



Spirit of Life

December 2017

Sunday Worship 10:30am



Justice, love, and compassion
in spiritual community

12-03-17

“A Heart Ajar: the Spirituality of Waiting”: Rev. Cara Davis

Rev. Davis is the former Executive Director of Construct

Share the Plate with Guest At Our Table

12-10-17

“Deep Breath”: Rev Carol Allman-Morton

Join us in an intergenerational worship complete with a “no rehearsal Pageant” to keep us on our toes.

12-17-17

“Solstice”: Rev. Carol Allman-Morton

Today we honor the deep traditions celebrating the rebirth of the sun, the power of the dark, and the turning of the seasons.

12-24-17

“Christmas Eve Morning”: Rev. Carol Allman-Morton

Join us for a simple service of readings, music, quiet and reflection.

“Christmas Eve Candlelit Service”: 5PM

Join us for a Christmas Eve service in the UU tradition of non-traditional lessons and carols, candle lighting, and celebration.

12-31-17

“Preparing for the New Year”: Rev. Carol Allman-Morton

New Year's Eve we gather to celebrate and share in a letting go ritual.

Music: Marian Rose
Trustee/Greeter: Martha Page
Greeter: Al Blake
Hospitality: Wendy Noyes
Hospitality/Chalice: Sandy Noyes

Music: Hilda Banks Shapiro
Trustee/Greeter: Martha Page
Greeter: Al Blake
Hospitality: Jose Garcia
Hospitality/Chalice: Tommie Hutto-Blake

Music: Hilda Banks Shapiro;
UUMSB Choir
Trustee/Greeter: Martha Page
Greeter: Al Blake
Hospitality: John Farrell
Hospitality/Chalice: Dan Haas

Music: Marian Rose
Trustee/Greeter: Martha Page
Greeter: Al Blake
Hospitality: Paula Duhon
Hospitality/Chalice: Pauline Dongala

Music: Marian Rose
Trustee/Greeter: Martha Page
Greeter: Al Blake
Hospitality: Bonnie Benson
Hospitality/Chalice: Carol McKenna

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



Rev. Carol's Column

"Love Will Guide Us"



A wonderful part of our story as a congregation was our year worshipping at Congregation Ahavath Sholom. Their community was so welcoming, warm, and accommodating. We wouldn't be in our home today without their generosity and friendship. We haven't all gotten together in a very long time, so on **Saturday, December 16 at 5 p.m.**, I hope you will be able to come to a potluck dinner and holiday party with Ahavath Sholom, celebrating all the festivals of light in December. We are also inviting our friends from the UU Church of Pittsfield to join in the fun! The dinner will be a vegetarian potluck, and you are very much encouraged to bring any cookies you have collected, but don't want to eat all on your own. Members of Ahavath Sholom are going to bring latkes, so basically, that is my plan for dinner and dessert, I don't know about you...

In other news, I recently got the fire pit all warmed up for a solstice fire in our yard. We learned a lot last winter about keeping our house warm and cozy, and have 80% of our wood stacked (I know, I know, we are finishing next week...) I am really looking forward to this winter season: running around in the woods after most of the mammals head off to their winter naps (the bear pic. below is from July...); watching Deja eat snow and ice; and hearing the ultra-quiet of a winter night. When I go out in the evening now, on a clear night, the quiet is so stunning, and that is before we have any snow on the ground! All this is to say, I am grateful to live where we do, in a place with wonderful and distinct seasons, and something to look forward to in each one. This month is going to be a busy one at UUMSB, I hope to see everyone along the way, and wish you all a Happy New Year!



Blessings on the journey. ~ Carol

If you have any pastoral concerns, please call me to set up an appointment. I am available to meet on Sundays and weeknights. 413-717-5097 or callmanmorton@gmail.com.



Message from our President



Thanksgiving has always been one of my two favorite holidays (the 4th of July is the other) and, although Thanksgiving is properly considered as the traditional start of the festive season, I have a much more ambivalent view of the end of year holidays. It has been years since I have decorated for or even really celebrated Christmas much and mostly, even as I am blessed by the joy that others bring, I find myself anxious to fast-forward from this point to the New Year and beyond. Perhaps, it's the inexorable decrease of daily light and the accompanying increase of daily cold that causes me to long for the turn of the calendar.

I was raised in a Christian tradition, so, as a child, I was not much exposed to those belief systems that base their celebrations on the natural cycle of the year. As an adult, I have become much more familiar with earth-centered beliefs and find many things that are appealing to me about them. Particularly so are the traditions and rituals associated with the winter Solstice. I take comfort in solstice stories about the annual battle between the Oak King and the Holly King, with the victory by the Oak King signaling the longer days, warmth, and hope that will return to bless us all. Among the many spoken solstice traditions, this prayer by Edward Hays from Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim captures some of what helps me through the shortest days of the year.

A Winter Solstice Prayer

The dark shadow of space leans over us.

We are mindful that the darkness of greed, exploitation, and hatred also lengthens its shadow over our small planet Earth.

