



Volume 24 | Issue 3 November 2020 Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society of Westborough

## November Worship Schedule

Worship Theme of the Month: **Healing**



### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Rev. Laurel Gray

#### How to Listen

So much of life is spent with people talking past each other. Being listened to deeply is a rare experience, but a profound gift. Let us, as a community, consider how we listen and what gets in the way of true connection.

### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Rev. Michelle Ma, West Shore UU Church

#### My Greatest Gift

It's always an interesting time to be a chaplain, but being a chaplain at a Veterans Affairs hospital during these times is even more so. Rev. Michelle Ma finds it challenging much of the time, but always rewarding, and is especially proud of how she is able to live out her values as a Unitarian Universalist. Please join us for stories and lessons from a VA hospital chaplain!

### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) - Rev. Laurel Gray

#### Hearts of Flesh

This is a reflection on my experience serving as a chaplain on a heart transplant unit – caring for people who had literally received new hearts – and the biblical story about having our heart of stone replaced with a

heart of flesh. This is a story about transformation and love for the world, amidst all the things that plant seeds of cynicism.

### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Jerry Breecher & Christa Thomas-Sowers

#### 100,000 Cars

Amongst all the things that are hollered out of car windows at us supporting Black Lives Matter in the Westborough Rotary, the ones that keep us going are the “Thank you”s, thumbs up, and honks. Christa and Jerry reflect on their experiences over the last five months while conveying the message that Black Lives Matter. We encourage you to bring your own experiences to this service.

### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 29, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Rev. Laurel Gray

#### All Souls

We typically have our UUCSW All Souls service at the beginning of November, but this year we're celebrating it in the space between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The holidays are a time when so many of us feel the absence of loved ones gone from this world. This year, as we enter the holiday season amidst a pandemic, we will also make space for recalling all the people with whom we wish we could celebrate in person.

## *From the Minister*

Dear UUCSW,

As we come nearer and nearer to the end of election season, it feels like everything is up in the air – caught up in the winds of “no one knows what will happen.” Yes, as I write this, none of us know who will win the Presidential election, or all the Senate seats, or which ballot initiatives will pass. And. And we do know that the sun will rise, the leaves will fall, and this community will keep embodying our Unitarian Universalist values, building connection, and making space to celebrate no matter what. Life is filled with so much paradox.

I am holding plans lightly amidst it all, which we’ve actually been doing since the beginning of the pandemic. We have learned how adaptable we are, how cooperative and loving we can be, how much this congregational community matters. As a community, our first responsibility is the safety of anyone who enters and, as a minister, my most fundamental obligation is to do no harm. The Board of Trustees, staff, and Reopening Advisory Panel had a lot of difficult conversations about how to keep everyone safe during this pandemic, while also creating as much connection as possible. Even though none of us aspired to become a zoom church, the decision to remain virtual through at least May of 2021 became an obvious one.

And, as we continue working through these digital mediums, we’re getting better at using them effectively. I’m so proud of all of you who have bravely entered the world of zoom, signed up to help lead services, and learned all manner of new technology skills. We’re constantly thinking about how we can do church in a way that’s more inclusive, more inviting, and more connecting amidst the limitation of not being together in person. Thanks to our Office Administrator, Elisa, we now have a Calendly system set up, so you can make zoom or phone appointments with me quickly and easily.

Amidst all the uncertainty and fear and grief that has cloaked this year, we are finding our way. And we do that together.

Blessings,

*Laurel*

[Laurel.Gray@uucsw.org](mailto:Laurel.Gray@uucsw.org)

\*Please note that my days off are typically Monday and Saturday. I try to respond to emails within 48 hours, but that is not always possible. I appreciate your patience.

## Board Matters

*“When your heart starts to race, I invite you to take a steady breath in and pause... and remember that multiple truths surround us for we are loving into being a beautiful, complicated beloved community”*

- Rev. Mr. Barb Greve, 2020 UU General Assembly

The October board meeting opening reading was a phrase that spoke to me at the 2020 UU General Assembly (GA). It came during an apology for remarks said in a previous session that had offended some, but to me it spoke nicely to the idea that our congregations can be considered a beloved community. Other sessions at GA talked about how congregations have many smaller communities within it based on people’s interest - a beloved community of communities.

One of the things I love about being on the board is having the chance to see the different communities within our community doing their very good work. Here are some recent examples, that caught my attention.

The Program Committee has been working to simplify our virtual Sunday service. Having standard Zoom service roles makes it easier for both visiting guest ministers as well as lay leaders.

You can read about the Racial Justice Committee elsewhere in this Vista. Their work is important in helping us in learning how to better honor the value and dignity of all people.

The Religious Education committee has been organizing a variety of activities for the families and youth of our congregation while we do not currently have a Religious Education staff member. They have planned both for specific age groups in addition to events for all families with young children.

The 6-8th grade youth are having Zoom sessions using an interfaith curriculum called “Crossing Paths” where they will first explore Unitarian Universalism and then spend time learning about Christianity, Judaism, Catholicism, Islam, and the Hindu religion. Connections between these religions and Unitarian Universalism will be explored and they will meet with faith leaders of each religion as part of the curriculum.

