

ADVOCATES FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

The June travelers to Montgomery, Alabama have formed a new group to promote the work of racial justice in our community and nation. We are calling the group ***Advocates for Racial Justice***. The next meeting ARJ is scheduled for Wednesday, January 22nd at 4:30 p.m. in Pastor Stacy's Study. The following is the group's statement of purpose, which we will share during our worship service today:

Responding to our call as Christians to see the image of God in all people, and to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, we pledge to each other and the Union Church congregation to be faithful Advocates for Racial Justice. We will engage our congregation and the larger community in continuing study and conversation about racism in all its manifestations—private, institutional, and cultural—and about the ideology of white supremacy at its root. We want to unmask and oppose the racism that divides the people of God from one another, unfairly empowering some and not others, in our personal relationships, community, state, and nation.

Martin Luther King, Jr., said that “true peace” is “the presence of justice.” Bryan Stevenson of the Equal Justice Initiative says, “We must acknowledge the truth about our history before we can heal.” This is our main purpose: to seek, understand, and proclaim the truth about our history—specifically, about slavery and white supremacy—so that we can be properly reconciled to one another and prepare the way for true peace, which is the presence of justice.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

NICARAGUA BAKE SALE & LUKE'S LIGHTS – THANK YOU!

We're so grateful to everyone who supported our Bake Sale last weekend for Nicaragua! We raised more than \$1000 for needed school and other supplies for our partners in San Juan Del Sur, and also raised enough to purchase 25 solar-powered Luke's Lights, which will bring needed light to homes without electricity. Thank you for your generosity!

CITYREACH LAST WEEKEND THANK YOU!

Nearly 20 high-schoolers and adults participated in last weekend's overnight with Ecclesia Ministries this weekend in downtown Boston. We learned from and built relationships with members of the Ecclesia congregation who are experiencing homelessness, saw the city through their eyes, and served with them on Saturday distributing needed food, clothing, blankets and more. We're so grateful for the support of this UCW congregation, and especially for the generous donations so many of you made on short notice!

YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM – COMING UP! Meeting Jan. 26th at 6:00 p.m.

The Youth Ministry Team is made up of caring adults and teens who are interested in shaping a planning our ministries with middle and high schoolers. We're finalizing our Youth Ministry calendar for the winter and spring, and will gather as a team on Sunday, Jan. 26th at the Abbiati-Collins home. We'd love to have you join us! Contact Pastor Amy (amy@ucw.org).

PARENTS GROUP – Rescheduled for Monday, Jan. 27th at 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. at UCW

Because of the long MLK weekend, we're rescheduling our monthly Parents Group meeting this month to Monday, January 27th. Come find peace and support as we share in the good and hard work of parenting! We'll gather around tea, cocoa and cookies to share a New Year reflection.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP DINNER OUT – Coming up on Friday, January 31st

Our Dinner Out on the Town is always a great time! Save the Date and plan to join us for a delicious and fun dinner at the Biltmore Bar & Grille in Newton Upper Falls. Sign-up on WeSpire or be in touch with Pastor Amy (amy@ucw.org)!

EXPLORING OUR FAITH – Visit to the Islamic Center in Wayland – February 9th

The Islamic Center in Wayland generously opens their doors to visitors, and we will gather with them for a time of learning and worship on February 9th. Exploring our Faith students and other high-schoolers are especially encouraged to attend, and mentors are always welcome! We'll gather after UCW worship for a brief lunch, and then head to the Islamic Center by 12:30 p.m.

MISSION OUTREACH

February 2nd – *common art* show at the Union Church

Valentine's Day will be upon us before you know it! Come find a gift for that special someone after church service on Sunday, Feb. 2nd, when we will host artists from *common art*. *common art* is a program of *common cathedral* which provides space, materials and support staff to unhoused and low-income individuals as they develop their artistic abilities. Artists gather every Wednesday at Emmanuel Church on Newbury Street to draw, paint, sculpt, make crafts, and to share with other artists in like circumstances. For many *common art* members, art is a way of life. For others, it's a new discovery. But for all, art is passion, expressing and affirming life itself, a defiant or gentle "yes" in the face of stigma amid the constant struggle of poverty and homelessness.

Feb. 9th, 11:30 a.m. — Zoned Out: Who gets to live in suburban Boston

Ever thought about why you live where you do? Have you ever considered what unseen forces might have led you there? Join Kathleen Hobson, Nancy Zollers and Frank Laski, three of our Advocates for Racial Justice, in a discussion about the origins of the Boston suburbs, the roots of our chronic housing shortage, and how we might achieve a more just and inclusive community. Suggestions for pre-discussion reading*: "The Case for Reparations" (Atlantic, 2014), by Te-Nehisi Coates; The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America (2017), by Richard Rothstein; "How Segregation Caused Your Traffic Jam" (NY Times, 2019). You could also listen to Rothstein's interview on NPR's Fresh Air.

**Visit the Union Church website homepage at ucw.org to follow these links.*

March 1st – Public Voices Speakers from City Mission

We are privileged to host two speakers from City Mission's Public Voices program on March 1st after fellowship. Public Voice provides trained storytellers/speakers whose lived experience gives insight, understanding and perspective to the issues underlying homelessness. City Mission's Public Voice Project customizes storytelling training and presentations to help participants find and share the stories which break down barriers and build understanding within oneself as well as across groups, cultures and communities.

