

UNITARIAN CHURCH OF BARNSTABLE A UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

CHALICE

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH OF BARNSTABLE DEDICATED
TO EDUCATING, INFORMING, AND INSPIRING OUR COMMUNITY.

Volume 36 Issue 2 | February 2026

Mission Statement of the Unitarian Church of Barnstable

A welcoming congregation of and for all ages.
Working for justice and compassion in our world.
Encouraging spiritual journeys and thoughtful dialogue.

Minister: The Rev. Dr. Kristen L. Harper
Office Administrator: Chandra Bibeault
Church Office 508-362-6381

Open: Tuesday - Friday 9AM to 1PM

E-mail: ucb@barnstableuu.org

Website: www.barnstableuu.org

Minister's Contact Information minister@barnstableuu.org

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9AM to 1PM | Monday - Day Off

Contact the office for appointments outside regular hours.

Director of Children & Youth Ministry Dawn MacKechnie | DCYM@barnstableuu.org



Religious Services | Sundays 10:30AM

- February 1st "God Is Not So Little"
Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper
- February 8th Multigenerational Love Service.
Dawn MacKechnie and CYM
- February 15th "Loved for Who You Are"
Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper
- February 22nd "We Are All Mystics"
Rev. Cari Keith

One of the great gifts and mysteries of life is the human capacity for awe and reverence and curiosity. Many of us can remember being halted by the brilliance of a night sky; or the sudden wondering about who we, are or where we are going. Sometimes it is the unexpected question about the presence of God, spirit, inner light, angel guidance, or the essence of human nature. We all have a story to tell about the way we have felt an inner voice or act of nature or a dream or the surprise call that seems to be exactly what we needed at the time. In many ways, regardless of our religious affiliation or lack of such affiliation, we are all touched by the mysteries of life and we all participate in the mystic/pilgrim life in our intentional search for truth, compassion, and fullness of being. Come celebrate the gift of spiritual mystery and the ways it touches our lives.



Kristen's Korner

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This past month two opportunities presented themselves to me which called me to evaluate my morals and values. Usually I keep my outside activities to myself unless I feel others can or would want to join me. However, both opportunities showed me where I am in my spiritual development—both the strengths and weaknesses. They also demonstrated the lengths I will go to, at least at the present, to work for justice and equity.

The first was that I learned the Rev. Ashley Horan, Vice President for Programs and Ministries at the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), had sent out a call to all Unitarian Universalist ministers to go to Minneapolis, Minnesota, to be witnesses to the non-violent protest occurring in the city. Rev. Horan is the former Executive Director of the Minnesota UU Justice Alliance and still lives in Minneapolis with her family, and was inviting UU ministers on behalf of local immigrant organizers connected with the Black Lives Matter Movement there. I heard of this request through local UU ministers, a couple of whom are going.

For years I have proudly shared that Unitarians had the largest percentage of ministers answer the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call to come and march with the Civil Rights leaders in Selma, Alabama. The Rev. James Reeb, who was serving in Boston, was murdered during that march as was Viola Luizzo, a lay Unitarian from Detroit, Michigan.

So I asked myself to go. And, myself said "I don't want to." It wasn't that I had to preach the following weekend because I didn't and even if I did the demonstration was on Friday and I could have flown back on Saturday morning. It wasn't just that I hate to fly, which I do, and have not been on a plane in more years than I can count. It wasn't that it was supposed to be 15 degrees below zero in Minneapolis, although that wasn't a selling point. And, although it crossed my mind, I am not that afraid of what will happen to me. Yes the idea of being gassed or hit with a stray "non-lethal" projectile concerns me. Yes, I worry about being a Black woman in the midst of such hate and vitriol towards the Somali community in Minneapolis. Yes, I don't know the city and don't know if I'd have back-up—but the fear is not what stopped me.

I decided not to answer the call because I am tired. I have been holding my fear, anxiety, anger, fury, disappointment, and feelings of betrayal by my neighbors and fellow citizens for a long time now, as have you all. And, I have been trying to hold your fear, anger, fury, disappointment, and feelings of betrayal too. If I am going to continue to work locally to support the work of justice and love here on the Cape, I need to conserve what energy I have left for that. I do not know if this will be a pivotal moment in the fight for our freedom, our lives, but I hope so and I will be sorry to have missed it.

Kristen's Korner continued...



The second opportunity that came my way was when Representative Stephen Xiarhos sent me an email saying he had submitted my name for recognition at the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus's Black Excellence on the Hill celebration. This annual event honors Black leaders who have made a lasting and meaningful impact across the Commonwealth.

