Love is the spirit of our church, where …  
...we gather to worship...  
...we create a welcoming, nurturing religious community for all...

Forthcoming Services, Worship at 10:00 a.m. Sundays, Announcements at 9:55 a.m. unless stated otherwise.

We are a Welcoming Congregation, recognized by the Unitarian Universalist Association. This means we affirm and include people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer at every level of congregational life—in worship, in program, and in social occasions—welcoming them as whole people. https://tinyurl.com/rcazkcj

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Feb 23rd Rev Jill Cowie and Sharon Concannon  
“No Time to Say Goodbye: Resilience in Response to Suicide”  
The Center of Disease Control says we are in the throes of a national suicide epidemic. Sharon will share her journey of resilience since her husband committed suicide two years ago. Rev Jill will engage us in a ritual of intention and healing, as we reflect together how suicide has impacted our lives. Guitarist Joe Dzekevich will hold us all with the sweet and comforting sound of folk songs.

March 1st Rev. Jill  
“Becoming Wise”  
King Solomon, the greatest sage of ancient Israel exclaims: “Wisdom is brilliant she never fades. By those who love her she is readily seen. By those who seek her she is readily found.” Psychologist Robert Kegan speaks of wisdom as the gateway to integrity and the antidote to despair. What does it mean to become wise today? How do we seek her?

March 8th Anne (Andy) Perkins and Rev. Jill  
“Groundbreakers”  
Join Anne (Andy) Perkins, recent author of Yale Needs Women, and Rev. Jill for a celebration of International Women’s Day, the women’s movement and the gains made. What made the changes possible? What stood in the way? What lessons can we learn for today in this era of pushback? What is the call for us today?  
(For a Andy’s bio, please see page 6.)

March 15th “People of Wisdom”  
We will explore the theme “we are a people of wisdom.” How do we find it within ourselves, from our elders, and from the younger generations still finding their voices and in the midst of so much other non-wise noise? How do we listen for it? Do we each possess an inherent wisdom and is it possible to truly notice and respect it in all others? The beautiful music of the chimers will enhance our contemplations. Led by the Worship Team.

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I’ve been reading Anne Lamott’s book *Almost Everything*. In the first chapter she tells us that a few days before her 65th birthday she decided to write down everything she knew to be true for sure. People were feeling so beleaguered by the lack of truth in our contemporary culture they were turning to her for answers. In a recent TED talk she lists her top 12:

**Number 1:**

“All truth is a paradox, life is both a precious and unfathomably beautiful gift and that it's impossible to be here on the incarnation side of things.” She goes on to say, “these years have been a bad match for those of us born sensitive.” So true! “It’s filled simultaneously with heartbreaking sweetness and beauty, desperate poverty, floods and babies and Mozart all swirled together. We are a mixed grill of happy anticipation and dread.”

**Number 2:**

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes- including you.” Remember to unplug!

**Number 3:**

“There is almost nothing outside of you that can help you in a lasting way unless you are waiting for an organ. You can’t achieve, date, or buy peace of mind.” A horrible truth, she says, one she resents. But peace is an inside job. And we can’t buy or achieve peace for those we love either. They have to find their own way.

Ever since listening to her talk, I’ve been wondering what I would write down on my truth list. I know near the top of my list is the unfathomable power of forgiveness to renew and restore. She writes (more elegantly then I), “Earth is forgiveness school, and it begins with forgiving yourself. Then you might as well start at the dinner table with your family. That way you can do this work wearing comfortable pants.”

The second thing on my list is faith in the unexpected flow of grace that creates space, and light, and movement in what was a minute before, a daunting dark and unfamiliar stretch of road. She more elegantly then me writes “Grace is a spiritual WD40 that finds you exactly where you are but doesn’t leave you where it found you.” Against all odds you will get your sense of self and laughter back.

For the last several weeks I have seen grace work its wonders in the lives of us engaging in healing conversations about love and loss. In the presence of listening love, grace has found each one of us, but hasn’t left us where it found us. It’s been a beautiful and wondrous thing to witness.

The third thing on my list is the blessing of our church; the community it creates and our collective commitment to explore and claim all what it means to be fully human. To embrace the reality of our days, to persist in living our values, to learn from each other and to inspire growth, all the while recognizing this effort, with all its complexities—is the purpose, the path.

