

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

April 2024



NOTES FROM REV. DAN

"What does it mean to you to become a member of our congregation?"

When I sit down to talk with new members signing our membership book, I sometimes ask that question. I suppose many religions wouldn't have a question like that – joining would be a matter of accepting a certain set of beliefs, or adopting the rituals and practices of the faith. But Unitarian Universalists make meaning for ourselves, so I ask, and the answers are new and fresh with everyone who joins.

Some join our congregation because they feel at home here, and they want to know that they belong. For some it is a way of saying to the world, "This is part of who I am. I am a Unitarian Universalist." For some (and on some level for all, I hope) membership means a commitment to contribute to the life of the community. Some join because they've been Unitarian Universalists elsewhere and will always be part of a UU congregation wherever they are. For some, it's the quality of community at UCWC that draws them. Some

join because it is a place where they can feel comfortable exploring the meaning of God. Others feel grateful that they can be fully part of a religious community without believing in God. For most of us membership means all of this and more.

This year we've seen newcomers take part in services, Sunday School, our Explorations and UU History classes, the choir, social justice, and all of the other wonderful groups that make our congregation so vibrant. We've met new people, made new friends, and grown deeper in community together. For me, it's been a chance to remind myself just why I am here and why Unitarian Universalism is such an important part of who I choose to be.

I suspect that over the years, what membership means to each of us may change, as we grow and change within ourselves and in relationship to our congregation. Perhaps it's a good question for all of us to ask, every now and again, to ourselves and each other. We may rediscover the reasons we came in the first place. We might even find new answers to an old question.

In faith, Dan

I suspect that over the years, what membership means to each of us may change, as we grow and change within ourselves and in relationship to our congregation.

Our Mission

Our mission is to:

GROW in spirit, heart and mind

LOVE through care and community

SERVE beyond ourselves



A Welcoming
Congregation

Minister's Office Hours

Rev. Dan is available for appointments on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. He can be reached by email at email: [minister](mailto:minister@ucwc.org) or by cell phone.

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

Sunday Services

Religious Education
and Babysitting
Sundays at 10:00 am



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.

Pastoral Care

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



April 7 10 am THE MORE THINGS CHANGE Rev. Dan Schatz

Unitarian Universalism has always adapted and changed with new insights and a changing world. In this service, we will explore the value of transformation as part of our free faith.

This will be Jason Schafer-Valerius's last Sunday with us as Pianist. Please join us for a reception after the service to thank Jason for his many gifts over the past ten years.

April 14 10 am TOPIC TBA tonya thames-taylor

The work of tonya thames-taylor aims to actualize the United Nation's motto: "Peace, dignity, and equality on a healthy planet." She is the granddaughter of sharecroppers and daughter of parents who came of age in a segregated and violent Mississippi. She is in the first generation of Mississippians who came of age in an integrated Mississippi with opportunities for all.

Tonya is a Head Start graduate, graduate of an integrated, diverse, and inclusive high school, and first-generation college graduate. She earned her undergraduate degree from Tougaloo College, an Historically Black College and University (HBCU) that was a former slave plantation and hotbed of agitation during the 1960s. She earned her graduate degrees from the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss). Tonya is an American History professor at West Chester University and serves on several boards, including the Kennett Underground Railroad Center.

She enjoys reading, gardening, photography, walking her rescue pit bull terriers Raisin and Autumn, and spending time with her husband, Anthony. In spring 2022, tonya was recognized as one of the 150 Influential Women in the history of West Chester University.

April 21 10 am MAKING WAVES Rev. Dan Schatz and Cassie lengel

From the Brandywine to the Atlantic, water sustains and connects us with the mountains, the skies, the soil, and the oceans. In this all-ages Earth Day service, we honor the waters of the world.

This service will be followed by a congregational Town Hall on proposed changes to Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association bylaws. Please plan to attend.

April 28 10 am LOVE AND JUSTICE Rev. Dan Schatz

Justice has long been a key value for Unitarian Universalists, and our congregation in particular. How is our justice work rooted in love, and how does it help us to create community?



