

# NEWS FROM THE HILL

NEWSLETTER OF THE U.U.  
MEETING HOUSE OF CHATHAM

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Celebrate the Season	1
Month of Sundays	2
Who's Preaching	2
Minister's Message	3
Thanks to Pine Tree	4
Worship Services	4
Branching Out	4
Social Justice Committee	5
Endowment Board Message	5
Membership Committee	6
Images of War	6
New Office Administrator	7
Poinsettias	7
Poem from DJ Foley	8
UUMH Classifieds	8
Food and Comfort	9
Storm Closings	9
Bits and Pieces	10

**"NEWS FROM THE HILL"**  
is published monthly year round  
by the UU Meeting House of  
Chatham.

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**SUNDAY SERVICES** are  
held at 10:30 AM each week.

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

next month is TUESDAY

December 21. Send items to

Sue Bauer: Ralphb1234@cs.com



## CELEBRATE THE SEASON

### CHRISTMAS EVE

#### Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols

**Gather at 4:00 p.m.** for our traditional Christmas Eve service filled with story and song and light. Remember, no morning service.



### POINSETTIAS



Help decorate UUMH for the season and your home too. See page 6 for all the details.

### DECEMBER OUTREACH

**Mittens and hats and socks...**

Please fill the basket by the tree in the front of the Sanctuary with new hats, mittens, and socks. The collected items will be delivered to St. Joseph's Homeless Shelter in Hyannis.

STAFF MEMBERS**MINISTER:**

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arevtracy@gmail.com

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ftoppa440@gmail.com

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**Board of Trustees**

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Danielle Jeanloz, Vice President  
Joan Caputo, Secretary  
Joe Zahka, Treasurer

**At large members:**

Beth Avery  
Naomi Turner  
Liz Van Wye

**Program Council**

Sue Bauer, Chair

**VISION STATEMENT**

We, the members and friends of the UUMH, strive:

To apply UU principles in our daily living, social actions, and community service;

To nurture a safe community that encourages intellectual, spiritual, and religious freedom and celebrates all the passages of life;

To welcome diversity and pluralism as essential for our connection with all humanity;

To provide fellowship, friendship, and fun, and to support a creative artistic and musical environment;

To sustain and promote a vital religious and spiritual lifespan education program.

**MONTH OF SUNDAYS**

**December 3                      Microcosms                      Rev. Tracy Johnson**  
**and the leaders of our Small Group Ministries**

Join us for a special interactive service highlighting the value of our Small Groups here at the Meeting House.

**December 10                      A Place for Mystery                      Rev. Tracy Johnson**

Our theme this month is the gift of mystery. How do you experience mystery? Is there a place for mystery in your understanding of our world?

**December 17                      Holding and Releasing                      Rev. Tracy Johnson**

Today we will gather in the tradition of "Blue Christmas" services. The holidays can be especially difficult for some of us emotionally and spiritually. Join us for a special service of poetry, musical offerings and ritual.

**December 24                      No morning service**

**Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols**  
**Rev. Tracy Johnson**

We will **gather at 4:00 p.m.** for our traditional Christmas Eve service filled with story and song and light.

**December 31                      NO SERVICE**



Dear Ones, All –

Happy Holidays! Happy Holidays! This song keeps playing in my head as I sit to write this morning! I find myself wanting to balance the sadness I am experiencing in the midst of so much brokenness with the joy I have come to associate with this season. I hope you are able to do the same. Hope is certainly something we need right now. The ability to believe that something good or better is possible, in the offing, on its way for us and all of humanity. All of our various traditions point to this as the darkness expands over more and more of our days until that moment when it suddenly reverses itself and begins the cycle toward light. It doesn't affect us as much as it might have those who lived centuries ago, but we still feel it in our bones.

One of my favorite traditions associated with this season is bringing in the greens to create and light an Advent wreath. We have done this together over the past few years. The first week focuses on hope for what is to come. As Unitarians this is not often a hope in the birth of the Messiah, but that doesn't mean we can't consider what we are hoping for in our personal lives and our life together here at the Meeting House. Week two looks at peace and as we grapple with the violence around us, we need to think about ways to incorporate peacefulness into our days. Week three is about joy. Maybe you are preparing to see children and grandchildren this month as families gather. Maybe it is the simple joy to be found in the wonder of our world. Whatever it is for you, may joy be alive in your heart. The fourth week is the week of love. This is the bottom line for me! There is a greater love, a mysterious presence that holds and heals, accompanies me on the journey. What does love mean to you?

