



Spirit of Life

October 2017



Justice, love, and compassion
in spiritual community

10-01-17

“Joyful Hi-jinks”: *Rev. Kathy Duhon*

From faith, hope, and love, to “Joyful Hi-jinks” - this is the last of the sermon series while Carol is on sabbatical. UU minister Carl Scovel wrote that joy is the aim of life - “deep, abiding, uncompromised joy”. Molly Fumia calls being joyful “a brave and reckless act”. Let us be reckless together with a deep, abiding joy. (Also, come hear about the drinking game Kathy accidentally started in Virginia - clue - it involves JOY.)

Music: Marian Rose and Flora Caligiuri Randall
Trustee/Greeter: Mike Thiemann
Greeter: Leigh Merlini
Hospitality: Erin McNamara
Hospitality/Chalice: Valerie Bluhm

10-08-17

“Diversity, Race, and Justice in One 21st Century Family: What Are We Learning?”: *Martha Page and Bill Young*

Bill is on the board of Equal Access, a UU national disabilities action organization and also serves on the Appointment Committee of the UU Association. They have four adult children and six grandchildren, all of whom make up a beloved and interesting family.

Music: Ron Hanft
Trustee/Greeter: Mike Thiemann
Greeter: Leigh Merlini
Hospitality: Zoe Dalheim
Hospitality/Chalice: Stu Dalheim

10-15-17

“Buddhist Economics and Beyond”: *Jan Hutchinson*

Jan is a longtime member of this congregation, a writer, and a poet.

Music: Hilda Banks Shapiro; UUMSB Choir
Trustee/Greeter: Ray Garnett
Greeter: Leigh Merlini
Hospitality: Ivan Kruh
Hospitality/Chalice: Miral Kruh

10-22-17

“You May Say I’m a Dreamer”: *Ethan Klepetar*

Ethan is a local attorney who sits on the Board of Berkshire Immigrant Center. He lives with his wife Jayme and their two daughters in Becket. He is a busy Berkshire County activist, lawyer, partner and father.

Music: Hilda Banks Shapiro
Trustee/Greeter: Ray Garnett
Greeter: Leigh Merlini
Hospitality: Connie Canty
Hospitality/Chalice: Dianna Downing

Share the Plate with Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC)

10-29-17

“Our Beloved Dead, May Their Memory Be For Blessing”: *Michaela Romano Meade*

Michaela is studying to be a UU minister at Andover Newton Theological School and she is a proud member of UUMSB.

Music: Marian Rose
Trustee/Greeter: Ray Garnett
Greeter: Leigh Merlini
Hospitality: Al Thorp
Hospitality/Chalice: Elizabeth Keen

Mission: We come together from diverse traditions as a welcoming, religious community with shared values, seeking spiritual growth, lifelong religious education, and fellowship. We strive to promote justice, acceptance, and compassion in the world.

Reverend:
Carol Allman-Morton

Residence:
1089 Main Street, Housatonic, MA 01236
[Click here for map and directions](#)

Mailing address:
PO Box 783, Housatonic, MA 01236
Tel: 413-358-3877

Carol will be on sabbatical from July through October.

For any pastoral concerns while she is away from the congregation, please be in touch with our founding minister, Rev. Kathy Duhon. She can be contacted at kathyduhon2@gmail.com or 518-794-0021.

For congregation related questions you can be in touch with Martha Page, our new Board chair and she can help connect you to answers. If you have questions about membership, contact Ray Garnett and Al Blake.

Kathy's Corner

"Look Up, Look Down"

Rev. Jennifer Brownell wrote of the psalmist who gave us, *"I lift up my eyes..."* that *"we both know the temptation of a lowered head. Afraid and overwhelmed, we look down - at the ground, at a screen.... Look up ... and you will stay up. And once you are up, you can finally move forward..."* My son did an amazing sky program in first grade - even then, in the early 90s, there was concern that we don't look at the sky enough, not like our ancestors, who knew both awe and the weather, when they looked up. Looking up changes one's perspective. As Madeleine L'Engle said of the stars, *"I'll almost always get back a sense of proportion. It's not that they make me feel insignificant; ... they make me feel that everything matters"*

When I lived in Virginia, I was engaged in the opposite every day - looking down. I decided to pick up cigarette butts, and other trash and treasure. I'd read that a single butt has enough toxins to contaminate 2 gallons of water, and where we lived near the Chesapeake Bay, everyone had well water and all water flowed to the Bay. I wrote articles about it, hoping to inspire folks not to toss their butts on the ground. In two years I picked up over 30,000 butts and about \$60 - it turns out when you look, seek, you see more than you were first seeking. And, like L'Engle, it gave me a sense of proportion. It is possible to be more attentive, to expand one's vision, to take in more of the world around you and make a difference. Ah, but once, while walking along, mulling over the horrible news of yet another baby forgotten and dead in a hot car, and righteously feeling I would never do that, I looked down and saw a rusted wrench, on a path I'd taken many times, and I was humbled that I had neglected to see it. Our vision, even extended, is so limited in so many ways. We are all capable of not seeing, of looking away, of being blinded, ...and... we are all able to look up and out and down in a greater way of seeing the world as it is and ourselves as part of it all, making life meaningful in our connectedness.