From the President

As you read this, the Stewardship Campaign is in full swing. I am so thankful for Nancy Artus and her team who have worked so hard from the kick-off dinner to the gathering of pledges. Many of you have increased your pledge from the previous year. We also have a number of people pledging for the first time.

If you haven't pledged yet, please help Nancy and her team — they have enough work to do — by doing so as soon as you get finished reading this, lest you forget. I am so thankful, too, for the support each of you have given to our community at UCWC. It's the people who make the congregation, so take a bow. You deserve it.

The Board has spent time preparing for the upcoming Town Hall on Article II of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Yes, some of you are tired of hearing about it, but examining our current and proposed Article is really important.

You may have felt some of the tension around this issue. Some in the congregation feel the proposed Article II will take the UUA (and congregations) in a direction that they are not in agreement with. Others feel that the proposed Article II will take us into the future in a direction that makes sense to them.

The Board has provided ample (some have said too ample) opportunities to learn about the proposed Article II and now is the time in the process to compare, contrast and evaluate each as to their effect on future UUs and the UUA. On behalf of the Board, I would like to express gratitude to Mike Miller, Cheryl Pittenger, and Sandy Schall for helping us refine the questions we will be asking at the Town Hall. Hoping to see many of you there.

There are so many great committees and activities going on at UCWC that I thought I would lift up one of them this month, not because my wife, Diane, is the chair (co-chair with Fatima Patel until recently) but because they are providing invaluable support to congregation members.

The Pastoral Committee is a dedicated group that has offered support and a helping hand to congregants going through tough times, often medically related but not exclusively. Offering meals, rides, company, a comforting ear, checking in on, sending cards, etc., are some of the ways this committee provides support. Their caring focus on those of us who really need this to cope at times is what the UCWC community is all about. You can contact them, if you need them, or to thank them when you see them on Sundays. Look for the purple ribbon they wear on their nametags.

— Ed Cohle



Town Halls after the Service

Article II and Budget Upcoming

The Board will hold a Town Hall on April 21 immediately after the service. A light lunch will be served. This is a chance to hear a variety of opinions about our current and the proposed Article II of the UUA bylaws. For those who think talking about bylaws is *borrrring*, this is an important and sure to be spirited discussion. Please come and express your opinion as well as listening to others.

April 21	Article II (Current and Proposed) Discussion
May 5	Continued Article II Discussion if Needed
May 19	Congregation Financial Meeting



General Assembly Delegates Wanted

The GA happens every year and is a combination of trainings, presentations, and national business of the UUA. This year it will be a teleconference. You have the chance to attend from the comfort of your living room. A great opportunity for those who have never attended. The Board is looking for people who want to represent UCWC by voting on various business of the UUA.

This year is especially important as the vote to accept or reject the proposed Article II will take place. If you just want to attend the business portion (which includes voting and a much less time commitment as attending the entire conference), there is no charge. If you want to attend trainings and presentation about a number of subjects, there is a charge. Your choice.

It will take place from June 20 to June 23. If interested or for further information, please contact Ed Cohle at email: **president**.

Lifespan Faith Development

RE Schedule for April

Join us this month as we gather for more RE opportunities. On the 7th we will enjoy a Time for All Ages story and a song from our Intergenerational Choir before heading to our RE classes. On the 14th we will have a special children's worship circle with our normal RE classes. On the 21st we will enjoy an all ages Earth Day service, and on the 28th we'll again have a Time for All Ages and RE class.

Adult RE: Weekly Mindfulness Meditation

Join us every Sunday for a Mindfulness Meditation session to explore a topic, meditate together, and reflect as we support each other's spiritual journeys.

When: 9:20-9:50 am before services

Where: The meditation room (between the coat closet and the name tags)

Who: Everyone is welcome regardless of experience level

Why: Meditation promotes relaxation, focus, emotional health, self-awareness, memory, kindness, and better sleep quality.

REflections Religious Education Update

Sometimes...it's the little things that make the difference.