Our services this month will be a little different and I hope you find them meaningful. We will have a shared service on December 3<sup>rd</sup> with leaders of our Small Group Ministry. On December 10<sup>th</sup> we will explore the gift of mystery, our theme for the month. I will be offering a special "Blue Christmas" service on December 17<sup>th</sup>. For many of us this is a hard time of the year emotionally and spiritually. We will join together in a service of poetry and special music with a ritual opportunity to name our griefs and losses, be they personal or more broadly focused. On Christmas Eve we will have our traditional Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. **Please note the earlier time – 4:00 p.m.** We will not gather on the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup>.

However you celebrate this month, whether it is a family tradition or a religious observance passed down through the generations, or through rituals you have created yourself which express your personal theology, may it be a time filled with awe and meaning. As we gather in community, may you find hope for the days to come, peace in your heart, joy in your step, and an all-embracing love surrounding you.

Blessed be.

Reverend Tracy



## THANKS TO PINE TREE AND OUR OWN BILL CONLEY

Bill Conley and his company, Pine Tree Landscaping, have been keeping UUMH's lawn mown and beautiful for us. His Lawn Care crew, Brendon and Marvin, create a beautiful welcome to town! BUT, did you also know that Bill donates the charge for this service – and it's a lot of mows! - right back to UUMH to be used as part of our Angel Fund collection! He's the best!!! Thanks Bill!!!



## WORSHIP SERVICES COMMITTEE

The committee reviewed the script for the Sunday Service and decided we will rewrite the first paragraph and the offertory sections to begin December 1st.

They also decided to ask people to write their announcements out and give them to the service leader before the service. This will save time.

The order of service will have changes to it as well. The committee felt the placement of the offertory should be earlier in the service, as it now looks like the collection money is to show how well you liked the sermon or the previous speaker. It will be moved to after the Doxology.

Storm/Disaster Closing protocol was decided upon. See page 9 for details



## BRANCHING OUT

Join us at Branches on Crowell Road on Thursday December 14 for some pre-Christmas camaraderie with your UU friends. We will meet at 2:30 – to avoid driving at night. Have a drink or a snack or a late lunch – anything goes. No need to respond...just COME! Thanks to Kathy Nye for arranging this.

**Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone. (Charles Schulz)**

### SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

At the November meeting of the Social Justice Committee Rev Tracy reported the there was a small but interesting discussion of the Common Read book, On Repentance and Repair. This may be a topic for a future sermon.

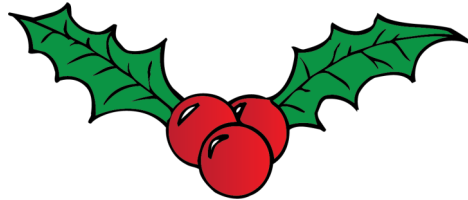
Everyone felt that the information shared by Sheriff Donna Buckley was informative and worthwhile.

As members finish up the donations for the Homeless Shelter, the Community Outreach for December will be Independence House, Cape Cod's leading resource, counseling and advocacy center to address and prevent domestic and sexual violence.

Rev. Tracy and Joan Caputo reported on upcoming events sponsored by the Nauset Interfaith Association. They have recently concluded a series on Voices of Refugees. The MLK Action Team will be working with local bookstores to encourage folks to purchase books at about a 3rd grade level featuring peoples of color. The MLK Breakfast will take place at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Orleans in January. And they are working on Youth Outreach to homeless, unhoused teens.

Susan Patterson shared info on Climate Action. There was discussion about a possible Sunday service around Climate Change and its effect on the Cape.

The Social Justice Committee will meet next on Monday, December 11 2023 at 10:00. For more info contact Robin Hubbard: [davrobhub@comcast.net](mailto:davrobhub@comcast.net)



### ENDOWMENT BOARD MESSAGE

Soon the income tax season will be here. You may find it beneficial to use a special tax saving measure that is available for those wishing to make a charitable contribution.

