



Volume 25 | Issue 7 March 2021 Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society of Westborough

March Worship Schedule

Worship Theme of the Month: **Commitment**



SUNDAY MARCH 7, 10:30 AM

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

The Free Pulpit

This Sunday marks a year since we've gathered in our physical sanctuary for services because of the ongoing pandemic. Just as we have learned that a congregation is a community, not a place, the "free pulpit" that we UUs so value is not something physical. So what is it? Where did it come from? How does freedom operate within a covenantal community? What commitment are we making to ourselves and our community when we step into that free pulpit?

SUNDAY MARCH 14, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Rev. Lisa Garcia-Sampson

What We Bring to the Movement

The many challenges we face as a nation also present us with an unprecedented moment of possibility. Despite our recent experiences of fear and scarcity, we are called to meet this moment in the spirit of abundance, creativity, and courage. This Sunday, we'll discuss how each of us can bring our gifts to the table and help co-create a new vision for our country.

SUNDAY MARCH 21, 10:30 AM

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

The Roots of Liberation

Liberation theology is a frame born out of the profound suffering that existed in Latin America in the 1960s and 70s, which then inspired and informed Black liberation theology in the United States. So, what is it? What does theology have to do with justice work? And what commitment does liberation theology ask of us?

SUNDAY MARCH 28, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Ellen Rutter

A Model of Activism

Dorothy C. Roudebush was involved with Planned Parenthood of St. Louis for six decades. In the early 1970s, prior to Roe v. Wade, she delivered reflections in the form of speeches to a number of congregations across the St. Louis area. UUCSW Program Committee Member Ellen Rutter is a granddaughter of Roudebush, and grew up with her grandmother as one of her earliest models of activism. On March 28, Ellen will share excerpts of some of her grandmother's speeches made to civic groups, schools and organizations on birth control and the need for legalized abortion. She'll also weave in her own reflections around how activism has changed over the past fifty years.

From the Minister

Dear UUCSW,

I just took Henry on a walk and felt the first suggestion of spring in the air. He found a few patches of half-melted snow to lay in, but it's mostly melted here. And I spotted the tiniest tips of bulbs starting to poke up through the dirt. Winter is often hard for many of us – the limited light, the ice, the cold – and it was no less so with the feeling of “pandemic burnout” that I've seen so many talking about on social media. It's a relief to remember that the flowers will bloom again and the days are getting longer. And we're coming up on a full year since life in quarantine began. The last service we had in person was on March 8th, 2020.

It feels almost impossible to hold the fullness of the last year in my head at once. The tragedy has been staggering, the political landscape was often terrifying, and our desire to care for our families and our communities was profound. And it's incredible to think about how we've adapted, not only as individuals and families, but as a congregation. The sheer technological capacity that we've developed blows my mind. In my ordination service alone, the technical skill and agility that our community demonstrated was remarkable. As was our commitment to finding ways to celebrate while we all weather this storm.

In addition to my ordination, February saw the start of our Annual Pledge Campaign, which is truly off to the races. It's an incredible thing reflecting on how our congregation is self-funded. So many old UU congregations in New England are living off of dwindling endowments, but that's not how we operate at UUCSW and what a blessing that is. This is your congregation, one that stays vibrant because of the collective generosity of everyone on board, and what a beautiful thing that is.

In addition to all that we've kicked off in the last month, we have some big things to look forward to! On March 21st we'll have the first of two whole-congregation workshops to brainstorm, envision, and start to make a plan around our justice goals as a congregation. Both conversations will be facilitated by the Rev. Erica Baron from the New England Region, who is wonderful and will help us hone our justice priorities as a congregation. The three things we're hoping to clarify are: our areas of focus, the types of actions we want to engage in, and how our justice program is organized within UUCSW. Please come for this important process of reflection and priority setting.

And just like the buds starting to show themselves, we are in the early stages of planning a spring auction! We have tentatively set a date for Saturday May 15th and the auction team is starting to sort out all the details. So, mark your calendars! We have exciting things in store!

Blessings,

Laurel

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.

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. 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.

Board Matters

While it is cold outside, there has been a lot of warmth being generated inside our walls!

We are all still basking in the glow of Laurel's ordination, and appreciated everyone's enthusiastic participation in celebrating this wonderful event. Also, plenty of warm energy is going toward our pledge activities, so please be sure to join together with your pledges, as we keep our ship steaming forward.

We appreciate the ongoing work of the racial justice committee to bring our congregation many learning activities, including a workshop on February 21. We are also welcoming Erica Baron, our regional UU consultant, later in March to join with us in "imagining" our future in social and racial justice here at UUCSW.

Outside of our walls, we have also been sharing in conversations with our neighboring UU churches to explore see how we can share our warmth, and continue to work together as we have done during the pandemic with sharing of virtual services. UUCSW will also be partnering with the community of Westborough in events for the upcoming "Kindness Week"; thanks to Kris Allen for working with the organizers of this annual community initiative.