Message from our President



“What’s happening with the new UUMSB Strategic Plan?”

In early 2016, UUMSB kicked off a process to develop a new strategic plan. It seemed to be an appropriate time to do this since the prior plan was more than a decade old, many of the goals had been accomplished and we were fully settled into our new home! Over many months, the strategic planning group developed the outline and contents of the plan, working with lots of groups and individuals across the congregation. The final plan was adopted at the UUMSB Annual Meeting in May 2017. So what happens now?

At its July meeting, the UUMSB Board of Trustees began to take the next steps toward implementation of the new plan. These steps included discussion about the best ways to approach the plan elements, including what items to tackle first and which will take more time (even years!) The plan has about a dozen distinct areas of focus with numerous topics within them. Examples include the future of worship, professional and lay ministry, social justice, membership, leadership development, finance, administration, and others. Each of the areas has been assigned to a board member as the lead. Over the next few months, each lead will work with the many stakeholders both within and outside the congregation to 1) articulate the 5 year vision, 2) define the actions to occur in 2017/18, 3) identify who will be working on them, 4) explain how we will know and measure when we have accomplished goals, and 5) who will be involved. We will be reaching out to many others, but if you see yourself as part of the strategic plan vision, don’t hesitate to raise your hand!

In the corporate and even nonprofit world, it is not uncommon to hear strategic plans joked about as “sitting on shelves and gathering dust.” We don’t want that to happen here...there is so much important work to do, and your help and involvement will be a critical part of achieving our goals! Stay tuned for more. - *Martha Page*

What Is Happening in the Rafters and in the Basement?

You may notice construction work happening at UUMSB starting in late September and going through at least October. Hopefully, interference with regular activities will be kept to a minimum. And, the goal is to keep messiness to a minimum, too.

The work is the result of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) award we applied for and received last year from the Town of Great Barrington. It is providing \$60,000 of grant funding, primarily for two projects in our building. The first is work on the roof rafters, done from inside the building, to reinforce and add to the roof support structure. This is important for the long-term viability of the roof. The second project relates to the foundation, its supports, and drainage. There will be significant reinforcement of existing building supports along with new supports in the basement.

What's Happening in October on the UUMSB's Social Justice Front?

UUMSB Justice Team Begins to Share Our Journey About the System of White Supremacy



Picture caption Workshop facilitators - Ken & Laura Wagner (UUA) and Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant (UUMSB). Culture of white supremacy

For some time now your Social Justice Team has been actively working toward better educating ourselves and our wider community about the history of the white supremacy system in our nation. We have sponsored lay services and workshops on the issue of the culture of white supremacy. It is hard and messy work –

taking the necessary steps to better understand the system of unearned privilege established at times by federal policies and programs. Discovering the history of unearned privilege for certain Americans is shocking to some and a real eye-opener to all.

One of the best examples of a federally funded program that most Americans today believe was designed to help create a level playing field for returning soldiers is the **GI Bill**. This law first established for soldiers returning home from World War II offered low rate home mortgages and free higher education (including both undergraduate and graduate degrees from major universities). Most of us think of the GI Bill as a great equalizer for soldiers returning home from service. But in fact, following WW II the one million black GIs who had risked their lives for their country were largely excluded from both federally supported home mortgages and free higher education.

Think about these facts for a minute and you just might conclude that the GI Bill was a policy of affirmative action for a wide range of white ethnicities in our American melting pot; while for black families this federal program was not accessible to them. Those of us that fall into this 'white' category have benefited from a culture of affirmative action baked into our country's rules of government.

For some of us who have joined the **Social Justice Reading Group** we discovered these truths in ***Waking Up White – Finding Myself in the Story of Race*** by Debby Irving. You will find this book among others on racial inequities on the top shelf of our UUMSB book case (on wheels) next to the Community Information Table. During coffee hour check out a book (on the honor system) for your own research on race in this country of ours.

