



# THE TOUCHSTONE

*A monthly publication of the Unitarian Church of Hinsdale*

March 2021 | Monthly Newsletter

## Update from the BOT President Bob Daniel Wayman

### Spring Is Breaking Out At UCH

It feels like Spring has truly sprung! Warm weather and good news on vaccines have us excited about the way forward. The Church also has great news to share. Thanks to your continuing generosity income is higher than budgeted and the staff has managed expenses better than was budgeted. Services continue to be wonderful and we are beginning planning for the spring pledge drive and the 2021-22 church year budget.

With spring feelings of renewal and growth, the board has decided to recognize Rev. Pam Rumancik's commitment and contributions this year. Last year, Pam agreed to stay on and minister to the church through a critical and challenging year. In addition, she agreed to do so at a part-time rate which supported our reduced pandemic-driven budget. Despite that, it has been clear that Pam provided a full-time ministry this year. In addition, she has overseen the many critical changes in ministry and organization necessitated by the pandemic. In recognition of these efforts the board of trustees has decided to use our strong financial position, and within our bylaws discretion, to raise her compensation for the second half of the year to a full-time rate.

In the spirit of leaping forward into the new year and renewing our church for the coming decade, the board has discussed a vision of where we would like to be in five years. These discussions serve as preparation for the current budgeting and pledge cycle. With these thoughts in mind and after discussion with Pam, we agreed to renew her full-time contract going forward. We have all been through a great deal together over the last several years. We are excited about moving forward with this strong foundation in place.



## Deepening Connections



### A New Normal

It's been a year since I wrote to the board with my intention to take a year off from ministry and end my time with UCH. It was not a decision lightly made. Coming out of five continuous years of loss and personal family

challenges, I was emotionally, spiritually and even physically spent. A place where I not only couldn't see a path forward but was even doubtful one existed. After communicating my intent, I began to think about what that meant for the remainder of my time at the church.

And then... Covid. The pandemic set the entire terrain in motion with none of us knowing what might come next. I worked with church leadership to create safe moorings for the congregation and try to figure out

country I tried to reinvent worship and church participation through the lens of zoom. An intriguing challenge drew me forward – how do we identify the essence of church so that we could support and forward its resilient center?

As we turned the corner on the year, I realized that I was excited about continuing the work that we'd begun during this pandemic year and starting to feel regret that I wouldn't be around to see it through. New discussions began with your board of trustees when they asked if they should be seeking an interim minister this year. I am not in the same place that I was last January, despite an incredibly weird pandemic year. It surprises me as much as it does anyone.

We have mutually decided to maintain our relationship in ministry together. Not maintaining the status quo, but creating a dynamic, conversational, missional focus with explicit structure for feedback and support. An intentional relationship which allows us to stay clear and up to date on what is going on with all involved.

how to do church in an unrecognizable landscape. Everything got turned on its head. In good conversations with the board, I agreed to stay on at 2/3 time for an additional year, so UCH didn't have to navigate the challenges of transition in the midst of this time. Karen and I continued our move to the country and bought a house just outside Woodstock. We have three acres, lots of trees, and that room to breathe that I had been longing for.

They say the best way to make God laugh is to make plans. As the year passed, with all of its challenging peaks and valleys, I did find some space to breathe. Space to assess, to reflect, and to look forward with new eyes. Like every other minister in the

I find myself deeply grateful for this opportunity. Grateful to be in an organization which listens and leads with heart. Grateful for leadership which is willing to take new information and come up with different strategies. Grateful for the kindness and compassion that has flowed from members of this church.

None of us still know what the future will look like or what a 'new normal' will bring. What I am sure of is that we have the commitment, tools and skill set to adjust and move forward into whatever that future brings with conscious care, with respect, and with love as our guide.

## Director of Programs News



### Pam Fodor

Our children have put away their toolboxes but will continue to work toward building a better world. It is time for something new! They will soon be embarking on a Faithful Journey. I can't wait to see where we will go!!

Because ours is a creedless faith, defining what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist can be challenging. Our adults and youth often welcome such a challenge — indeed, a questioning spirit is part of our faith. However, our children need to learn who Unitarian Universalists are, what we believe, and how we live in faith. Faithful Journeys equips them with language and experiences to answer these questions and help them develop a strong Unitarian Universalist identity.