As our ancestors feared death and evil and all the dark powers of winter, we fear that the darkness of war, discrimination, and selfishness may doom us and our planet to an eternal winter.

May we find hope in the lights we have kindled on this sacred night, hope in one another and in all who form the web-work of peace and justice that spans the world.

In the heart of every person on this Earth burns the spark of luminous goodness; in no heart is there total darkness. May we who have celebrated this winter solstice, by our lives and service, by our prayers and love, call forth from one another the light and the love that is hidden in every heart.

Amen.

- Martha Page

Please Note!

*Second Sunday School will be on the First Sunday this month (12/3)
It is going to be a really fun one with great intergenerational activities.
I hope to see you there!*



2017 ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR & RAFFLE



Begin your holiday shopping here! We will kick off the holiday season on December 3rd after the service with our annual craft fair and—for the first time—a raffle too. Join us for refreshments, good cheer and of course, opportunities to buy crafts and baked goods donated annually for this UUMSB fundraiser. What has not sold on this day will be available again on December 10th, which is the day we will also draw the lucky raffle ticket for a gift bag filled with crafts and other treats. Tickets can be purchased now through the 10th. \$3 each; 2 tickets \$5.

There is still time to sign up to make some crafts, bake something yummy, or volunteer to help out. Contact an organizer (see names below) or sign up on the clipboard lists in the social hall. We look forward to seeing you all at the 2017 UUMSB Craft and Bake Sale!

If you have questions, contact Jan Hutchinson (413-528-9588; janhutch@simons-rock.edu), Marion Jansen (413-528-5195; silobb@verizon.net), Dianna Downing (413-538-3381; dj.downing@verizon.net), Valerie Bluhm (802 272-6195; valerie4748@gmail.com); Sheena Evans-Morris (413-717-0479; sheenamcbs@gmail.com); or Laurie Shaw (413-528-0343; Shaw419@verizon.net).

Let's make this the best craft fair ever!



UUMSB Social Justice Committee— update for December 2017



Spreading hope toward positive change in our wider world through the work of the **UU Service Committee**. Not familiar with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (**UUSC**)? Come to Sunday service on **December 3** and you will learn more about this UU powered work which does both national and international social justice programs.

See - www.uusc.org



Presently UUSC is represented in more than a dozen countries throughout the world, fostering social justice efforts toward a world free from oppression. Using innovative approaches with measurable impacts — the UUSC staff representatives, along with local partners, promotes economic justice; bolsters environmental justice; and protects rights at risk. The work of UUSC is grounded in the belief that all people have inherent power, dignity, and rights.



On Sunday, December 3, UUMSB Social Justice team member Valerie Bluhm will be introducing a long time UUSC congregational program called **GUEST AT YOUR TABLE** – an annual holiday tradition of taking little ‘table boxes’ home, placing them on individual kitchen tables, and hopefully filling them up with coins/dollars throughout the holiday season. Ultimately, we will combine our donations when the boxes (Sunday, January 7) are returned to support the 2018 human rights programs of UUSC. The Justice Team is thinking about hosting a potluck on that day. What do you think? Those joining us would bring your Guest At Your Table box and a dish to share.

To boost this congregational effort there is a long-time **matching fund** offered each year by the UU Congregation of Shelter Rock in Manhasset, NY. For gifts of \$125 or more Shelter Rock will match our community’s donations. This Guest at our Table program will serve as our **December Share the Plate**.

On the subject of our UUMSB Share the Plate tradition, during our **final 2017 Social Justice Committee quarterly meeting**, we decided to continue in 2018 what we began this year in having **quarterly themes** for Share the Plate organizations. We will begin the year with organizations working with children and youth. In January you will be given an update about the work of our

Berkshire **GREENAGERS**. In February we will welcome back a representative voice from **Railroad Street Youth Project**. In March you will be introduced to a new organization to us from Pittsfield representing girls. Just a bit of a tease about what's coming for the first quarter.

The next meeting of our UUMSB Social Justice Team will be the first meeting of 2018 - on **Sunday, January 18th at 9am** in the community room. Our meetings are always open for anyone interested in justice work. We welcome new members!

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



*We Warmly Welcome Everyone
To the 8th Annual UU New Year's Day Gathering*



Fred and Karen Clark's

388 Park Street (Route 183), Corner of Park St. and Mountain View Ave.
Housatonic, MA

Open House: January 1, 2018 from 1-4pm

ksclark126@gmail.com or 413-274-0160 for questions or directions



December

- 02 Sophie Cary
- 02 Peter Bluhm
- 06 Annarose Stewart
- 10 Ellie Ghitman
- 16 Nancy Nirenberg
- 17 Eleanor Stewart
- 17 David Jaicks
- 18 Sandy Noyes
- 19 Hilda Banks Shapiro
- 21 Helen Thorp
- 22 Emily Shaw
- 22 Elaine Caligiuri

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!



Picture Day!

