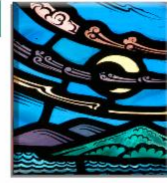


A Publication of the Winchester Unitarian Society

# Mystic Messenger

www.winchesteruu.org 478 Main Street Winchester MA 01890



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Volume 8 Issue 4

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## June's Theme: "Delight"

by Rev. Heather Janules

At a recent continuing education retreat, we realized that one participant was celebrating a birthday the second day of the conference and another was celebrating a birthday on the third. So we took some time out of our dinner hour the second night to name what we appreciate about these two dear colleagues.

When I was preparing my affirmation, I realized that, even though I know one rather well and the other only in passing, I appreciate the same things about them both – their wisdom and their laughter. Each in their own way, they have a distinctive laugh – hearty, robust, spontaneous. They have a way of making joy contagious in a group.

I know I am relaxed when I laugh easily. Sometimes I get into trouble if my laugh is too loud or a little inappropriate. But those moments are moments of freedom, when it feels safe to express my sheer delight in the moment.

"Delight" is the theme for June. When I think of "delight," I think of sensory experiences – the cold sweetness of ice cream on a hot day, a riot of colors in the garden, the perfume of roses and lilacs in bloom. I can't imagine a better theme as we make our turn towards summer.

"Delight" is also fitting as we will join many other congregations in recognizing the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Flower Ceremony on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Bringing flowers to worship, seeing and blessing our combined bouquets, each taking a different flower; the colors and scents, enjoyed in community. How can we not find our way to delight?

However you spend your summer, I hope it includes many moments of delight, moments of pleasure through intention – the planned beach vacation, the family cookout – and pleasure when you least expect it. And I hope you feel free to respond to all of these gifts with a full and open heart...and maybe a burst of laughter. There is joy to be found in life...May you find it!



## WUSYG: Live to Give

by Sam Wilson

Last month 12 youth and 4 of us adults spent the week living in southwestern Rhode

Island and working at various sites in the "Quiet Corner" of northwestern Connecticut. We stayed at a homestead whose mission is to "offer environmentally responsible hospitality to churches and nonprofit organizations seeking to make a positive impact in the world." They are an outdoor ministry of the United Church of Christ.

During the day we partnered with Community Kitchens, a locally-run organization that provides healthy and nutritious meals to all who come through their doors, 5 days a week at various sites in the area. Their mission:

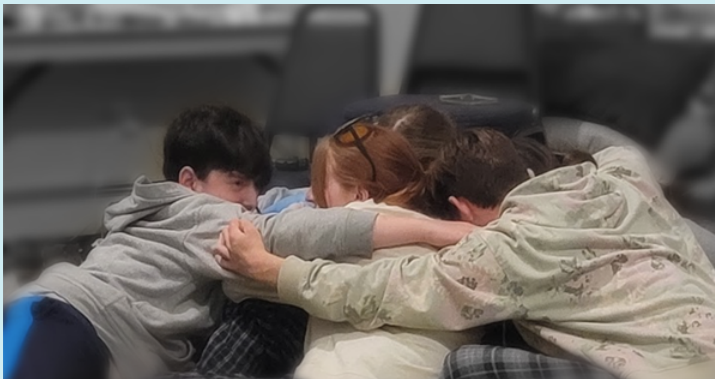


being committed to improving the quality of life of those they serve, restoring their dignity, and working to end food insecurity in their community.

As per our own mission, we were there to be of service to them however they saw most fit, which included preparing meals, organizing pantries, and also working with their partners to clean up trash and help the community theater clear out their space. We also spent time learning about food insecurity, fostering connections with each other and our spirituality, and thinking about how this week might catalyze change in our lives and subsequently the world.



We are so grateful to the congregation for giving our youth the opportunity to go on this transformative trip. Also huge thanks to Roofus Hoffmann and Gordy McIntosh, our two volunteer chaperones.



I am also pleased to share that we have already decided to return to War, WV next year. This will be WUSYG's third trip there, working with an organization called Big Creek People in Action. They are a

community-led organization in one of the poorest regions in the country. We help them with various construction projects that people otherwise would not be able to afford or do themselves (for example, we have built handicap ramps and even set up plumbing for a family with a toddler who previously had no access to water in their home). Our rising seniors went there during their sophomore year and are particularly excited to return and do more for this wonderful organization and community.

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## **GA: Key Climate and Investing Decisions Ahead**

by Rev. Cindy Davidson,

## Affiliated Community Minister

I am delighted that the congregation has voted to welcome me into the Winchester Unitarian Society as an affiliated community minister. I am looking forward to working with Rev. Heather and other leaders to begin putting plans into place for the coming program year.