Last, a reminder which is important given our election season. We are a community of communities with many people and perspectives. While you all are encouraged to speak for yourselves no single person can speak for our congregation.

This is especially important as there are very specific rules that prevent religious institutions from backing specific candidates. We can speak for ourselves and tell people how our own beliefs follow UU principles. We cannot individually claim to speak for the whole UUCSW community. If there is a public communication or statement you believe we should make as a community, please speak to Rev. Laurel and Elisa so that they can help ensure that communication fits all appropriate rules.

*David King on behalf of the UUCSW Board of Trustees*

### Board Meeting Dates:

- November 5, 2020
- December 3, 2020
- January 7, 2021
- February 4, 2021
- March 4, 2021
- April 1, 2021
- May 6, 2021
- June 3, 2021

## *Pastoral Care*

The Membership Engagement Team and Rev. Laurel are always here to support you. We know that caring looks different right now, as we keep physical distance. Rev. Laurel is now, like so many of you, working from home.

If you'd like to make an appointment for pastoral care, or have a joy or sorrow that you'd like included on a Sunday when you're away, you can email Laurel at: [laurel.gray@uucsw.org](mailto:laurel.gray@uucsw.org). She can also be reached on her cell phone at 401-932-7855. Feel free to text or call if something is urgent or you just need to check in.

## *Share the Plate*

Our Share the Plate organization for the month of November is the Community Harvest Project (CHP) in Grafton, a non-profit farm that engages volunteers to grow fresh fruits and vegetables to provide to those experiencing hunger. Through volunteer farming programs and community partnerships, CHP brings thousands of community members together each year to improve access to healthy foods for individuals and families in need across Worcester County. So far this year, they have provided 89,600 pounds of produce - over 404,000 individual servings - to feed our food insecure neighbors. Learn more at [community-harvest.org](http://community-harvest.org).

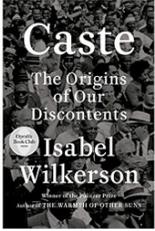
## *Food Collections*

Last year, our congregation made and delivered hundreds of lunches to a homeless shelter in Worcester. The need remains, but the pandemic is blocking us from repeating our success of last year. We will adapt to ensure that we can provide at least the same level of assistance to one of Worcester's most vulnerable populations.

Please watch for notices of and support monthly food collections, and, if you would like to do more, please reach out to:

- Ed Walsh ([walshnboro@aol.com](mailto:walshnboro@aol.com)),
- Jerry Breecher ([Jerry@breecher.com](mailto:Jerry@breecher.com)),
- Pauline Sciarappa ([psciarappa@gmail.com](mailto:psciarappa@gmail.com)), or
- Marjorie Fisher ([mfisher2898@gmail.com](mailto:mfisher2898@gmail.com)).

## Book Group



For **November**, we are reading *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. Please join us.

The group is open to all. You are welcome to attend.

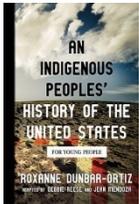
**Because of the pandemic, Book Group will be [online](#).**

If you are planning to attend for the first time, please email

Judith: [Judithteacake@gmail.com](mailto:Judithteacake@gmail.com).

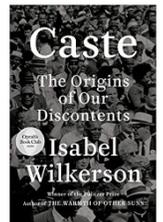
## Racial Justice Committee

**Thinking about Native Americans this month?** To learn which indigenous communities lived in the greater Westborough area and other parts of North America, [use this interactive map](#) which is intended as an educational tool "...to help create dialogue around Indigenous territory recognition and acknowledgement."



The June 2020 UUA General Assembly included discussion from the authors of a previous UU Common Read selection, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Dunbar-Ortiz) and its adaptation for younger readers (Reese & Mendoza). In both editions, the authors provide an historical account of the U.S. from the perspective of indigenous people.

**Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 pm:** Join Kim Hall and Jerry Breecher as they facilitate a discussion of the book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. You and your friends are welcome to bring your reflections, questions, ideas about the relationship between caste and racism as described by Wilkerson.



**Next Committee Meeting:** The committee will meet the second Wednesday of the month from 4:00 – 5:30pm in November and December. The first portion will be devoted to business and the second portion will address previously selected topic. **It's not too late to get involved!** If interested, contact Jane Walsh at [janenboro@aol.com](mailto:janenboro@aol.com) or 508-393-9206. If the meeting time does not work for you, please let Jane know.

*Westborough Interfaith Association presents*

**2020 THANKSGIVING SERVICE:**

# OPEN HEARTS



*On Westborough TV  
and social media*

*Tuesday, Nov. 24th  
7:30pm*

# November Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
10:30 AM – <a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>	6:30 PM – <a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a>			7 PM – Board Meeting		
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
10:30 AM – <a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>	6:30 PM – <a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a>		4:00 PM – Racial Justice Meeting		7 :00 PM – <a href="#">Book Group (online)</a> 	
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>
10:30 AM – <a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>	6:30 PM – <a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a>	7 PM – <a href="#">Program Committee</a>	7 PM – Racial Justice Book Discussion			
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
10:30 AM – <a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>  6 PM - Vista Articles Due	6:30 PM – <a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a>	7:30 PM – Interfaith Thanksgiving Service				
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
10:30 AM – <a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>	6:30 PM – <a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a>					