March 8th – Potluck with Speaker, Josephine Bolling McCall, author of:

The Penalty for Success - My Father was Lynched in Lowndes County, Alabama.

The speaker will tell the story of how her father's success as a businessman in Alabama led to his lynching and how that impacts his descendants and the community even today. This speaker will provide updates on the Legacy Museum and the Memorial in Montgomery both of which honor her father as one of many victims. This sensitive information will make a strong impact on students as they strive for improved social justice and diversity. Josephine McCall will also challenge participants to rethink the reality of life for blacks and whites in the mid-20th century rural South by considering joining a literacy campaign. Research shows that children who have learned to read by the third grade have a much better chance of completing high school.

Alabama has a new law that children will be retained if they do not successfully complete the third grade. The speaker hopes her presentation will set the stage for dialogue on creative ideas for participants to help improve literacy in Lowndes County, Alabama.

For more information about these offerings, please see the Friday e-blast. Or please feel free to reach out to Carol Bascom-Slack, Jaap van Reijendam or Julie Heffernan.

TODAY'S FELLOWSHIP HOUR- ALL ARE WELCOME!

Thank you to Betty and Jay O'Bierne for laying our table and hosting our fellowship time this morning. If you would like to host a future, after-church Fellowship Hour, please sign up through the Sign-Up Genius webpage. The link can be found on the UCW website at ucw.org and in the Friday e-blast.

CHURCH MATTERS

MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION: NEXT SUNDAY, Jan. 26th

The Church Council invites all members of the Union Church community to meet on January 26 for three important items:

1. A briefing from our Communications Committee on a Statement of Purpose, an outward-reaching description of who we are that can be used on our web site and in publicity.
2. A vote on adding four words to our Church Covenant (our promise to each other within the church) to update our language with respect to being open to all:

“We, the members of the Union Church in Waban, true to our founding principle of being an inclusive church, covenant together to nourish and to sustain in our common life and practice a fully welcoming and affirming church for all persons. Welcoming all persons who seek to join with us in a commitment to love God and our neighbors, affirming the inclusive love of Jesus, we are open to all, without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, ***gender identity and expression***, nationality, ability or economic circumstance. We invite all to full participation in our worship, membership, leadership and life of this church”.

3. A creative and interactive conversation about our visions for the church so that we may set our priorities for our spring stewardship campaign and budget-setting process the coming year. This session will set the context for the spending plan we will vote to adopt in June.

NEW MEMBERS – WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE CHURCH?

We rejoice and welcome all who gather and share in our life together as church. And there may be some of us who are feeling called to deepen our relationship with the community by becoming members of UCW. Membership offers the congregant and congregation an opportunity to pledge ourselves one to another in an intentional walk of faith. Membership also enables one to vote in congregational matters like the vote we will take on updating the language. We will be receiving new members into our life together during worship on Sunday, January 26th. If you are interested in membership, please reach out to Pastor Stacy.

Valentine Care Packages for Our Young People

The Deacons will be compiling Valentine Care Packages to send to our UCW young people who are in their first year of being away from home. We want them to know that the church is thinking of them and sending love. If you have a young person who is newly away from home whether as a college freshman or in another setting please send [Pastor Stacy](#) their mailing address so that we can send them a box of treats.

ADULT EDUCATION, SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND FELLOWSHIP

BOOK GROUP: January 28th, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. “Evicted” by Matthew Desmond.
“In *Evicted*,” Princeton sociologist and MacArthur “Genius” Matthew Desmond follows eight families in Milwaukee as they each struggle to keep a roof over their heads. Hailed as “wrenching and revelatory” (*The Nation*), “vivid and unsettling” (*New York Review of books*), *Evicted* transforms our understanding of poverty and economic exploitation while providing fresh ideas for solving one of twenty-first-century America’s most devastating problems. Its unforgettable scenes of hope and loss remind us of the centrality of home, without which nothing else is possible.” (*Amazon review*)

THE WEEK AHEAD

Sun., Jan. 19	9:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal	The Union Church in Waban: 14 Collins Road, Waban, MA 02468 For a complete listing, and details of upcoming events, please visit our website, www.ucw.org
	10:00 a.m.	Worship	
	7:30 p.m.	Parent’s Gathering	
Mon., Jan. 20	7:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal	
Wed., Jan. 21	6:30 p.m.	Worship Team	
Thur., Jan. 23	7:30 a.m.	Prayer Group	
	9:00 a.m.	Yoga with Andrew	
un., Jan. 26	8:00 a.m.	Bible Study	
	8:30 am.	Teacher’s Breakfast	
	9:00 a.m.	Choir Rehearsal	
	10:00 a.m.	Worship	
	11:00 a.m.	Congregational Meeting	

COPY DEADLINE: Material for inclusion in the Friday e-blast newsletter or the Sunday Announcements should be e-mailed to the office at ucw@ucw.org, by **9:00 a.m. on the previous Wednesday morning.**