

**Unitarian Society of Hartford**

**February 15, 2023**

**Building Community Since 1830  
50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105  
Tel: (860) 233-9897 • Email: [hartforduusociety@gmail.com](mailto:hartforduusociety@gmail.com)  
[www.ushartford.org](http://www.ushartford.org)**

**Office Administrator's Hours: This Week Only**

**Sunday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**Monday & Tuesday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**\*Office is closed on Thursday 02/16/23\***

**Wednesday & Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Please email/call for an appointment.**

**\*Please note the Office is closed on Monday 02/20/23 in observance of Presidents' Day\***



**February 19, 2023: 10:30 a.m.**

**"From Crowd to Community"  
Mark 6: 30 – 44**

**Rev. AJ Johnson, Pulpit Guest  
Rick Tsukada, Worship Associate  
Sam Moffett, Director of Music Ministries**

**Matters of the Heart:**

**Electronically by 9 a.m. Sunday: email [HartfordUUHeart@gmail.com](mailto:HartfordUUHeart@gmail.com)**

**In person – use MOH basket for written cards on Sunday morning**

**10:30 a.m. Hybrid Worship Service**

**Join us in ZOOM [here](#)  
See Order of Service [here](#)**

**Closed captions are available.**

**Meeting ID: 931 0388 7934**

**Passcode: 128493**

**10:30 a.m. Religious Education in person  
Annie Witzler, Interim RE Coordinator**

**11:30 a.m. – Coffee Hour immediately following the service, in person and ZOOM**

*Soup Sunday in Fellowship Hall —  
support our Youth Group and its ministry*

*Stay for our Semi-Annual Meeting at NOON —  
Learn the Latest Information, and Ask Questions!*

You can also watch the Sunday service at <https://vimeo.com/unitariansocietyhartford>  
or on the USH [Facebook](#) page.

### Mask Update

***Masking is currently optional. Our policy is to follow CDC guidelines.***



#### **Rev. AJ Johnson, Pulpit Guest**

Rev. AJ Johnson is a faith-influenced voice for urban resurgence and revival and a pace-setting champion for justice and community-wide uplift. As a trailblazer, Johnson leads The Urban Hope Refuge Church, an influential church where passionate worship and community activism meet in Hartford. Johnson works at the Center For Leadership and Justice as a Community Organizer. He spearheads Small Business Night

Out, a network of minority-owned businesses and entrepreneurs; Calling all Brothers, a widely hailed male mentorship and leadership organization, and Brothers Johnson 1929 Hat Company, a clothing brand reflecting strength, loyalty, and distinction.

Rev. Johnson has been a recipient of Connecticut Bar Association's 2019 Citizen Of The Law commendation, the Hartford Business Journal '40 under 40' honor, and the Merrilee Milstein Award for Organizing, Activism & Leadership, and an honoree of the 100 Men of Color Award for Leadership, Entrepreneurial Success and Community Activism. His community organizing efforts have been celebrated in notable online news platforms including TVONE, The Huffington Post and Yahoo News; several print media standard-bearers including The Hartford Courant, The Christian Science Monitor, and The San Diego Union-Tribune as well as several radio and television outlets.

A bridge-builder at heart, Rev. Johnson is frequently in the company of notable men and women and unsung heroes. Johnson welcomes every opportunity as a featured speaker on social justice issues on community-action panels, workshops and national conferences to connect people to each other and inspire stronger communities. Johnson is a well-known advocate in the 'Fight for 15', 'Moral

Monday', 'Ban the Box' and 'No More Slumlord' movements and contributor to other causes, campaigns, and organizations.

Rev. Johnson is married to Melinda Johnson, the father of a four-year-old son Ashton William Johnson, and one year old son Addison King Johnson. He is also immediate past president of The Delta Pi Sigma chapter of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and appointed by the Connecticut Speaker of the House as Deputy Chaplain of the Connecticut General Assembly and Vice Chairman of the Hartford Board of Education. Rev. AJ Johnson holds a Bachelor's Degree in Religious Studies and Education from W.L. Bonner College and is currently pursuing a Master of Arts degree from Liberty University in Organizational Management and Leadership.

