



Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Bennington



December 2024 UU Bennington e-Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter is made possible by submissions from our UUFB community and beyond.

Deadline for submission of content for the January 2025 edition is noon on December 29. Please send all submissions to uubenningtonnews@gmail.com.

If I don't hear from you, you may hear from me!

Sue Andrews

Our Mission

The mission of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bennington is to create and nurture a spiritual, ethical and welcoming community which celebrates personal growth, diversity of beliefs, and freedom of expression.

From Rev. Barbara's Balcony

A wish for the holiday season and the coming year for everyone whose heart feels heavy, expressed in the words of the Irish poet John O'Donohue's poem Blessing. (A 'currach' is a small traditional Irish boat, made with a frame covered by animal skins or canvas)

**On the day when
the weight deadens
on your shoulders
and you stumble,
may the clay dance
to balance you.
And when your eyes
freeze behind
the grey window
and the ghost of loss
gets in to you,
may a flock of colours,
indigo, red, green,
and azure blue
come to awaken in you
a meadow of delight.**

**When the canvas frays
in the currach of thought
and a stain of ocean
blackens beneath you,
may there come across the waters
a path of yellow moonlight
to bring you safely home.**

**May the nourishment of the earth be yours,
may the clarity of light be yours,
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.
And so may a slow
wind work these words
of love around you,
an invisible cloak
to mind your life.**

**May we each find the colors, the moonlight, the clarity,
and the cloak of protection that we need.**

**Shalom and Salaam,
Rev. Barbara**

Do you have photos to share for upcoming Newsletters or social media? We would love to share them. The file size must be less than 5000 KB.

[Click Here to Send Your UU Bennington Photos!](#)

December Sunday Worship Schedule

December 1 "Prestidigitation" Steve Gillette

December 8 "Benn Playback Theater - Improv" Janet Groom & Friends

December 15 Holiday Brunch Party 10 AM

December 22 Rev. Barbara Threet

December 29 Life in Mongolia student from Mongolia) Oyun (exchange

December Special Collection

UU Service Committee

During the month of December, we invite you to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC). This is an annual tradition at UUFB also known as the Guest at Your Table. With a gift of \$40 or more you can become a member of UUSC.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is a nonprofit, nonsectarian organization advancing human rights together with an international community of grassroots partners and advocates. UUSC believes that everyone has a right to dignity, justice, and a sustainable livelihood in the place they call home. When violence, climate change, natural disaster, economic

injustice, or political instability threaten this right, we also believe that everyone has a right to seek asylum, safety, or economic stability elsewhere. Striving to center the voices of people most affected by injustice, UUSC creates eye-to-eye relationships with frontline grassroots movements across the world that support marginalized communities in determining their steps for the future.

Since it began in 1975, the Guest at Your Table program has introduced generations of Unitarian Universalists to the grassroots partners working for justice around the world supported by donations to UUSC. This church year, we are celebrating Guest at Your Table's 50th anniversary with the theme "Expanding the Welcome Table." Since UUSC works in more than 20 countries, with over 50 grassroots partners, there are thousands of individuals involved in and who benefit from the work that our members make possible. For more information on the inspiring work of UUSC: <https://www.uusc.org/initiatives/>

News from the Caring Committee

Our Fellowship is a caring community and we want to be there for each other through the ups and downs of life. The Caring Committee has been offering help to our members and friends through the years. We've provided meals, rides, phone calls or visits, birthday greetings and help with chores. For example daily phone calls to one of our members on Hospice was something she really appreciated. We've also offered support to members dealing with illness in the family. If you are dealing with whatever life throws at you and would like some help, please reach out to Lisa LeMay (l.lemay4@yahoo.com or 802 578 8913) or Silvia Dauenheimer (dauen60@gmail.com or 518 677 8744). At our December services we will have Holiday cards available to anyone who would like to send a greeting to members or friends we haven't seen in a while so we can keep in touch.

Membership Committee Update

Work has started on the assignment of TASKS for each Sunday. Included here is the grid for December - January. It is my hope that the posted monthly version will include the board member on duty for each service, the musical responsibilities, and also who is our speaker. Wouldn't this be an encouraging heads-up?

As the committee prepares the February- June schedule, PLEASE contact me (joandornhoefer@gmail.com) to volunteer which chore and which Sunday you would be willing to help.

REMEMBER: the greeter & the opener start as a team at 9:20. Directions are posted in the kitchen and most importantly, one of you brings the half& half for coffee. Closers need to ensure that all the trash is taken home, the dishwasher is actually running, and our place is in top shape.

Items needing to be purchased is now my duty. The list of needs will continue to be posted on the side of the refrigerator. Paper towels are in the supply area shelves (open the door near the dishwasher), tissues are under the right-hand sink cabinet.