I see many congregations speeding to the “finish line” of the program year, and (hopefully) heading to our UUA General Assembly where the participation of our congregational delegates is vital to the denomination’s health and governance. I have a fond spot for GAs, as we call them.

Over the past ten years, my own GA experiences have been shaped largely by my role as a Board member of UU Ministry for Earth: supporting the workshops, spending time in the exhibit hall booth conversing with the curious, our supporters and allies. Add to that the thrill of worshipping *en masse* with UUs from around the country, learning new things and unlearning the unhelpful, and the pleasures of the chance encounters with old friends and acquaintances. Having served as a delegate from my home congregation in the past, I know the importance of taking up the most pressing concerns of the times and serving as a bridge to bring it all “home” to my congregation.

This year, I wear neither the UUMFE nor the congregational delegate hat. I’m not obligated to attend, but I want to go! So much is happening ... Article 2, the presidential election and transition. A visit to my home state!

My personal interest in this year’s GA is especially piqued by the excitement, concerns and discussions generated by a proposed business resolution put forth by a group of UU young adults, [“Complete Divestment from the Fossil Fuel Industry and Subsequent Reparations.”](#) The resolution calls for a more complete divestment of the UU Common Endowment Fund (UUCEF), no longer holding fossil fuel shares for the purpose of shareholder advocacy, and making plans to redistribute the fossil-fueled wealth generated.

For context, you may know that this GA marks the ninth anniversary of the passage of the 2014 Business Resolution calling for Fossil Fuel Divestment. At the time, this was ground-breaking news in the faith community as the UUA, along with other progressive faiths, began aligning their investments with their values more rigorously in response to the climate crisis. Another UUMFE Board member and I worked closely with the UUA’s Socially Responsible Investment Committee and Treasurer to craft and bring that resolution forward and engaged congregations to support it. It was a long and careful process. I often hesitate to get up to speak in front of hundreds

of people, but this issue, those times and the “Pro” mic called to me! ([UUWorld article here](#))

Today’s young adults seem to me to be saying the spirit and the letter of that law have been forgotten or ignored, judging from the rather damning litany of fossil fuel shares held by the UUCEF included in this business resolution. How did this happen after the initial years of compliance? I don’t know! Clearly, a course correction is called for and, apparently, according to the UUA Treasurer, is partly under way.

The UUA Treasurer has shared his analysis of the operational and financial impacts of the proposed resolution in his [UUA Treasurer’s memo to the UUA Board of Trustees](#). Taking these points into consideration, the UUA Board has released its [statement opposing the resolution](#).

I’m curious to see how this plays out at GA. How do we have the conversations that move our highest, most idealistic aspirations towards the actionable and pragmatic? How far can we live into our values when our own funds and sustainability are at stake?

Stay tuned!

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## Welcome **Ella Kromm**, Summer Intern

Earlier this Spring, we were approached by Ella Kromm, a local college student, about a Summer Internship.

Ella seeks to gain a better understanding of faith communities and how they live out their spiritual convictions through institutional structure, practices and processes. We did acknowledge that summer is our most quiet time...but she is undaunted!



Our Standing Committee approved an internship for June, July and August of this year. Ella will serve WUS for about 25 hours per week with a couple of weeks off due to family obligations. She will provide administrative support

through producing the order-of-service, *Highlights* and light clerical duties as needed. She will also attend and participate in our summer worship services and after-worship conversations. To ensure she learns as much as she can, we will also be arranging interviews with long-time leaders so Ella can get a better sense of congregational life and governance outside of our quiet season.

Ella will write a reflective essay about her experiences at WUS. Rev. Heather will serve as her overall supervisor and Richard Dorbin will supervise Ella when Rev. Heather is away for vacation and study leave. This internship is funded by an outside grant through Wellesley College.

Here are a few words from Ella: I'm a third-year student at Wellesley College studying gender and sexuality in religion. I was born and raised in Durham, NC, where my beautifully blended family still resides, including four parents, four siblings, four cats, and a dog. While I did not grow up in any particular faith tradition, I attended the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (ERUUF) for a year and the experience stayed with me.

So it felt like kismet when my first-year Residential Advisor at Wellesley was the President of Heartspace, the UU campus ministry group. I initially joined Heartspace as a favor to her, but quickly fell in love with the community. I became more involved over time and am now President of the group. Aside from Heartspace, I am also a Sexual Health Educator (SHE) on campus, an Administrative Assistant in the Religion Department, an avid romance novel reader, and an aspiring embroiderer.

I am thrilled to be interning at WUS this summer and can't wait to get started!