Representative Xiarhos, for those who do not know him, is the representative from the 5th Barnstable District and sponsored a bill that would require local law enforcement to work with ICE to detain and deport migrants. He has consistently aligned himself with constituents who praise the Trump administration's abhorrent tactics and refuses to even call his supporters to civil and compassionate discourse. He also tries to create a narrative of support for marginalized people while doing very little if anything to actually support them. I realized I would just be a photo opportunity on his social media pages.

I just couldn't accept it. I explained to Rep. Xiahros about my belief in the inherent worth, dignity and divinity of every person, that I would not be seen as endorsing his views, and that I align myself with love and not hate. He didn't understand and I wasn't surprised about that.

To be completely honest, I had a moments hesitation before declining the honor. To be in the company of "Black Excellence," was enticing. In some ways it fulfills the wish of a little Black girl, raised by white people, but who wanted to be seen and appreciated as a Black person. But, as I told Rep. Xiahros, "I do what I do not for awards or recognition. I use the gifts I have to ensure that all people know they have worth and dignity."

It is not always easy to follow your morals and values. Sometimes we just have to protect ourselves so we can be present for others when they need us—I might have made a different choice about Minneapolis if I didn't feel so soul tired. And, sometimes we have to put our foot down and say, "I will not align myself with hate."

In the coming months and most likely years, we will be faced with many choices which call on us to access what we believe, what our truest values are. When we can follow what we profess as Unitarian Universalists, let us do so. When we feel drained and don't have the bandwidth to follow our morals, let the value of honoring your inherent worth, dignity and divinity be centered—so that the next time we are called to show up, we have the strength and love to do so.

See you in church!

Rev. Dr. Kristen L. Harper



UNITARIAN CHURCH OF BARNSTABLE CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM

Highlights from January programming

This January, our children and youth spent the month exploring a big UU idea through some very small (and very strange!) things: **shapes**. Together, we wondered what boxes, donuts, and even Möbius strips might teach us about hidden connections and looking beyond the surface.



Through hands-on building, counting, drawing, and playful experimentation, the children learned that things that look very different can share something deep in common—and that sometimes the most surprising truths are the ones we discover when we slow down and look more closely.

These explorations invited curiosity, creativity, and bold questioning, all hallmarks of our Unitarian Universalist faith and our free and responsible search for meaning. Although a winter snowstorm kept us from our final lesson on fractals, the spirit of that exploration stayed with us: the idea that mystery exists within mystery, and that wonder doesn't disappear just because we don't get to the last page of the story. It was a month full of questions, laughter, and "aha!" moments—and a reminder that embracing curiosity is a spiritual practice we can begin at any age.

A special thank you to Ryan Smee, who organized, wrote, and led our January children and youth program. Ryan brought creativity, curiosity, and care to each week, inviting our kids to explore big ideas through hands-on learning, playful experimentation, and thoughtful reflection. His ability to weave math, imagination, and Unitarian Universalist values together made this month's program both meaningful and memorable. We are deeply grateful for the time, energy, and heart he shared with our community.



Multigenerational Service on Love

February 8th

Dawn MacKechnie and Jen Shattuck will be leading the service and welcome any participation from the children and youth to help tell a story with props. We will be **Meeting at 10am that morning to rehearse.**

COME PLAY!

GAME DAY COFFEE HOUR FOR EVERYONE!

February 8th at coffee hour The Children and Youth Program Team will provide lunch food and the games. Hope you will stay for some lunch and play!



Youth Group February Donation Drive

Throughout the month of February, our youth group will be hosting a donation drive in support of *YouthStreetReach*, a program that brings young people together to learn about and serve our unhoused community members. At the end of the month, our youth will offer a shared meal and distribute donations as an act of care and connection. To support this effort, we are collecting monetary donations to purchase gift cards, along with essential items, including toiletries, sunscreen, new underwear (especially men's boxer briefs), baseball caps, and socks. A donation bin is located in the hall under the Children and Youth table. We will also be collecting food donations for the breakfast our youth will serve on February 28. A list of needed items will be available mid-February, and a sign-up sheet can be found in the hall if you would like to participate. Thank you for supporting our youth as they put their values into action.



What does it mean to be a member of our church?

Becoming a member is a simple process:

- Attend a Path to Membership Class
- Make a financial commitment of record; and
- Sign the Membership Book.

However, being a member is a bit more complicated. It requires a commitment to the community: a commitment of your time; a commitment of money, no matter how great or small an amount; and a commitment of your gifts, be they dusting the lamps in the sanctuary; baking scones; ushering, serving coffee or chairing the Governing Board. Sharing your time and gifts is what weaves our community together and makes us who we are.