Participants embark on a pilgrimage of faith, exploring how Unitarian Universalism translates into life choices and everyday actions. In each session, they hear historic or contemporary examples of Unitarian Universalist faith in action. Stories about real people model how participants can activate their own personal agency — their capacity to act faithfully as Unitarian Universalists — in their own lives, and children have regular opportunities to share and affirm their own stories of faithful action. Through sessions structured around the Unitarian Universalist Principles, Faithful Journeys demonstrates that our Principles are not a dogma but a credo that individuals can affirm with many kinds of action. Over the course of the program, children discover a unity of faith in the many different ways Unitarian Universalists, including themselves, can act on our beliefs.

Faithful Journeys will:

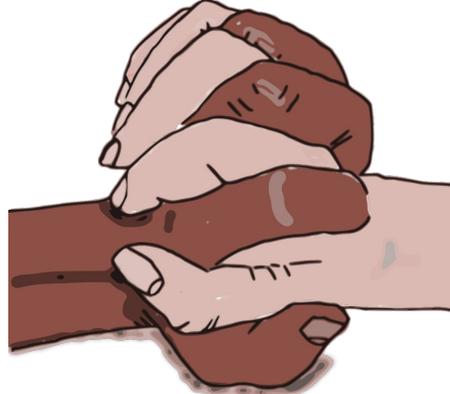
- Strengthen participants' Unitarian Universalist identity through exploration of people from our faith heritage and our contemporary communities whose actions have expressed their faith and our Principles and promoted positive change
- Help participants recognize and develop their capacity to be agents for positive change in the world
- Highlight ways the small and large choices we make represent our personal faith and beliefs
- Teach participants to understand our Unitarian Universalist Principles and apply them to faithful actions in their own lives
- Promote understanding of, and sense of responsibility for, the world's interconnectedness, and reinforce cooperation, nonviolence, and balance as necessary for our collective moral, ethical, and spiritual health

## Uncomfortable Conversations with the UCH Racial Equity Team

Have you felt that you might want to increase your understanding of racial issues but don't know where to start? You may be interested in attending Uncomfortable Conversations with the Racial Equity Team. These monthly conversations last about an hour and a half and are currently being held virtually on the third Tuesday of the month, starting at 7:00 p.m. After a brief chalice lighting and check-in, we introduce a short video, followed by a discussion. We then open up the conversation to participants' concerns: perhaps an example of race or diversity in the news, or a comment made by a friend or relative where race was alluded to or where a difference was denigrated. The meeting ends with announcements of upcoming events related to

prison reform, policing issues, wealth disparities, educational equity or other current social justice issues.

At the January meeting, we watched a video called *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man, Episode 1*. (You can watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8jUA7JBkF4>.) In this video, Emmanuel Acho, former linebacker for the Philadelphia Eagles, discusses topics and questions sent to him by white people, such as riots, white privilege, the N-word, and crime, among others. He also explains why it's so important to have uncomfortable conversations about race. As he says in his book *Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man*, "Getting uncomfortable is the whole idea. Everything great is birthed through discomfort."



As people who identify as white, we know we need to take responsibility to learn about this issue from the people most affected by it. Therefore, we are reading books by Black authors and watching videos by people who are Black, Indigenous or People of Color. We aren't just talking about race, either. We can have uncomfortable conversations about wealth, gender identity, immigration, and politics, too!

At these meetings, you'll learn about the books your fellow church members are reading, the podcasts we're listening to and the videos we're watching. A few of the resources discussed in January:

- Trevor Noah's video commenting on the killing of Ahmaud Arbery, protests and the social contract: <https://www.facebook.com/TrevorNoah/videos/271546193965209>
- *All In: The Fight for Democracy*, a documentary on voter suppression (available on Amazon);
- Books including *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson, *How to be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi, and *The Meritocracy Trap: How America's Foundational Myth Feeds Inequality, Dismantles the Middle Class, and Devours the Elite* by Daniel Markovits.

We believe that silence equals complicity. Many people want to speak up, but don't necessarily know-how. This group offers a "brave space" where we can practice with each other how to respond to problematic comments such as microaggressions, as well as learn about actions we can take to make the world more fair in our local communities. As Acho says, "I believe the majority of white Americans are now ready to help America become the land it dreamed for itself." Be a part of the solution!