That measure, known as a "Qualified Charitable Distribution" (QCD), allows anyone who takes a distribution from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) during the year to deduct the amount given. Normally, any distribution from an IRA is taxable to the recipient as ordinary income. If some or all of that distribution is paid directly to a charity by the IRA custodian, that amount will not be subject to any tax. That means the charity (the UUMH, either for a pledge or contributions to the Endowment Fund) benefits fully from the gift, and the donor (you) will have a reduced tax bill.

The Endowment Board cannot properly give anyone tax advice, and individual circumstances may differ, but we wanted to share this information. Anyone interested in knowing more about this or similar opportunities should consult their tax advisor. Arrangements can be made through you financial institution.



### MEMBERSHIP

An additional AED/CPR training took place in October with 5 in attendance. There is always an opportunity for more sessions if the interest is there.

We have been having more visitors, and the welcome they received, especially at the coffee gathering, has been appreciated.

We are looking for additional greeters for the Christmas Eve service. Please contact Bonnie (508-432-2509) if you are able to help out. Thanks.

### IMAGES OF WAR

Priscilla Smith, Textile Artist, will have her fabric art on display in the Fleck Room for the month of December. Here is her Description of her art and the philosophy behind it.

My art focuses on Social commentary” and “anti-war.” My purpose is to provoke thought and emotion; to raise consciousness; and to galvanize change. For many years of my life, I marched for peace and other social causes. But that is not enough. The artist must also create “images” which reflect, in the case of war, its horror and dark side.

It is the description of what war looks like by the French playwright, Jean Giradoux, in his play Tiger at the Gates; “like the bottom of a baboon....when the baboon is up in a tress, with its hind end facing us; scarlet, scaly, glazed, framed in a clotted filthy wig.” It is the picture of the Vietnamese girl running down a road, her skin shredding from napalm. It is a newspaper’s response to a reader who asked “....is it true that for every enemy soldier we kill in Vietnam, the United States kills six civilians””. The newspaper replied “....no, no, this is not true. We only kill four civilians for every soldier we kill.” These are some of the images which will hopefully galvanize people to say “no more.....no more killing...no more war.”

In making art about War, I am witnessing to my great respect for the soldiers who are sent off to fight. I do not respect the leaders who make the decisions to go to war...the leaders who unthinkingly assume the conflict is between total good and total evil. The leaders, who through distortions and coercion, move the masses from believing a war is unnecessary to believing in a “just” war.

The processes and materials I use are designed to generate discomfort, sadness, and shock on the part of the viewer. I use images such as crosses with dead soldiers’ helmets perched on them; a pastel baby blanket in the shape of an AK47 gun; or burning buildings falling down. I sometimes intentionally use discordant colors. Or I might use beautiful colors to create an awkward juxtaposition with a deadly weapon. I use images such as an array of soldiers’ dog tags interspersed with guns and nooses covered with a large hand gun ; and a tree with beautiful nests filled with AK47 guns.



### MEET OUR NEW OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Dawn Dinnan is excited for her new role as UUMH's part-time office administrator. She is enjoying learning about us while collaborating with staff and volunteers, responding to email messages, and uploading Sunday sermons and special event recordings to our YouTube channel. Dawn works "remotely" in her admin role for us, but is happy to also connect in person with new friends and colleagues at UUMH.

Dawn grew up in Andover and has been a part of the Chatham community all her life, beginning with summer vacations. Most recently, she served as communications director at Latham Centers, a therapeutic residential program for children and adults with special needs. She continues to support local non-profits and town committees with her work at Watermark, practically right across the street!

She is a graduate of Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, and has a Master of Arts in Teaching (English) from Salem State University and an MBA from Suffolk University. She lives in Dennis with her husband Terry and children Andrew and Carly (students at Nauset Regional High School).



### POINSETTIAS

To decorate the front of the Sanctuary for the holiday, Mary Parsons will happily receive your \$10 for a poinsettia! As in past years, the plants will grace the steps and area around the pulpit until Christmas Eve, at which time you are encouraged to take your own home to enjoy through the winter – and beyond.