December 10, come for the fun worship, stay for the holiday fair and picture day! The membership committee is working on a photo directory project. If you would like your photo included in the directory, you can send in a picture to info@uumsb.org, or have a new one taken during coffee hour on 12/10. Pictures will help us all put together faces and names!



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!



Would you like to join?

Come and sing with us!

We rehearse at **9:15 a.m.** before worship on the Sundays we will be singing.

Contact Marian Rose for information.

We come together **December 17**

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%40gmail.com/public)

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](#)

[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.

December 2017



<i>Membership & Growth Committee meeting</i>	<i>9:15am: Sunday December 3</i>
<i>New Member Sunday</i>	<i>10:30am: Sunday December 3</i>
<i>Annual Craft Fair and Raffle</i>	<i>11:30am: Sunday December 3</i>
<i>Second Sunday School (on the 1st Sunday)</i>	<i>12Noon: Sunday December 3</i>
<i>South County Race Task Force</i>	<i>7:00pm: Thursday December 7</i>
<i>Facility Use Committee meeting</i>	<i>9:00am: Sunday December 10</i>
<i>Craft Fair 'anything left sale' & raffle draw</i>	<i>11:30am: Sunday December 10</i>
<i>Worship Committee meeting</i>	<i>12Noon: Sunday December 10</i>
<i>Holiday Party with Ahavath Sholom & UU Pitts</i>	<i>5:00pm: Saturday December 16</i>
<i>Choir Rehearsal</i>	<i>9:15am: Sunday December 17</i>
<i>Board meeting</i>	<i>12Noon: Sunday December 17</i>
<i>Christmas Eve Morning Service</i>	<i>10:30am: Sunday December 24</i>
<i>Christmas Eve Candlelit Service</i>	<i>5:00pm: Sunday December 24</i>

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-](#)

Lifespan Faith Development at the Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire 2017-2018 Schedule

Lifespan Faith Development programs at UUMSB are designed to offer opportunities for deepening and exploring our personal faith, traditions, history, scriptures, and practices in a Unitarian Universalist context including our congregational covenant and our UU Purposes and Principles. We offer programs that allow for intergenerational growth and learning along with space for peer development. Our program is small, but warm and thoughtful.

For All Ages (Feel free to bring your lunch or snacks to any post-worship programs.)

Second Sunday School - Each month on the second Sunday we offer a class for all ages. Families are encouraged to come together. Sessions run from 11:50 a.m. to 1 p.m. This year we are studying the [Sources of our Living Tradition](#)

2017

November 12 - Wisdom of world religions, part I

December 3 (Not second Sunday) - Wisdom of world religions, part II

2018

January 14 - Loving our Neighbors as Ourselves

February 11 - Humanism

March 11 - Reason

April 8 - Earth-centered, part I

May 6 (Not second Sunday)- Earth-centered, part II

June 10 - Spiritual practices

Living by Heart - Second Wednesdays each month in the evening - Explore memorizing poetry as a meditation tool and spiritual practice. Jan Hutchinson is the facilitator and we meet at her house in South Egremont. If you would like to participate, please let Jan know (info@uumsb.org).

For Children ages 7 and under - Child care and age appropriate activities are available each week in our space for younger children. We also invite parents with young children to have them be a part of our worship service. Quiet toys are available at the welcome table at the back of the sanctuary.

Children and youth older than 7 are encouraged to take part in the Second Sunday School program, and to participate in worship. If there is ever a worship topic, or a wiggly day, when they do not wish to be in the service, they are welcome to join our youngest kids in the nursery to read to or play with our youngest members. Children of all ages are also welcome to pick up entertainment packets at the back of the sanctuary to color, draw, or read in worship.

Other ways to connect:

Small Group Ministry - The Small Group Ministry program deepens and broadens personal spiritual growth. A group usually consists of 8-10 members who meet at each others' homes, usually once each month. Each meeting is focused on a spiritual or religious topic. Check with Rev. Carol for more info.

Social Justice ministries - There are wonderful opportunities for doing justice work in our community and with rare exception are for all ages (sometimes outside groups have minimum age requirements for some tasks, i.e. Habitat for Humanity). We encourage everyone in the community to look at upcoming social justice programs including work days, marches, and interfaith worship and programs. If you have any questions, see Tommie Hutto-Blake or Rev. Carol.

Worship - If you or your family would like to participate in worship through music, lay readings, or even planning a service, there are lots of opportunities! Talk with Rev. Carol to learn more.

For More Information: Please contact Rev. Carol Allman-Morton at 413-717-5097 or info@uumsb.org

We worship at 10:30 a.m. each Sunday, 1089 Main Street, Housatonic, Great Barrington, MA

A Celebration of Light and Friendship!

Congregation Ahavath Sholom, UUMSB, and the UU Church of Pittsfield are invited to join together for a fun night of community, light, and yummy food. Bring a vegetarian dish or dessert to share if you are able!

December 16, 2017 at 5 p.m.



Gather at:

Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire
1089 Main Street, Housatonic, Great Barrington, MA.

Parking is available on the street and behind the building, a ramp entrance is off the driveway.

Questions? Email info@uumsb.org