What would you write, if you were to list all the things you know to be true? Maybe start with just three, and compare notes with someone else. Hope is contagious (the fourth thing on my list).

Yours in hope,

Rev. Jill
Here we are safe to share our deeply held thoughts and values …

From the Board

Beginning next month, the Board, Rick High, and Rev. Jill will be carefully working to create a budget to present to you at the Annual Meeting in May. It typically takes us about 2 months to do this important work. If you are active on a committee, you are probably working to get your committee’s requested budget. In the relative “calm” before this process begins, we wanted to update you about two things:

“Evaluations That Energize” Workshop
We hope you plan to attend the “Evaluations That Energize” workshop for our congregation on Sunday, March 22, 12–2:30. Immediately after worship, there will be a potluck in Fellowship Hall, followed by the workshop which begins at 12:00. We’ll use a process developed by a UU minister that provides a structure where people can reflect about how we’ve changed, what is working well, and what could be improved. For each question, we’ll think about how the lay leadership, congregation, and minister contribute. You’ll work in small groups to individually answer questions, share and discuss your answers, and then group similar responses.

We hope you’ll join and bring your thoughtful observations to this learning conversation. If you would like to participate and are unable to attend on March 22, please email us stacie@64crayons.com and h.bachmann72@gmail.com. We’ll work to make alternative arrangements for you to participate, as everyone’s voice is important.

Coffee Hour Update
The youth have done an excellent job with doing hospitality and the adults have done a wonderful job of bringing in snacks for people to eat (without having to sign up). We have heard feedback from people of all ages about how nice it is to see more kids attending service and in general, more people report feeling connected to the youth than they previously did. While it was a goal to offer hospitality, our larger goal was finding new ways to connect youth and adult in authentic church life. In our UU church at least, a lot of connections happen over eating with each other, whether it is a potluck, snacks at a meeting, a potluck after service, or hospitality.

While it has been going well, we currently have the money to pay the kids for 2.5 more Sundays and have 13 Sundays left where the kids are scheduled to do hospitality. We either did the math incorrectly or some people still haven’t contributed their $20/adult donation for the year. We’ll put out the jar next week in the hopes that we can secure more donations to keep the program running.

In peace,
Heidi Bachmann and Stacie Green, Co-Presidents

Special Congregational Meeting Cancelled
The Music Committee has withdrawn their request for additional money for this year. We have cancelled the special meeting we had scheduled for this Sunday, February 23.
Religious Education

“We are all five bad days away from homelessness.”

—Pastor Zach at project ReachOut Worcester; attended by many of our Coming of Age youth

We are a people of resilience and wisdom

Life is hard. Perhaps the best we can do to meet life’s challenges is to try, try again, and when all else fails, try a new way. It’s a hopeful sentiment, though the outcome may not be what we expected or in the timeframe we wanted.

This suggests another aspect of resilience—the wisdom to understand what is in our control. This is best said in the Serenity Prayer:

As we go…

Grant us the serenity
to accept the things we cannot change;
The courage to change the things we can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

Homelessness and the Coming Of Age youth

Nine of our teens experienced what it was like to walk the streets of Worcester, at night, in the freezing cold—accompanied by our once-homeless guides: Marybeth, Kathy, Sonny, and Cleveland. That was the beginning of their 20-hour immersion retreat understanding homelessness in the ReachOut Worcester program for youth.

Then Saturday morning, they setup the toiletries and clothing our church donated, and warmed up the chili they made for an impromptu “soup kitchen.” Their charge was to provide kindness and dignity to the homeless guests. Stories were heard & shared.

The youth created a banner to help show what they learned. The tiles read, top to bottom:

- We are all five bad days away from homelessness.
- Not a person fault, its society.
- Hope for a good future.
- Chronic homelessness is inescapable.
- Dignity, Kindness, Not a Choice, Resilience, 5 Bad Days, Community, Hope: Homelessness.
- Hospitality (Chili)
- It only takes 5 bad days.
- Homelessness is not a choice.