Social Justice Committee Helps Launch Not In Our Berkshire County by Karen Clark

This month the Social Justice Committee will be helping launch a program which aims to unify communities throughout the Berkshires to stop hate, address bullying, and build safe inclusive communities for EVERYONE.

Last winter UUMSB, through our Social Justice Team, signed on as a community partner in this Berkshire-wide effort to address or prevent incidents of hate crimes and prejudice, and build a sense of community among all county residents. The **Not In Our Town** (www.niot.org) movement began in the 1990s when a group of citizens in Billings, Montana organized and stopped a group of ‘skin-heads’ who were targeting families of color in their town with threats of violence and hatred. A documentary film was made about this citizen initiative to ‘take back their town’ by working together, getting to know each other, and saying in one voice - **Not In Our Town!**



Multicultural BRIDGE is the coordinating Berkshire organization who for months now has hosted small groups of people all over Berkshire County to both view the Not In Our Town films (now over six) and discuss a number of local incidents in our schools, targeted acts against religious groups and individuals, and how to better protect our immigrant communities across the county.

NIOT is a grassroots movement that has become a model (for over 2 decades) for communities to address or prevent incidents of hate crimes and prejudice, and build a sense of community among all residents. Members of our UU Justice Team have volunteered to sit on the NIOC Steering Team. We have found that racism, prejudice and injustice are right under our noses and by helping to coordinate this county-wide movement we intend to make our community a safer place for all.

This is a growing movement and the work is long from over but right now your Justice Team wants



to ask you to consider signing the **NIOC Pledge**. It is a simple pledge stating – ***“I commit to working together with my neighbors to create safer, more integrated communities for all residents in Berkshire County. I do not stay silent in the face of intolerance or hate based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, country of origin, ability or any other factor. I work to acknowledge and heal all forms of hate, bigotry and bullying. I pledge to renew my commitment to this work every day.”***

Watch for members of the Justice Team at a NIOC Information Table following Sunday service during coffee hour. Ask us questions, tell us your stories, and consider signing the NIOC pledge. We are in this work for the long haul. . . consider joining us in this work.

Ray Garnett In the Local News



One of our Justice Team members, Ray Garnett, was interviewed by local reporter Jenn Smith last month in the EAGLE and it is worth a read by our community. The article was titled: *“I want to be a part – Berkshire Trans Group aims for support, empowerment.”* You may read the article in its entirety by checking out this Berkshire Eagle link <http://www.berkshireeagle.com/stories/berkshire-trans-group-aims-for-support-empowerment-at-new-pittsfield-peer-group,519593?> Go Ray – you certainly walk your talk!

October Share-the-Plate

On Sunday, October 22, **Ethan Klepetar** will be our UUMSB morning speaker giving a Lay Address about his work with the **Berkshire Immigrant Center (BIC)**. His working title is *“You Say I’m a Dreamer”* and following Ethan’s remarks we will be sharing our offertory with BIC. Ethan is a local attorney who sits on the Board of BIC. He lives with his wife Jayme and their two daughters in Becket. He is a busy Berkshire County activist, lawyer, partner and father and we want to welcome him to our Sunday morning service by listening and giving as generous as we can to the work of BIC to support the Berkshire immigrant community.

The mission of BIC reads in part: *“We assist individuals and families in making the economic, psychological and cultural adjustment to a new land, not only by meeting basic needs, but also by helping them to become active participants in our community. The Center also aims to build bridges of understanding and cooperation across cultures, to fight racism and discrimination in all forms, and to advocate for the rights of immigrants from all backgrounds.”*

In the journey, Tommie Hutto-Blake and Karen Clark for the UUMSB Justice Team ~ Ricky Bernstein, Al Blake, Valerie Bluhm, Stu Dalheim, Sheryl Davies, Ray Garnett, Gwendolyn Hampton VanSant, Sandy Noyes, Martha Page, Sue Protheroe, Gary Shaw.

REMINDER: The Social Justice Committee’s 4th quarter meeting is scheduled for Sunday, October 22 at 9am in the Community Room. All are welcome!

Second Sunday – Intergenerational RE after the service

Each month on the second Sunday we offer a class for all ages. Adults, families, and youth are encouraged to come together! Please bring a brown bag lunch if you would like. Each month will have a different theme.

We discussed our UU seven principles before the summer, and have started to discuss the six sources of Unitarian Universalism. Last month, our theme was the first source, direct experience. In October, the theme will be the second source, which reads: *“Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love.”*



October

- 10 Gwendolyn Hampton
- 15 Jon Corcoran
- 17 Dane Fay
- 19 Andrew Shaw
- 19 Tristan Osgood
- 21 Wendy Noyes
- 21 Sharon Meyer
- 25 Elizabeth Keen
- 29 Ethel Shippey
- 29 Ricky Bernstein
- 29 Joan Flesch
- 31 Kathy Duhon
- 31 Stu Dalheim

Membership Directory!