See you on February 16, and other third Tuesdays at 7 p.m. The Zoom link to join the conversations is [here](#) and you can also find it in News & Notes. (Meeting ID: 981 4074 2710 and Passcode: 589921.)

## Animal Ministry

### Recipe of the Month

Animal Ministry is pleased to provide a different recipe free of animal products every month for you to try! Have a suggestion for your favorite plant-based recipe?

Send non-copyrighted website links to [UCHAnimalMinistry@gmail.com](mailto:UCHAnimalMinistry@gmail.com)

This recipe of the month is submitted by Gene S.

<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/89195/zucchini-and-potato-bake/>

Gene discovered this recipe in his swinging bachelor days, and it quickly became a family favorite that's requested every Thanksgiving. All the vegetables can cost \$5 or less, prep is very quick and easy, it's good for a side or a main dish, and it reheats as good as new. This recipe proves you don't have to sacrifice taste for convenience!



Animal Ministry is also collecting photos of church members with their companion animals to include on our section of the church's website. Please submit to the above email!

March 20 is National Meatout Day. More information is available here: <http://meatout.org> On the site you can find recipes and coupons, take the Meatout Day pledge, and win prizes! Meat replacements are widely available, and not just at specialty stores, but at your local Aldi or Target too! You can find locations to get great burgers and more at <https://www.impossiblefoods.com/locations/> and <https://www.beyondmeat.com/where-to-find> or even get them shipped to you directly.

## Soul Work - 2021

Soul work encompasses a group of offerings that allow our community to ponder, wrestle, discuss and grow. This

spring continues many of our year long programs. The small group ministry folks have been meeting faithfully to practice deep listening and reflect on monthly topics, the meditation group gathers every Monday for contemplation of a Dharma talk and time to breathe, Linda Karlen offers forest walks and Len Edgin and Gene Schafer are leading a Spirit in Practice group which is exploring a wide range of practices to try on and see what might fit.

Check out the [Soul Work page](#) in our website to see what's available and join something that calls to you. The upcoming dates for Forest Walks are: **March 28, April 25, May 16**

**Feel free to contact [Rev Pam](#) for more information or to offer your own practice to the congregation.**

## March Worship

### **March 7: Commitments of the Heart**

What does this time require of us and how can we keep ourselves nourished while we lean into our most sacred commitments as individuals and in community? Join Rev. Allison Farnum as she explores these questions from the lens of her work as UU Prison Ministry of IL.

Rev. Allison Farnum is the Director and Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Prison Ministry of Illinois.

March 14: Pi Day - Grab a Slice!

Welcome New Members and celebrate the wonders of pi. ~Rev Pam

### **March 14: What Makes Our (Church) Garden Grow?**

This church is really an amazing place - one of the best-kept secrets around! Let's count our blessings and figure out how to shine the light of love and care that lives at UCH out into a wanting world. ~Rev Pam

### **March 14: Pi Day - Grab a Slice!**

Love doesn't divide, it multiplies. We live in a world of equations where anything we see can be translated into a mathematical equation. In a time when trust in science is being eroded in some circles, can we find a language that helps us communicate across the chasm? ~Rev Pam

### **March 28: Four Questions that Matter**

Based on Ira Byock's book, *The Four Questions That Matter Most*, Elizabeth will talk about issues of mortality and legacy, questions that lean into Unitarian Universalism. How do we make meaning? How do we share that meaning with others? How can we stay focused and grounded during this time of pandemic? ~Rev Elizabeth Harding

**Rev. Elizabeth Harding** graduated from Meadville Lombard and the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago. Elizabeth is an affiliated community minister with Second Unitarian Church of Chicago. She has worked as a hospital chaplain, parish minister, hospice chaplain and bereavement counselor. Elizabeth is married to Kevin and together they have Lucas, Simon and Adam the fish. Elizabeth is currently staying at home with their boys due to the pandemic and is available for consultations about end-of-life issues.

### **Follow Up - Rev Harding will hold a Q and A session on Tuesday March 30 @ 6:30pm.**

Have questions about family members or wanting to learn more about End of Life issues? Watch Elizabeth's videos about Palliative Care 101, Hospice 101, and Advance Directives ahead of our session. Write down your questions or scenarios and come to the Q and A session over Zoom. Elizabeth will be available for an hour to talk with you about the video material and any



## Join us for Worship via [Zoom](#)

The service will be uploaded to [Youtube](#) by Tuesday morning. Past services are also available to watch on the church's Youtube Channel.