You may reach Ella this summer at: [ella.kromm@winchesteruu.org](mailto:ella.kromm@winchesteruu.org)

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## 2023 Summer Services Schedule

**Please Note: All summer services will start at 10 am, except for the Service on June 25<sup>th</sup>, when we will gather for coffee and conversation at 10:30 am before the General Assembly livestream, which is scheduled to start at 11 am. \*\* Also please note: There will be a discussion in the parlor following the Summer Services on July 9, 16, and 30, August 6, 13, 20, 27, and September 3. For those attending by livestream, the Zoom link for the discussions will be: <http://www.tinyurl.com/wusworship>**

- **Sunday, June 18** 10 am **Annual Summer Poetry Service**  
(Rev. Heather, leader.)
- **Sunday, June 25** 10:30 am **General Assembly livestream**  
(Livestreaming starting at 11 am)
- **Sunday, July 2** **No Service due to July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday**
- **Sunday, July 9** 10 am **Green Sanctuary Service**  
(Phil Coonley, leader) (Summer Choir)
- **Sunday, July 16** 10 am **"Faithfully Becoming: General Assembly"** (Rev. Heather, leader)
- **Sunday, July 23** 10 am **Annual Summer Hymn Service**  
(John Kramer, leader) (Summer Choir)
- **Sunday, July 30** 10 am **"A Broader View of Reparations"**  
(Patty Shepard, leader)
- **Sunday, August 6** 10 am Service TBA  
(Dan Hermes, leader) (Summer Choir)
- **Sunday August 13** 10 am **"This is Your Brain on Lies"**  
(Lee Barton, leader)
- **Sunday, August 20** 10 am Service TBA  
(Chris Weigand, leader)
- **Sunday, August 27** 10 am **"Principles to Pinwheels: Article II"**  
(Rev. Heather, leader)
- **Sunday, September 3** 10 am **"Sexuality, Faith and Self-Acceptance – Lessons from the Diaries of the 'First Modern Lesbian' Anne Lister"**  
(Alison Kirchgasser, leader)

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## SOUL MATTERS THEMES FOR THE COMING YEAR

September: **Welcome**  
 October: **Heritage**  
 November: **Generosity**  
 December: **Mystery**  
 January: **Liberating Love**

February: **Justice & Equity**

March: **Transformation**

April: **Interdependence**

May: **Pluralism**

June: **Renewal**

*WUS is a **Soul Matters** congregation, part of a coalition of communities that follow the same monthly themes and share related resources. The following is a meditation on this month's theme of "Delight" from Soul Matters leadership:*

Because the road  
turns long and lonely sometimes,  
I built this box of delight.  
I picked up the lid  
and into it I put...

My children laughing, together.  
The look of giddy disbelief on my mother's face when that black-capped chickadee swooped in and landed next to her knee, waking her up from her Alzheimered daze.  
The bitter bite of rhubarb pie smothered by a spoonful of half-melted vanilla ice cream.  
That field of fireflies at the bottom of the West Virginia hills.  
Roald Dahl or Neil Gaiman's books read at bedtime.  
Kick ball.  
Being pulled through a snowy field on a saucer sled tied to the bumper of my dad's Chevy Vega with tire chains wrapped around every wheel.  
Deep dish pizza. The smell of a tangerine. French press.  
The first bite of a perfectly made croissant, proving that decadence sometimes purifies the soul.  
An artichoke, with no limits on the butter.  
Mixtapes made with tunes from the eighties.  
Sweatshirts worn faithfully for 20 years, their holes a reminder that to be used up is a gift.  
The first fall tree to boldly burn red while its less-brave siblings stay safely green.  
Stumbling on black raspberries while walking in the woods;  
No, scratch that. Instead let's put in having a loved one save you some black raspberries they found in the woods.  
Seeing the smile on my claustrophobic wife's face after finally snorkeling in the waters of St. John.  
That sweet, night owl quiet when worries don't seem so big or so scary.



My 6-year-old daughter writing "I love you Mom and Dad" on our car seat,  
in permanent marker.  
The way subway street musicians suddenly turn strangers into fellow  
humans.  
The feeling of getting warm after being cold.  
My wife's laugh, and how much I love her toes.  
And the knowledge that all this will be gone,  
but is not gone yet.

That's what's in my box.  
I wonder what you'll put in yours.

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## Ingathering Service: Water Communion September 10th



If you travel, if you rest, if you work or if you play - no matter if you go far away or stay in place - save some water from your Summer. Then bring it to Ingathering Worship on Sunday, September 10th. As is our tradition, we will gather and pool our waters as an embodied symbol of our coming together.

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*Save the Date!*

## Community Dance September 24th 5 - 6:30 pm

Outside in the back parking lot with our own fantastic house band of fiddlers and the fabulous Marcie van Cleave returning as our caller.

All ages are welcome – and be prepared for a seriously good time.

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