When you get a chance, ask our youth about the banner they made.
**Loaves & Fishes: Children, Youth, and Us**

More than 79 lbs of toiletries, 25 packages of feminine hygiene products, and 17 beautifully decorated (by our kids!) “gift” Valentine’s Day bags went to Loaves & Fishes. This is in addition to the roughly 100 lbs of food donations that Maddy and Hugh Silk drop off each month.

We are a giving church—as we help others to be as resilient as they can.

**Family Ministry Happenings**

The children/youth had many opportunities for interacting with the Minister, congregation, and others, and visa versa, including: having Rev Jill as their classroom story-sharer and doing laughter-yoga with Jill. They also sang at the Hungarian potluck, helped with Time For All Ages, and brought back to the church their Lego build and home-baked cookies for coffee hour.

They learned about the resilience needed for people of color to change systemic racism throughout American history. How Thurgood Marshall took to trial Jim Crow laws and re-wrote them case by case. And how the Children’s March in Alabama had people finally listening and truly supporting liberty and justice for all regardless of skin color.

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**Covenanting Meetings abound**

There will be four covenanting meetings this weekend, and more to come. Many of us wear different hats and so are invited to more than one meeting. The Religious Education covenanting meeting is Sunday, March 1, at 1 p.m. Please join us in the Fellowship Building.

The following verse speaks to listening to each other, finding the good, and supporting others’ resilience as we strengthen our own. We do this by covenanting together:

Hidden in all stories
is the One story. The more we listen,
the clearer that story becomes.
Our true identity, who we are,
why we are here, what sustains us,
is in this story.

—Lifting Our Voices, #239, by Rachel Naomi Remen (adapted)

With Care.
Laura Vilain
Director of Religious Education
Here we are inspired to explore, reflect, and grow spiritually; and are safe to share our deeply held thoughts and values ...

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**UUSC -- Guest At Your Table (GAYT)**

In just a few weeks (on March 8) we will be launching our GAYT program. For almost 50 years this has been a major family oriented fund raiser for the UU Service Committee supporting their efforts to help the most marginalized people around the globe. Their efforts focus on three broad areas, namely economic justice, environmental justice and rights at risk with about two thirds abroad and one third in the US. This year the theme is “Women Leaders, Strong Communities”. You can read in the Stories of Hope pamphlet about the struggles of four of the UUSC partners that are led by dynamic women. The effort will last until mid April when the GAYT boxes will be collected. All of the funds collected will be matched and donations of $125 and more will be matched again by the Shelter Rock UU Church. This effectively means that donations of at least $125 will be multiplied four times.

Last year we raised over $7,000! Let’s see if we can do even better this year.

Thank you for your support,
Glen Frederick

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**Partner Church Brunch- 9 February 2020**

Partner church brunch is now in the books, Thanks to all you Hungarian cooks, Jasper, Glen, Pam, and Tom Daniells too Represented the setup crew.
Next Eleanor and her singers held sway.
Bill and David's AV helped save the day.
Then Barbara, Liv, David R, and George chimed in To give partner church history a spin.
Fifi and the cleanup squad
Left Sutherland Hall looking most untrod.
Best of all, when all was done, Andrasfalva, the partner church had won! 1,455.70 Rumanian lei-($331)

Mary Donald for the partner church

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**New to Harvard Unitarian Church or Unitarian Universalism?**

Come to a fun, interactive these session series during which we delve into our theology, history, and make meaning together. March 8th, March 29th, 11:30-1:00 in the Fellowship Building’s community room.

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**Speaker Sunday March 8th Bio**

Anne Gardiner (Andy) Perkins is an award-winning historian and expert in higher education--and a longtime resident of Harvard and member of the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church. Anne graduated from Yale University, where she won the Porter Prize in history and was elected the first woman editor-in-chief of the *Yale Daily News*. She is a Rhodes Scholar who received her PhD in higher education from the University of Massachusetts Boston. YALE NEEDS WOMEN is her first book. Learn more at [www.annegardinerperkins.com](http://www.annegardinerperkins.com)

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**Women's Alliance of the Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church**

Our mission is to bring together the women of our Church to discuss issues important to women, to offer an opportunity for intergenerational friendship, and to support the special needs of the church. All are welcome.