It's been so interesting to see our children engage with RE classes and content this year as they continue to surprise me and teach me more and more that the littlest things make the difference.

One of the most recent examples of this is from our Spirit Play class. I fill our rooms with art supplies and activities galore to engage our young hands and intentionally try to plan options and ideas for things to do together. And yet the most popular item we've had has been an old stack of coffee filters.

This simple item has created hours of joy and given the kids such creative freedom that they have made snowflakes to explore how they are each different and beautiful, they've made flowers to share with one another as they connect with the web of life, they've used them in their play kitchen and more as they share and work together.

Such a little thing, but our children have used them as a vessel to remember what we are hearing in class and to share their care and joy with one another in play. They've reminded me that it's the little things that make the difference – it's the way we engage with one another, the smiles and the sorrows, the deep thinking, and the silly laughing.

We all bring something valuable to this community by bringing our selves, and even when you think you've only been able to bring an old coffee filter, we are here to remind you how much you are valued.

Cassie Lengel, DLFD@ucwc.org



Explorations A Program for Beginning and Deepening Our UU Journeys

Join in anytime!

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. "Explorations" examines what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist, as we delve into our common faith and our individual experiences. RSVP to email: **DLFD** for more information or see our calendar to join our sessions as you are able. We will be meeting on Wednesdays, April 3, April 17, and May 1 from 7:00-8:30pm via Zoom.

Stewardship Campaign Update

If you have already made your pledge to UCWC for the upcoming year, thank you! If you haven't yet, please make your pledge as soon as possible, so that our finance folks can create a budget to put before our members at

our June meeting. You can go to ucwc.org/pledge for pledging guidance and to pledge online. Or you can mail in the printed pledge form you received.

Help support our congregation. A generous pledge allows us to create a thriving, caring and welcoming community. If you would like to speak to a member of the Stewardship team, or if you have never made a pledge before and have questions, contact email: stewardship. Thank you.



Honor the Pledges

Join us on Sunday, April 28, after the service for cake in honor of the pledges received during the stewardship campaign.



Passover Seder

Tue, Apr 23 6:00 pm

Passover is the Jewish remembrance of the exodus from Egypt and a time to celebrate freedom and bring our attention to justice and liberation for all peoples. We will celebrate Passover with an intergenerational Seder on Tuesday, April 23, at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary. Our Seder will be followed by a potluck — please come and enjoy.

All ages are welcome, and you do not need to have any experience with a Passover Seder to enjoy this one. Please RSVP and sign up to help set up, bring food (Kosher for Passover is ideal), or clean up — sign up online by clicking [here](#), or write to Lauren Kelly (email: fun).

As a reminder, on evenings and weekends we are permitted to use the West Chester Public Works lot on Lacey Street, two blocks east of the congregation. (From High Street go all the way up Magnolia past Matlack, follow the road to the right, go half a block, and turn left into the parking lot across from the Public Works building. It is a three-minute walk down Lacey Street to the congregation.)



Planet vs. Plastic Earth Day Celebration

Sat, Apr 20 3:00 pm

Our congregation is collaborating with the West Chester Green Team and West Chester Cooperative to sponsor our *Earth Day: Planet vs. Plastic* rally and celebration on Saturday, April 20.

The celebration will begin with a rally at the Chester County Courthouse at 3:00 pm. Speakers include local elected officials, youth environmental activists, our own Rev. Dan Schatz, and others. At 4:15 we will march together from the courthouse to our congregation for a celebration of Earth Day.

There will be tables from local environmental groups, as well as a presentation by Maurice Simpson II from Clean Water Action. A Mexican Buffet will be served with vegetarian options, drinks and flan included.

Please note: Advanced tickets are required for the dinner only (sliding scale of \$10-25 for adults, and children 18 and under with an adult are FREE). Go to wcgreenteam.org to order dinner tickets.

Small Group Ministry

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. If you are interested in joining a group, please write to email: SGM.

