 pm.
- Feb 13 Sun **Diversity Book Group.** 7:00-8:30 pm. See p. 7.
In-person Religious Education for Families. See p. 4.
- Feb 14 Mon **Religious Services Committee.** 6:30 pm.
- Feb 15 Tue **Adult RE Committee.** 4:30 pm. Email: [adult-re](#).
Board Meeting. 6:30 pm. All are welcome.
Adult RE: An Exploration of World Religions. 7:00 pm. See p. 5.
- Feb 16 Wed **Black Lives Matter Committee.** 3:00 pm. Contact Sandra Schaal, email: [black-lives-matter](#)
- Feb 17 Thu **Religious Education Committee.** 7:00 pm.
- Feb 20 Sun **Share-the-Plate Sunday.** Benefits LCH Health and Community Services. See p. 7.
Racial Justice Discussion. 7:00 pm. Contact email: [black-lives-matter](#).
- Feb 22 Tue **Committee on Ministry.** 6:30 pm. Email: [COM](#).

EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:

- Most Thursdays Spirit Singers Practice.** at 7:00 pm. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: [choir](#).
- Various Dates Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups).** See [web calendar](#) or contact email: [SGM](#).

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