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**March 3, 2020 @ 6:30 p.m.**

**Women's History Month Alice Rennie**

Come celebrate Women's History Month, and the centennial of U.S. women's right to vote. Hear about the brave women who defied the entrenched power of men to stand up for themselves and their rights, for a say in how our country is run. Alice Rennie will spotlight these heroines, and tell the story of her own great-grandmother, Mary Doolittle Fisk, who fought all her life for women's right to vote. Everyone is welcome to come.

Hostess: Alice Rennie

**Potluck at 6:30, Program at 7:30.**
Please share your “Power of We.”

An Invitation
We are inviting your committee and volunteers in the church community who work with you to join the covenanting team for a one-hour facilitated conversation using an appreciative inquiry process to help us create a collective answer to this question: **To what do you give your hearts and act upon that connects you to a larger whole?** We will lead three rounds of conversations using these more specific questions as prompts:

- What two values does this group center in the life of the church?
- What do we create together, or aspire to create, that acts upon these values?
- What greater whole do these actions connect this group to?

Piali De, Jon Green, Barbara Kemp or Rev. Jill will be attending committee meetings in January to talk more about this process. Please invite volunteers who support your work.

The Covenanting Team is hosting 6 facilitation session during the last week in February. The schedule is below, please attend any or all! Thanks for participating!

Rev. Jill
Barbara Kemp
Piali De
Jon Green

The Upcoming Week Covenanting Team Schedule

**Group One: Justice Works Monday, Feb 24th 6-7p.m**
(includes SJMC, Partakers, Loaves and Fishes, HRPI, 1619 Project, Women’s Alliance)

**Group Two: Connection and Caring:** Thursday, February 27th 7:00 -8:00 p.m.
(Includes small groups (Soulmatters, Writing Groups, Connections Team, Caring Network, Welcoming Renewal Team)

**Group Three: Financing Our Mission :Thursday March 5th, 7:00-8:00 p.m**
(includes Stewardship, Trustees of the Endowment, Auction)

**Group Four: Stewardship of the Congregation: Saturday Feb. 29th, 10:00-11:00 a.m.**
(Board, Nominating, and Building and Grounds)

**Group Five: Sunday Morning Experience: Saturday Feb. 29, 1:00-12:00**
(Music, chimers, choir, worship committee, participants in worship)

**Group Six: Serving our Families and Children: Sunday March 1st at 1:00**
Here we support and care for one another …

Healing Conversations Grief Group at Harvard Unitarian Universalist Church

Healing Conversations is a small group specifically for those who are moving through grief of a major loss in their life. The group meets two more Tuesday nights to share stories and experiences, to learn about the grief process and to talk about what it means to move toward healing. Some of the questions we will explore are: What is this thing called grief? How have things shifted and changed in my life? How do I take care of myself? What will my life look like now? Where do I find strength and support? 7:00-8:30 p.m. in Rev. Jill’s office February 25 and March 10.

To register email Rev. Jill or Elinor our administrator to let them know of your interest.

Revjillcowie@gmail.com or Admin@uuharvard.org

March Birthday Wishes Go to …

Nico Agosta
Nicholas Cleary
Pam Frederick
Benjamin Graffam
Teddy Justicz
Deborah Levering
Charles McCormack
Michaela Nickerson
Lisa Oldham
Colleen Pearce
Mary Lou Rawlings
Dorothy Solbrig
Gordon Weast
Darrell Wickman

If you missed the opportunity to give us your birthday month please contact the church office: 978-456-8752, or admin@uuharvard.org. Thanks.

From the Admin Office

Our Annual Meeting is Sunday May 17 after worship service. Annual Reports are due to me Monday May 4. If you need a file of any of last year’s reports, let me know. Corrections due Wednesday May 6. Thanks.

Our monthly newsletter, The Belfry is sent electronically as a pdf, and is available on our website. Let me know if you need to be added to that email group. Some paper copies are available to pick up in the church, or you can ask me to mail you a copy via USPS. Deadlines usually 3rd Tuesdays of each month before noon.

The weekly news is sent electronically each Thursday afternoon September—June. Please let me know if you need to be added to that list. The deadline is before noon on Thursdays. NOTHING December 26.

If you want your name and contact information in our church directory, please let me know.