## When Are We Getting Back Together?

Someone recently observed that it's been March for 13 months now. As we near the one year anniversary of everything closing down due to the pandemic, many of us are feeling an urgency to get back together again and begin some new normal.



Last spring a dedicated group of church folks prepared a 'get back to church' plan, thinking it would be much sooner than later. We are very grateful for their thoughtful work and still holding that report for guidance.

However much has changed and new information has come in and church leadership is continuing to gather information in order to make the best decision possible for our church community.

The MidAmerica Region of the UUA is offering a webinar in March with recommendations on how to regather safely and members of the board and original committee will be taking in that information.

We will keep you informed as we learn more and make the best and most informed decisions possible.

questions you may have. If you would prefer to talk with Elizabeth privately, she would be glad to set up an appointment with you.

Thanks for your patience! We are all in this together and will make it through to the other side!

## Coming Soon!



If UCH had a time machine, we could turn back the dial to marvel at our rich history and past accomplishments such as being a home for diverse speakers, responding to social action needs, and adopting green initiative.

Then we could turn the dial to its upright position and be grateful for the wonderful way we supported each other and our church during this last year. Despite the pandemic our congregation flourished and we are so grateful.

Lastly, we could dial ahead to experience all the exciting things that our future holds: being back together again for worship, RE and programs, continuing our hybrid models to include many more folks in our community, and celebrating our 151<sup>st</sup> Anniversary.

We are not just bouncing back from the last year but leaping forward toward many more! Watch for more pledge drive info coming soon to your e-mailbox and your snail-mailbox! Save the date April 10<sup>th</sup> for a super fun trip through a time machine!

# Thrive with Pride

AN INCLUSIVE ONLINE CAFE FOR OLDER ADULTS

## Thrive with Pride Cafe Gatherings for LGBTQ+ Seniors

Age Options created Thrive with Pride Cafes to combat social isolation among LGBT+ older adults. This network of community sites provides social support and vital information to LGBT+ older adults and caregivers in suburban Cook County. Thrive with Pride Cafes are envisioned as safe spaces for older adults and caregivers to learn more about benefits, share their stories and discuss topics that matter in a safe and affirming environment.

**UCH Tuesday March 9 - Join us to Discuss** the presentation by Kelly Rice of Howard Brown Health's Aging Well program on how you can discern, document, and protect your future, with simple tools that make advanced planning easy and safe.

Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82329996123?pwd=RnhjdTIUSXlhL3E2R3I1a1ZTK211Zz09>  
Meeting ID: 823 2999 6123  
Passcode: 616471

**March 23, 2021:** What's Next: Affirming Care

Matt Vail of Rush University Medical Center's Affirm community clinic will discuss the important of affirming care for the LGBT+ community. Learn about how your relationship with your health care provider can impact your care, how to find affirming care, and how to better communicate with all your care providers.

Click [HERE](#) to join us via Zoom on March 23 at 11am. You can also join by phone! Call (312)626-6799 and enter Meeting ID 966 6129 4106 w

## UCH Music in the time of COVID

Like everyone involved in keeping UCH programs engaging and inspiring during the pandemic, musicians have been challenged. Thanks to the talents of Music Coordinator Jamie Pastman, the challenge has been met. Not only has he added his creative piano arrangements of hymns, pop, and classical music but he has also composed lovely music as well. As if that's not enough, he's learned the technical skill of weaving videos and live performance into each service.

The Celebration Singers love singing together in one room, but have summoned their courage and

virtually recorded lovely music on Zoom for Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve, with the help of Jamie and K. Mooney. We will continue to provide virtual music while eagerly awaiting the time when we can be together again. Completing these vocal contributions are the solo and family gems from John Cooperrider; K Mooney; Tim Hays and his son, Eric; the Teppema and Budziak families. And who can forget the lovely flute solos from Carolyn May. Remember the children singing Jingle Bells before Christmas --and Nora and Luke Makdad playing flawless piano? We so appreciate these gifts of music from our church family. They'll keep us inspired until our family is back in our church home.