It has been a joyfully busy time. We look forward to continued high creativity inside and out!

Finally, plans are underway for our annual Spring Auction fundraiser so stay tuned and please:

SAVE THE DATE - May 15th

Important reminder if you must enter the church building:

1. Please complete a [building use form](#).
2. Special "heads up" – all doors must be locked – we recommend locking the door behind you upon entering as well as confirming it is locked and the building is secure and lights are all turned out upon leaving.

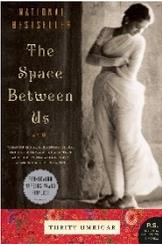
Thank you and stay warm!

Kim Hall on behalf of the UUCSW Board of Trustees

Board Meeting Dates:

- March 4, 2021
- April 1, 2021
- May 6, 2021
- June 3, 2021

Book Group – March 12th



For **March**, we are reading *The Space Between Us* by Thrity Umrigar. 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: Juditheacake@gmail.com.

Racial Justice Committee

Those regularly participating in the committee include Kris Allen, Andrea Burke, Jerry Breecher, Kathe Scott, Phil Mighdoll, Marge Fisher, John Metzger, Scott Owens, Sheila McPharlin, Jane Walsh, Kim Hall (as Liaison from the Board) and Rev. Laurel. Feel free to contact us at our group email rlc@uucsw.org with topics and issues you'd like to learn more about or initiatives you think should be considered by the congregation. We look forward to learning what is on your mind and in your hearts as it relates to creating racial equity.

We will continue to meet monthly through the end of the church year, on the second Wednesday of the month. Our next meeting is March 10, 4:00 – 5:30pm. All welcome! Contact Jane Walsh with questions or to let her know you are interested but unable to attend at janenboro@aol.com or 508-393-9206 (leave a message). And here's the Zoom meeting link: zoom.us/j/84599163211

The session on the origins of racism in the United States which was held in late February was well attended. About 25 people listened to one episode from the *Seeing White* podcast series, before sharing impressions and considering how viewing historical events from a different perspective sheds new light on current day behavior and policies. We invite you to listen to the podcast (which includes some violence) and join the ongoing conversation of how to understand and counter racism. The link to the episode we listened to is [here](#). If you prefer reading, a transcript of the episode is available [here](#). These links will also allow you to find your way to the other episodes in the podcast series. Let us know what you think.

SMOC Food Drive for March

Please consider participating in a congregational food drive to benefit the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC) which provides meals for people in Worcester. At this time, they are especially in need of: 6-8 ounce juice boxes/pouches; fresh fruit, especially apples, pears, and clementines; 16 oz. packages of bologna, pre-packaged; and boxes of chewy/soft granola bars. **There will be a collection for these items on Thursday, March 25th between 4:30 and 5:45 pm at the Ruggles Street door of UUCSW.** Please reach out to Libba Moore at libbamoore13@gmail.com ahead of time if there's a better time for you. Food will be delivered to SMOC on Friday, March 26th. Thank you for help with this. - *Your friends on the Social Justice Committee*

Help UUCSW Help People in Need

SMOC has identified the need for men and women's warm winter clothing, especially socks, coats, sweatshirts, sweatpants, long sleeve shirts, hats and gloves. New socks only please, other items should be new or gently used and clean; note the ratio of men to women served is 70:30. Hand warmers and ponchos are also welcome. **Please bring your donations to UUCSW on Thursday, March 25th between 4:30 and 5:45 pm, the same day/time as the monthly food drive.** If this timing does not work for you please reach out to Nancy Siegal via email at NSIEGAL185@msn.com or Pauline Sciarappa at psciarappa@gmail.com for other options. These clothing drives will happen monthly at least through spring. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

March Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	1	2	3	4	5	6
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online)	7:00 PM – Membership Team Meeting		7:00 PM – Board Meeting		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service 7:00 PM – Coming of Age Session	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online)		4:00 PM – Racial Justice Meeting		7:00 PM – Book Group (online) 	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online)	7:00 PM – Program Committee				
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service 7:00 PM – Coming of Age Session	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online)			4:30 PM – SMOC Food and Clothing Drive @ UUCSW Ruggles Door	6:00 PM – Vista Articles Due **	
28	31	30	31	1	2	3
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online)					

** Send Vista articles to amk32@cornell.edu

**THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
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Music Director.....Kala Farnham
Office Administrator.....Elisa Scully

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DUE DATES

FOR VISTA NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Announcements, suggestions, or questions?
The VISTA is published monthly and submissions
are welcome. Please email submissions to:

Andy Koenigsberg at amk32@cornell.edu.

Please put "VISTA" in the subject line.

**April Vista articles due by
6 PM, Friday, March 26th.**

**For updates visit
uucsw.org**