If you are interested in learning more about membership, we encourage you to attend the upcoming Path to Membership class to be held on Sunday, February 15th, after church. The class generally lasts an hour and a light lunch will be served. If you plan to attend, please email Carol Ewing, carol.m.ewing@gmail.com, or call the church office, 508-362-6381.



a film by Peter C. Downey



Ecosophia

Ecological Wisdom



WHAT: a film/discussion to explore the interrelationship between energy, the economy, population, the limits to growth and climate change. What's needed is as much a spiritual revolution as a physical one. **WHEN:** Saturday, February 28, from 2:00- 4:00 pm **WHERE:** Unitarian Church of Barnstable, 3330 Route 6A, Barnstable



Justice For All/Green Sanctuary by Susan Starkey

On MLK Day, January 19, 2026, I was humbled and encouraged to hear the keynote speaker Rev Liz Walker, who spoke at the Nauset Interfaith Association's annual MLK Breakfast. Noting the dangerous time we are living in, she asks us to "do more" and specifically to:

- Pray without Ceasing. To decolonize our imagination, and to help each of us when we are fearful ; prayer helps us to choose to listen to the Divine and follow its guidance
- Do not grow weary in doing good work

Sounds simple enough. Yes, here at UCB and in our Justice For All efforts, we find ourselves asking: What IS the good work we are called to do? One answer, no matter which Justice issue you are working on, is to use your voice and your relationship with others to take a stand

You might wonder how effective signing online campaigns, writing emails, sending letters or postcards, and/or making phone calls matter. Elder Climate Action reviewed a Cornell student survey done in 2025. Their results conclude that digital action is a cost-effective form of outreach and the simplest form of action for us to take. So let us step up our actions in the new year, starting with the easy part- contact your Representatives and use your voice and your pen. Many of us are doing this regarding the overreach of ICE and this is critically important.

Additionally, given the criticality of protecting our Environment for our children, grandchildren, future generations, and all of the "more than human" species we have harmed, one way to use your voice is to sign up with Climate Action Now, a phone app that each of us can use daily to take positive action. Here is their Manifesto:

We are Climate Action Now. And we're in a fight for our lives.

For our planet. For all of us. All races. All colors. All creeds.

Political and apolitical.

Left, right or center.

There's room in this tent.

For everyone. Together, we embrace our obligation.

Individually and collectively.

To use the power in our hands, to take a thousand actions.

That add up. And makes a difference.

We can do this. We will do this.

We are Climate Action Now.

Please sign up with Climate Action Now and take actions daily. We can do this!

COFFEE HOUR AND KITCHEN NEWS

Kitchen: UCB hasn't had a Kitchen Committee for a number of years; as I'm in the kitchen fairly often I have noticed quite a few used items being 'dropped off'; pots, pans, platters, serving utensils, etc. The kitchen is becoming too crowded; a couple of cupboards are so full that they won't close. After speaking with Kristen, I'm asking to have no further items 'donated' to the kitchen, this includes paper plates/cups/foam cups, plastic ware, pots, pans, serving platters, etc. In the future, if there is a need for any of the above items, I will send out a notice. Within the next couple weeks I will place a few donated items on a cart in Warren Hall, free for the taking. If the items remain, off to the transfer station they go. I'm happy to have someone help me with this endeavor

(keeping the kitchen organized and tidy).

Coffee Hour: Thank you to those who regularly sign up for Coffee Hour. Please remember the goal of signing up is to eventually take a Sunday as the Head Host. I'm more than happy to assist you to become acquainted with hosting, it's not hard, and everyone loves you more for this small task. If you are new to Coffee Hour host, please arrive at 09:45am.

All preparations are done before Service. After Service, the hosts keep the cream container filled and refills any snacks as needed. Once Coffee Hour winds down, the hosts begin loading the dishwasher, and puts things away. There's a one page manual for reference as well. Hosts are typically out the door by 12:30. I would love to speak with you more about

Coffee Hour; please call/text/email me: Thank you.

Patty Kenyon | cell: 774-313-8555 | prkenyon@comcast.net



COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM

We received some lovely thank you cards from our Adopt-a-Family recipients at the Homeless Prevention Council. They are posted on the bulletin board in the vestibule. During the month of February, we are asking you to support our youth group as they participate in Youth StreetReach. Whether you contribute clothing and toiletry items, breakfast foods, or money, your donations will be much appreciated.

Questions? Contact Gayle Leaversuch, Tina Payeur, or Sally Tarbell. Thanks to all!