## A Little Help From Your Friends...



The pandemic crisis has been going on for many long months now and even with an end in sight, many folks have been affected in ways great and small. If you are facing challenges right now, know that your church is here to help. An emergency relief fund exists at all

times for church members experiencing financial difficulties.

Help with groceries, utilities or other unexpected events is available by contacting [Rev Pam](#). You are loved and cared for. If you are in trouble, let us know so we can help. That's what community is for!

## Monthly Share the Plate: Third Unitarian Food Pantry

The ongoing pandemic continues to create food insecurity for too many of our fellow humans. Third Unitarian Church is located within the Austin neighborhood of Chicago and has created a food pantry to support their neighbors. The need is great. Please be generous in supporting their good work.



You can donate through our website or by mailing a check to UCH, 17 W Maple, Hinsdale, IL 60521 - mark Feb Food Pantry in the memo line.

## Who Should You Call?

January's Touchstone gave a detailed explanation of our new staffing structure and the reasons for change over the past year. Please read about it [here](#) if you still have questions. UCH is in a process of evolving to fit the

changing needs and opportunities presented by the march of time. The chart below illustrates the staff member covering each area. You are always welcome to contact [Rev Pam](#) or [Pam Fodor](#) if you have questions.

Staff Member	Support Area	Contact information
Rev Pam Rumancik	Worship, Pastoral Care, Theological exploration, general support	<a href="mailto:minister@hinsdaleunitarian.org">minister@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (440) 570-9812
Pam Fodor	Religious Education – All ages Membership, Caring Committee, Space Sharing / Events	<a href="mailto:re@hinsdaleunitarian.org">re@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (630) 323-2885 ext 110
Lily Field	Bookkeeping – Pledge reports, reimbursements	<a href="mailto:finance@hinsdaleunitarian.org">finance@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (630) 323-2885
John Cooperrider	Heating/cooling issues, property maintenance	<a href="mailto:grounds@hinsdaleunitarian.org">grounds@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (630) 435-0164
Cherita Axel	Communications – articles for News & Notes and Touchstone, Press releases, Facebook events	<a href="mailto:communications@hinsdaleunitarian.org">communications@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> <a href="mailto:socialmedia@hinsdaleunitarian.org">socialmedia@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (224) 388-0957
Jamie Pastman	Musician, Worship Technology	<a href="mailto:music@hinsdaleunitarian.org">music@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (847) 651-4324
Julia Beckman	Choir Director – joining choir, ideas for musical events	<a href="mailto:choirdirector@hinsdaleunitarian.org">choirdirector@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> (630) 605-7069

Due to continued high Covid rates, our staff is working from home and the office will remain closed.

We look forward to vaccinations and the opportunity to be with you

again soon!



## Staff Info & On-Site Days:

<b>Director of Programs:</b>	Pam Fodor - <a href="mailto:RE@hinsdaleunitarian.org">RE@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a> .	<i>Tuesday</i>
<b>Bookkeeper:</b>	Lily Field - <a href="mailto:Finance@hinsdaleunitarian.org">Finance@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	<i>Wednesday</i>
<b>Minister:</b>	Rev Pam Rumancik - <a href="mailto:Minister@hinsdaleunitarian.org">Minister@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	<i>Thursday - by Appt</i>
<b>Facilities Manager:</b>	John Cooperrider - <a href="mailto:Grounds@hinsdaleunitarian.org">Grounds@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	<i>Friday - as needed</i>
<b>Choir Director:</b>	Julia Beckman - <a href="mailto:ChoirDirector@hinsdaleunitarian.org">ChoirDirector@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	
<b>Music Facilitator:</b>	Jamie Pastman - <a href="mailto:Music@hinsdaleunitarian.org">Music@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	
<b>Social Media Manager:</b>	Cherita Axel - <a href="mailto:Socialmedia@hinsdaleunitarian.org">Socialmedia@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	
<b>News &amp; Notes:</b>	<a href="mailto:Communications@hinsdaleunitarian.org">Communications@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	
<b>Touchstone:</b>	<a href="mailto:uchtouchstone@gmail.com">uchtouchstone@gmail.com</a>	
<b>Board President:</b>	Bob Daniel-Wayman - <a href="mailto:President@hinsdaleunitarian.org">President@hinsdaleunitarian.org</a>	

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