Social Justice

Jubilee Three Anti-Racism Workshop

Fri-Sun Apr 12-14

Do you wish to deepen your understanding of how race and ethnicity play out in our institutions and our daily lives? Come join this life-changing weekend. Training includes presentations, discussions, videos, exercises, and small group work. This 2½ day online workshop is open to anyone who wants to journey toward making a stand against racism.

Enrollment is limited so sign up today. The cost is \$170 per participant, and \$85 for second and third person in the same household. Partial scholarships are available through the UCWC Racial Justice Ministry. Contact email: [racial-justice](mailto:racial-justice@ucwc.org) for more information if you'd like to speak to folks who have participated in Jubilee previously. You can register [here](#).



UUSC Update

Highlights of Josh Leach's report for UUSC *Crisis and Opportunity in Haiti.*

Recent reports out of Haiti portray a society in a state of collapse. Criminal gangs—more accurately described as paramilitary groups—have hijacked large parts of the country, **inflicting terror on ordinary civilians with impunity**. The chaos has ground most aspects of Haitian life to a halt, including the nation's economy and government. As the movement of basic goods into Haiti slows to a trickle, **extreme hunger throughout the country is rising**. Ordinary Haitians are desperate.



The chaos of unelected Ariel Henry's increasingly dictatorial reign underlines the dangers of wealthy governments interfering in Haiti's politics. It highlights the urgency of supporting a truly Haitian-led solution to the crisis... It means they should direct their support to Haiti's own grassroots civil society—rather than assuming that they know better than the people closest to the crisis.

UUSC is partnering with grassroots groups on the ground. For years now, our partners have said that this is the time for a Haitian-led solution. In the face of the country's present troubles, we reaffirm their call today. It is more needed now than ever.

If you would like to support a Haitian-led solution to the crisis, click [here](#) to donate to our emergency response fund for Haiti. These funds will not only resource those groups, but also the solutions they develop and their work to realize those solutions in real-time. Thank you.

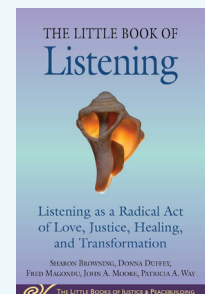
Beyond Active Listening Workshop

Mon, Apr 15 7:00-8:30 pm Zoom

Living our UU value that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of all people is among the most challenging tasks we UUs set for ourselves. With that in mind, you are invited to join the Racial Justice Ministry on April 15 at 7:00 pm via Zoom for "Beyond Active Listening," a workshop that will explore the ways that listening justly and with compassion can provide insights into and tools for helping us to live our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of all people.

We all listen through the lens of our life experiences. This workshop will use resources from Sharon Browning's *The Little Book of Listening* to learn how our life experiences can get in the way of listening to others in ways that make it more difficult to truly recognize their worth and dignity.

Using videos, conversation and practice we will explore ways to listen that go "Beyond Active Listening" to deepen our abilities to communicate justly and compassionately with one another. To register or for more information contact the Racial Justice Ministry at email: [racial-justice](mailto:racial-justice@ucwc.org).



MLK 365 Knitters

At long last, the MLK Day of Service knitting project has become a year-round project. The knitting group — to be called **MLK 365 Knitters** — is currently meeting on the first Tuesday of each month from 6:00-8:00 pm in the second-floor library at St. Paul's Baptist Church.

All knitters are welcome — from beginners to advanced. Some of us knit with looms and some with needles. Supplies — yarn, looms, needles, etc. — are supplied. (Crocheters are welcome, too.)

We will be expanding the projects that we do — we are currently beginning to make hats for children of all ages to match coats for an upcoming community coat drive. Other ideas for projects are welcome.

Our next knitting session will be on Tuesday, April 2. If you have questions or need directions, please contact Sandy Schaal at email: racial-justice.