If you are part of our community, but have not yet officially joined the congregation, we would love to add you to our member directory as a friend, so that folks can be in touch with you and we can call you in case of cancellations. Just send an email to our administrator Sheena with your contact info at info@uumsb.org!



UUMSB Community News:

If you have any personal joys or concerns that you would like to share, send them to Sheena at info@uumsb.org. Thanks!

Choir



Would you like to join?

Come and sing with us!

We rehearse at **9:00 a.m.** before worship on the Sundays we will be singing.

Contact Marian Rose for information.

We come together **October 15**



The Caring Committee, a part of the Membership and Growth Committee, coordinates and delivers caring services to members experiencing difficulties. We are available for anyone needing assistance in life or family situations that seem to come to everyone from time to time. Our committee finds volunteers from the congregation to help provide visits, food, transportation, and other services, depending on the situation.

Whether you or someone you know may need information, encouragement, a hand or a ride, please call:

- Valerie Bluhm (413) 394-4309
- Zoe Dalheim (413) 243-3617
- Phlox Laucher (413) 281-8351
- Sharon Meyer (413) 528-0956
- Sue Montague (518) 321-5102



[Facebook/uumsb](https://www.facebook.com/uumsb)



and share our events and announcements.

Thank you!

UUMSB Social Media 'Go To' Page

Online UUMSB Google Calendar!

You do not have to be signed in to anything to see it. The calendar will reflect our programs, meetings, and worship information for each Sunday.

Click on this link: [UUMSB calendar](https://www.google.com/calendar/ical/uumsb_calendar)

Let Sheena know! Email her at info@uumsb.org

Not In Our Town: www.niot.org

Four Freedoms: www.4freedomcoalition.org



Are you a Facebook user?

Check out UUMSB on Facebook, including a calendar of all our events!

"Like US" and help spread our messages to your friends.



CLICK ON THE LINK:

[BHRSS](#) Berkshire Human Rights Speaker Series

[Clara Barton District](#)

[Construct Inc](#)

[Unitarian Universalist Association](#)

[UU Mass Action](#)

[UUMSB](#)

[UUSC](#)

[HospiceCare](#)

[RSYP](#) Railroad Street Youth Project

[Hands in Outreach HIO](#)

[Multicultural BRIDGE](#)

[350.org](#)

[Twitter/uumsb](#)

[Facebook/uumsb](#)

[Tumblr/uumsb](#)

[Standing on the Side of Love](#)

[Commit2Respond](#)

[PFLAG](#)

[Jan Hutchinson's Raggedy Prayers and Crooked Ladders.](#)

WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION ON EVENTS HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY?

The most comprehensive listings are:

- ◆ In the newsletter (print, email and web); On our website (uumsb.org)
- ◆ On our Google calendar:
- ◆ (https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=uumsb1@gmail.com&ctz=America/New_York)
- ◆ Updates and changes are sent out over email and posted on Facebook
- ◆ In the weekly insert at worship; On the bulletin board in the social hall

If you have any announcements to go out by email or to be printed in the Sunday insert, send them to info@uumsb.org by Tuesday each week. If you have something to be posted to Facebook, you can send that to callmanmorton@gmail.com anytime, or post from your account on the UUMSB page.



October 2017

Membership and Growth Committee meeting	9:15am: Sunday October 1
South County Race Task Force	7:00pm: Thursday October 5
Facility Use Committee meeting	9:00am: Sunday October 8
Second Sunday School	12Noon: Sunday October 8
Choir Rehearsal	9:00am: Sunday October 15
Board meeting	12Noon: Sunday October 15
Social Justice Committee Quarterly meeting	12Noon: Sunday October 22



UUMSB Board

President: *Martha Page* (860) 597-2612
Vice President: *Mike Thiemann* (413) 344-6969
Secretary/Clerk: *Dennis Downing* (413) 528-3381
Treasurer: *Bill Young* (860) 597-2627
Trustees at Large: *Ray Garnett* (413) 232-0248
Chuck Pierce (413) 528-7910
Laurie Shaw (413) 528-0343

Our congregation's first meeting was in 1995 with 6 people in attendance. We are a chartered congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association. We currently have 67 members and maintain strong ties to our community. We are a growing congregation in the liberal tradition that respects ideas, values diversity, and encourages the exploration of spirituality and life's meaning.

UUMSB Church, Housatonic [Click here for map and directions](#)