Submitted by Joan Dornhoefer

UUFBSUNDAY TASKS GRID

GREET OPEN & CLOSE

2024

December 1

Julie M and Gael

Cindy Murray & Wendy

December 8th

Stephanie & Tordis

Linda & Chuck

December 15th

HOLIDAY BRUNCH TEAM

December 22nd

Karen & Joan

Tim & Julie

December 29th

Fronia & Joan

Lisa & John

2025

January 5th

MaryEllen

Naomi & Joan

January 12th

Stephanie & Suzanne

Tim & Julie

January 19th

Bill and Sue

Jim & Sherri

January 26th

Julie M & Gael

Ursula & Joan

Scam Alert

Dear UUFB members and friends,

Recently several members of UUFB report getting email requests that claim to be from me 'Rev. Threet' but are actually a scam. They include a 747 area code number number (which is NOT mine), they are asking the recipient to purchase emergency gift cards 'for cancer patients', and they promise that somehow you'll be repaid later. THESE ARE A SCAM! I will never request that anyone purchase gift cards in this way. I use only one email address, which you are all familiar with, and

the only phone number I have is the one in our directory. Please ignore any such requests: they are NOT legitimate! Whatever gift cards are offered just enrich the scammer.

Unfortunately, anyone can set up an account using anyone else's name and it's almost impossible to stop this from happening. Please do not share the information in our Directory with anyone other than our own UUFB community, since unauthorized access to an organization's mailing list allows scammers to set up schemes such as this. Posing as a clergy person in an attempt to scam that clergy's congregation is, sadly, all too common. Don't fall for it!

Rev. Barbara



Citing the Koran "We need to know one another", stressed Wajih Miri, (right side of couch) as the native of Tunisia and a Muslim, spoke Saturday, Nov. 23 at the UUFB in a series of informal lectures addressing the need for unity despite national or cultural differences. Now an American citizen and a resident of North Bennington, he told the gathered group that the Koran and Bible share basic principles, such as peace, family forgiveness and love. Locally, he has been active in movements seeking peace for Palestinians. Not an official spokesman but an ardent public citizen, he said he is speaking where possible to groups to contribute to the "collective conscience" of all who will listen. (Submitted by Bruce Squiers)

Go the Extra Mile

To keep ourselves and each other as safe as possible during this season of heightened infections, please take recommended precautions: getting vaccines, keeping hands washed, staying home when you have any symptoms or when you may have been exposed to an infected person, using masks, testing, and isolating, following the CDC protocols. This congregation has a generally older, at-risk population who are nonetheless quite active in the community and travel all over -- and we want to stay active! So let's take reasonable precautions. Remember that our services, meetings and classes are accessible online either regularly or when requested.

Hybrid Services

Having our services on Zoom during the COVID pandemic was a community-saving innovation. When we were able to have in-person services, we expanded who we could serve by having a Zoom component to accommodate people who could not come to the meetinghouse. All of this technology was planned, organized and operated by a small team of members led by Steve Gillette. This team has put in many hours making sure that services were available online. At one time, attendance online averaged about 6; now attendance has diminished to one or none. As a result, the tech team are proposing to end hybrid services at the end of the year. If anyone needs to stay home and would like to attend a service by Zoom, they can request an online link a few days ahead by contacting Steve. Services will continue to be recorded and put on our website as they are currently. More details will follow later. If you'd like to add to the discussion about this change, please contact Sheila Mullineaux.

Troubling Concerns About Voter Suppression

I came across this video today and am amazed at the story. Greg Palast is a recognized journalist with many good credits. It's very disturbing to learn how vicious the voter suppression has been. And, I believe the number of disenfranchised voters probably do account for the disappointing results of the recent election.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_XdtAQXnGE

Submitted by Steve Gillette

Holiday Party

This year's Holiday Potluck will be held on December 15, 2024 at 10 AM at the Meetinghouse in lieu of our regularly scheduled service. Get out your holiday outfits, dust off your cookbook to find a yummy dish to share, and join us for brunch, fun, and games.



Friday coffee group deep in discussion

December Birthdays

Matthew Schultz December 8

Charlie Rossiter December 11

Bill Davis December 12

Suzanne Kirkpatrick December 16

Chuck Putney December 19

Please let us know when your birthday is - submit to kathyduhon2@gmail.com.

Thanks, UUFB Caring Committee.

Services Are Recorded

Recent Sunday readings and talks are available as audio recordings. A link is provided on the Sunday Service section of our website, www.uubenington.org

Helpful Links & Community Information

If you see something below you think might be helpful to someone you know, share this newsletter with them - you can also share the external website link, too! Thank you for helping out your community by sharing resources they might find beneficial!

Are you a Young Professional seeking other YPs in the southern Vermont Community? Click here to connect via Shires Young Professionals!

New to Vermont? Want to help welcome newcomers to the Green

Mountain State? Check out the Vermont Welcome Wagon Project!

Click Here for a List of Bennington County Resources!

Click Here to Discover Bennington County Food Resources!

Learn More about the UU Faith - Visit the Unitarian Universalist Association!



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