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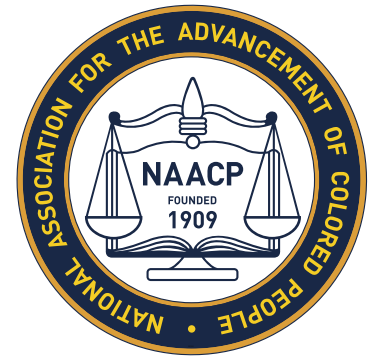
Disability Awareness and Accessibility Team

Thanks to the efforts of Pat Anderson, Parish Council has created a Disability and Awareness Team. This ad-hoc team supports UCB's long-term commitment to the needs and issues of our members and friends who need accommodation.

This Team will develop and prioritize recommended steps for review and implementation. Initial steps will include collecting and publishing UCB accomplishments and developing strategies to raise awareness about the needs and issues of people who need accommodation among our leaders, members, and friends. Please contact Pat Anderson if you would like to help. You can email Pat at andersonpla@snet.net



SPLIT PLATE



Parish Council chose NAACP Cape Cod as the January and February Split Plate recipient. The mission of the Cape Cod Chapter of the NAACP is to end racial discrimination and segregation in all aspects of life.

The Cape Cod Branch is an active local chapter focused on civil rights, equity, and inclusion. Led by President Lynne Rhodes, they work on community engagement, voter registration, addressing local incidents, and partnering with other local groups. You can find the Branch on [Facebook](#) or e-mail capecodbrancenaacp@gmail.com.

Caring *Connections*

Would you like the Care Team to contact a member or have an idea? Our email is: caring-connections@barnstableuu.org or leave us a note in the suggestion box.

We are available to help with a meal, visits, run an errand, send a card and lend a helping hand.

If there is a member of the Congregation that you miss seeing, has had a hospitalization, illness, birthday or simply want to say Hi to? We have a full basket of cards to share on our table in Warren Hall. We will mail it for you if you are unsure of their address.

Bring Cheer to a fellow congregant! We will deliver donated flowers from Sunday Service. Spread the love.

Thank you, Meredith Censullo, Connie Hinds, Susie Littlefield, Nancy Rizzio and Carol Wall.



RESCHEDULED

UCB'S PEBBLE COMMUNION
SUNDAY, MARCH 22nd

**All are invited to participate in
UCB's Pebble Communion on MARCH 22nd**

We are inviting anyone who has a special pebble they would like to add to the community pebbles that we use for our joys and sorrows every Sunday to bring it with you on the **22nd**. This is a special ceremony where we will share with one another briefly why we have brought it to be included in our community bowl of pebbles.

Church Officers and Committees

GOVERNING BOARD

Dan Ewing, Treasurer ex-officio voting member
Owen Fletcher
Kim Hanggi, Clerk
Rob MacNamee
Ralph Marotti
Michael Medeiros, Co-Chair
Nancy Risio, Co-Chair

Schoolhouse Steering Committee

Janet Abbot, UCB FOSH Liaison
John Beach
Polly Brazelton
Crystal Gips, Chair
Scott Kenyon
Mark Nichols
Nancy Risio, Governing Board Rep
Lisa Standish

STANDING COMMITTEES

Finance, Capital Projects, and Investments
Long-Range Planning Committee
Nominating Committee
Personnel Committee
Building and Operations Committee

Submitting Material

Please email submissions to:

chalice_ed@barnstableuu.org

If you do not have access to email, please give your submission to the office manager.

MINISTER Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper

Small Group Ministry: Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper
Committee on Ministry: Allyson Bizer Knox

PARISH COUNCIL

Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper
Dawn MacKechnie, Dir. Children & Youth Ministries
Elaine Brennan
Jo Anne Miller Buntich, Coordinator
Carol Ewing
Betsy Johnson
Helen Matusow-Ayres
Nancy Risio, Governing Board Liaison

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES, GROUPS, & TEAMS

Barnstable Interfaith Council: Janet Abbott

Communications:

Website & YouTube: Chris Hammond

Chalice: Sarah Beal-Fletcher

Facebook: Jo Anne Miller Buntich, Susan Starkey, Sarah Beal-Fletcher

Flowers: Kathy Bryan

Hospitality: Patty Kenyon

Justice for All: Rev. Dr. Kristen Harper

Library: Carolyn Barnes

Membership: Carol Ewing

Music: James Rosenblum, Music Director

Outreach: Gayle Leaversuch

St. Joseph's House: Ruth Owen

WomanSpirit: Karen Birely

Worship: Vicki Goldsmith

CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM TEAM

Dawn MacKechnie, Director of Children & Youth Ministries

Jen Shattuck, Assistant DCYM

Sharon Beard

Mary-Jane Beach

Christine Bockmann

Marcella Curry

Allyson Knox

Michael Medeiros

Ryan Smee

Sarah Secules Smee

**Deadline for the March
Chalice is February 24th.**