Please give your \$10 to Mary by December 6, as she must order and pickup for placing in the church before the 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday service. Call her for more info (508-367-0714)

**Christmas is not a date. It is a state of mind. (Mary Ellen Chase)**



### Cranberry Duck by DJ Foley

Cranberry clouds  
in deep blue  
almost navy  
Bog reflects sky  
Mallard hen  
cuts through bobbing berries  
weaves watery trail  
Quacks quietly to herself  
as she samples  
hidden stems  
shuns tart fruit  
Her comment on  
traditional flavor  
that graces  
many a holiday table



### UUMH CLASSIFIEDS

*(Please email Sue Bauer with your "ad" at [ralphb1234@cs.com](mailto:ralphb1234@cs.com))*

(An occasional feature of the UUMH Newsletter. Do you have a service to offer? Something to sell or donate? )

#### Here's our first one.....

Marvin Bryan, the foreman of Pine Tree is available for after-hours work – lawn work, mowing, pruning, etc.  
Call or text Marvin at 508-332-0113. PS He does superb work! (see Sue Bauer for testimonial !!)





### FOOD AND COMFORT

The Pastoral Care Team is well aware of the kindness and generosity of our congregation. Those just home from a hospital stay or some other overwhelming event could perhaps use a meal. Others might need a ride or just a visit. Please let Sue Bauer know (943-3264) if you would be willing to be on a list of possible helpers - only occasionally and only on your schedule. Many of us are already doing this, but we are hoping to collect a list of folks to call when needed. Many thanks to you all.



### POSSIBLE STORM CLOSINGS

We are coming into winter, and the possibility of snow or ice which might make getting to the Meeting House difficult. There is a procedure for such times with a decision made by the Minister, the President of the Board and the chair of Building and Grounds. Whatever the Meeting House does, please decide on your own whether or not to venture out!

**Sunday Services: If a Sunday service needs to be canceled, the following will occur as soon after 8AM as possible:**

**An all-wide church Eblast will go out to the congregation  
Notice will be sent to Cape Radio 107 and to Channel 7.**

**PLEASE!!!** Make your own decisions based on your situation. Sunday services will not be canceled unless absolutely necessary, but consider your street, your neighborhood, your love – or not! – of driving in the snow. **The most important thing is not the sermon, but your safety!!!**



**DIRECTORY CHANGES**

Add Barbara Whittaker-Johns to your directory:  
 5 Candlewick Rd. Orleans 02653 207-691-8577  
[bwhittakerjohns@gmail.com](mailto:bwhittakerjohns@gmail.com)



**PEOPLE TO CELEBRATE**

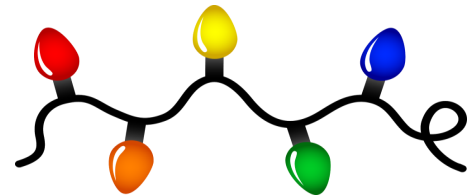
**December Birthdays**

- 3 Danielle Jeanloz
- 6 Jan Perry
- 7 Liz Sjogren
- 11 Debbie Rogers
- 11 Dick Fewkes
- 15 Bill Conley
- 16 Barbara Rothenburger



**December Anniversaries**

- 6 Edith and Clif Mayfield
- 15 Evelyn and John Raye
- 24 Greg Heyl and Eric Riley
- 28 Karen and Ron Nickerson
- 29 Jane and Read Moffett



**MISSION STATEMENT**

**Nurturing inclusive community**

**Seeking justice and equity**

**Encouraging free minds and spirits**

**THIRD MONDAY BOOK CLUB**

Third Monday Book Club will meet on December 18 to discuss Lauren Wolk's *Beyond the bright sea*.. Contact Mary Parsons with questions. [marypmac@comcast.net](mailto:marypmac@comcast.net) / 508-367-0714.

All are welcome for one book or many!



**MEDITATION GROUP**

**“Our body talks to us in Feelings and Sensations. Meditation Practice is taking time out to listen.”**

The UU Meditation group meets on Zoom at 9:30 every Saturday morning. If anyone is interested in joining the group you can tune in from any location.

Email Nancy Fields with questions:

[nfields42@gmail.com](mailto:nfields42@gmail.com)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://zoom.us/j/93717313258?](https://zoom.us/j/93717313258?pwd=OUZDbzdjSzZoa2dybGo4cWp4dnNPUT09)

[pwd=OUZDbzdjSzZoa2dybGo4cWp4dnNPUT09](https://zoom.us/j/93717313258?pwd=OUZDbzdjSzZoa2dybGo4cWp4dnNPUT09)

Meeting ID: 937 1731 3258

Passcode: 040260