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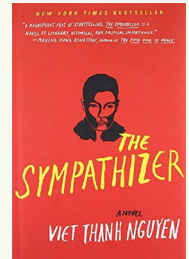
Diversity Book Group

The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen
Sun, Apr 14 7:00-8:30 pm on Zoom

This 2016 Pulitzer Prize winning book depicts the anonymous narrator, a North Vietnamese mole in the South Vietnamese army, who stays embedded in a South Vietnamese community in exile in the United States. The narrator describes being an expatriate and cultural advisor on the filming of an American movie resembling "Platoon" and "Apocalypse Now" before returning to Vietnam as part of a guerrilla raid against the communists.

The dual identity of the narrator, as a mole and immigrant, and the Americanization of the Vietnam War in international literature are central themes in the novel.

Led by Elaine Friedlander.



Fun & Fellowship

Folk Singing

Our next get-together is Friday, April 12, at 7:30 pm. We meet at the home of Linda and Steve Sander.

No singing talent or experience is necessary, just a desire to have fun. Capable musicians should bring their instruments. Bring a munchie if you wish. Maps are in the foyer. Contact Steve at email: folk-singing with questions or driving instructions.

All vaccinated adults are welcome.



Women's Group

Join in on some fun and/or educational activities and build deeper friendships along the way. Attend what sparks your interest, and/or plan something yourself if you'd like to. Events planned include: weekly walking group(s), monthly lunches, and various tours. Craft days, themed book groups, and other fun are in planning stages. The UCWC Women's Group is an inclusive group: Trans, CIS, nonbinary, and plus welcome. Receive a weekly email digest of plans and activities by email: womens-group.



Men's Group

The UCWC Men's Group will meet in-person on Tuesday, April 2, at 7:00 pm, in the sanctuary (no zoom this time!). Bob will lead a discussion on "Christian Nationalism."

All men are welcome. If you are interested in participating but are not yet on the email distribution list, please reach out to Mark and Dirk at email: mens-group.



Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

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



TOWN HALL

Don't miss this very
important Town
Hall. The topic will
be the proposed
rewrite of the UUA's
Article II.

Apr 1	Mon	Racial Justice Ministry. 5:00 pm. Zoom. Contact email: racial-justice for more information.
Apr 2	Tue	Executive Committee Meeting. 7:00 pm. MLK 365 Knitters. 6:00 pm. St. Paul's Baptisst Church Library. See p. 7.
Apr 3	Wed	Men's Group. 7:00 pm. Sanctuary. See p. 7. Explorations. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 4. Small Group Ministry Leaders. 7:00 pm.
Apr 5	Fri	Game Night.
Apr 7	Sun	UU the Vote. Voter Intimidation. 11:15. Sanctuary.
Apr 9	Tue	Council Meeting. 7:00 pm.
Apr 12	Fri	Folk Singing. 7:30 pm. Sander home. See p. 7.
Apr 12-14	Fri-Sun	Jubilee Three Anti-Racism Workshop. See p. 6.
Apr 14	Sun	Diversity Book Group. 7:00-8:30 pm. Zoom. See p. 7.
Apr 15	Mon	Racial Justice Ministry. 5:00 pm. Zoom. Contact email: racial-justice for more information. Beyond Active Listening Workshop. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 6.
Apr 16	Tue	Board Meeting. 6:30 pm.
Apr 17	Wed	Explorations. 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 4. UUJusticePA Reproductive Justice Meeting. 7:30 pm. Zoom.
Apr 20	Sat	Earth Day Celebration. 3:00 pm. Chester County Courthouse and UCWC. See p. 5.
Apr 21	Sun	Share the Plate Sunday. Benefits the Community Youth and Women's Association. Town Hall. Article II Discussion. See p. 3.
Apr 23	Tue	Passover Seder. 6:00 pm. Sanctuary. See p. 5.
Apr 28	Sun	Honor the Pledges Cake. After the service. See p. 5.

EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:

Sundays	Mindfulness Meditation. 9:20-9:50 am before services. See p. 4.
Most Thursdays	Spirit Singers Practice. at 7:30 pm. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: choir .
Various Dates	Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups). See web calendar for dates. Contact email: SGM for availability. See p. 5.

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

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