Our Sunday Chalice Chat is put on our website as a pdf as well. The deadline is before 9:30 a.m. Fridays.

Thanks. Elinor Stapleton, admin@uuharvard.org

978-456-8752

Sad News

Long time Harvard UU church member Bruce Morgan passed away early Tuesday afternoon. There will be a brief service followed by a reception on Saturday, February 29 from 1-3:30 at the Badger Funeral Home in Littleton. Thank you for keeping Marylin in your thoughts.

Ongoing Event
Silent Sitting and Walking - Wednesday Meditation
Wednesdays: 7:00-8:00 pm

Fellowship Building on Elm St.: Usually Charlanne Van Wormer room - occasionally a different room.
Format: Rotating leadership. We open with a reading, then sit for 20 or 25 minutes, followed by walking meditation for 10 minutes. Next we sit for 10 minutes and then close with a reading. All are welcome. Bring your mat/cushion/whatever you use, or use one of ours. Chairs are available, if you prefer one, and you might want a cushion for the chair.
For more information email David at davidpkendall@gmail.com, or Pam at pwfrederick@gmail.com.

Thanks.

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Here we celebrate together our traditions and our lives, with all their joys and sorrows ...

What’s Coming Up, Church Events
Thursday February 20
11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Soul Matters
7:00-9:00 p.m. Soul Matters
7:30-9:00 p.m. Choir Sectional rehearsal
Sunday February 23
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
   **Rev Jill Cowie and Sharon Concannon**
   “No Time to Say Goodbye: Resilience in Response to Suicide”
12:00-2:00 Board meeting
Monday February 24
6:00-7:00 p.m. Covenanting, Justice Works
Tuesday February 25
7:00-8:30 p.m. Healing Conversations
7:15-8:45 p.m. Auction meeting
Thursday February 27
7:00-8:00 p.m. Covenanting, Connection and Caring
Saturday February 29
10:00-11:00 a.m. Covenanting, Stewardship
1:00-2:00 p.m. Covenanting, Sunday morning
Sunday March 1
8:45 a.m. Be Well and Sing
10:00-11:30 a.m. Coming of Age class
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
   **Rev. Jill**
   “Becoming Wise”
11:20-11:50 a.m. Jr. Choir
12:00-1:00 Chimmers
1:00-5:00 p.m. Covenanting, Families and Children
Monday March 2
7:30-9:00 p.m. Stories Group
Tuesday March 3
6:30 Potluck 7:30 Program
   **Alliance, “Women’s History Month”**
7:00 p.m. Worship Team meeting?
Thursday March 5
7:30-9:00 p.m. Choir
Sunday March 8
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
   **Anne (Andy) Perkins and Rev. Jill**
   “Groundbreakers”
11:20-11:50 a.m. Jr. Choir
11:30-1:00 Starting Points
12:00-1:00 Chimers
Tuesday March 10
7:00-8:30 p.m. Healing Conversations
Thursday March 12
7:30-9:00 p.m. Choir Sectional
Sunday March 15
8:45 a.m. Chimers
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
   **Worship Committee**
   “People of Wisdom”
11:20-11:50 a.m. Jr. Choir

Music Notes

**Jr. Choir:**

I heard many compliments regarding your performance at the Partner Church lunch. Congratulations on a job well done.

We will not meet during February vacation. Hopefully you will all have a great holiday. Our next rehearsals will be March 1, 8, 15 and 22, preparing for the Easter service on April 12. Stay healthy please!

**Chimers:**

We’re back to rehearsals on March 1, and March 8. On March 15, when we participate in the service, we’ll meet at 8:45 a.m. We won’t rehearse after the service that day, but will continue on March 22 and March 29 at the usual time 12:00-1:00. Take care!

Eleanor Toth

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Hand Drums

We of the Mentoring Circle group would like to borrow your hand drums for a while. Please label your drum(s) with your name and bring them in to Donnalisa Johnson. All drums will be securely stored.

Thank you!

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Upcoming Concerts in our Sanctuary

March 21: The Rafters, and GS Picard
April 4: Crosstracks/Bluegrass
May 16: Harvard Pro Musica

Link to our Building Use Calendar via our Website:
https://uuharvard.org/our-facilities/calendar/