### *Worship Calendar*

**Upcoming Services: Join us, in person or online.**



**February 26 – "Love Will Guide Us"**, Sally Rogers, Pulpit Guest/Sue Smolski, Worship Associate

**March 5 – "Standing on the Shoulders of Those Who Came Before"**, David Newton, Pulpit Guest/Rick Tsukada, Worship Associate

**March 12 – Title Pending**, Rev. Stephen Kendrick/Laurie Kelliher, Worship Associate

**March 19 – Title Pending**, Pulpit guest pending/ Margaret Leicach, Worship Associate

*Sue Smolski*

*Worship Associate Coordinator*

**Welcome Team Sign-Up**

Volunteer to be a greeter, usher, or to staff the welcome table this fall. Simple, rewarding short-term commitments helping extend hospitality to members and visitors.

Use the Sign-Up Genius app [here](#) to be part of our Sunday Morning Welcome Team.

**More You Can Do on Sunday**

Here are some other things you can do once and be done – see Rick Tsukada or Laurie Kelliher if you're interested.

- Candle Bowl Lifter
- Chalice Lighter
- Sermon
- Reflection
- Welcome Table
- Summer Service Pulpit Guest
- Chancel Art

**Looking for a Minister...**

In early January we posted our ad for a one-year contract minister. Contract ministers, unlike interims, are eligible for long-term hire if both the minister and the congregation feel they are a good fit. We hope to find a candidate who will be a full-time minister and part-time preacher. The Worship Associates will fill the pulpit on Sundays when the minister is not preaching. This is the type of shared ministry that Rev. Josh Pawelek has at UUS:E in Manchester and it has worked well for 20 years. You can hear Rev. Pawelek's interesting sermon on this topic by going to the sermon archives on the USH website and scrolling down to October 22, 2022.

We've had a few applicants so far but we expect everything to be up in the air for at least another month, perhaps longer. At the semi-annual meeting on February 19, you will be invited to say what you would like in a minister. Watch the eNews for updates as we move through this process!

~ Judy Robbins, Chair, Review Committee

- **Board note 2/8/23:**

During the last quarter of 2022, board members spent significant time developing the solicitation for a new minister. Last week and this, Judy Robbins outlines where we are in the search. If you would like to read the description developed with careful consideration of our history and needs, you can see it [here](#):

*Congregational Update —  
Security Grant Approved!*

Last Sunday following the worship service, Administrative Council Chail Paul Cipriano provided us a short update on security measures, both planned and implemented, at USH. Paul further indicated we awaited hearing the results of a state grant, applied for in November 2022, which could facilitate additional upgrades in equipment. Now, we've just learned that The State of Connecticut\* has announced approval of our application to improve safety and security at the Meeting House. We will receive an official notice of the grant award in the coming weeks, including information on the amount to be granted. While we requested the maximum for which we were eligible (\$28,000), the actual amount awarded may be less — we shall know fairly soon.

\* through its Emergency Services and Public Protection Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

The safety and security work group is holding its monthly meeting on February 26 at noon, at the Meeting House and on Zoom. The group initially was created as a task force to develop emergency response plans for USH. Late last year, we compiled a list of the most likely emergencies requiring a coordinated response so we could assess our existing state of readiness and develop plans for emergency response. It is now evident that work will be ongoing, as preparedness is not a singular event but, rather, a permanent mindset. In that vein, a more permanent place in our organizational structure is warranted. Exactly where this new entity is placed, and how it is titled, are open questions at the moment.

**If this is an area in which you would like to be involved, you are welcome to attend. Please contact [Paul Cipriano](#) for information.**

DO YOU LOVE  
READING GOOD  
BOOKS?



Would you like to share special finds with your fellow USH book lovers?

The book table, which is set up in Fellowship Hall after service each week, needs a fresh supply of quality, interesting books. Gripping novels, informative nonfiction, inspirational, funny, artful—whatever you enjoyed reading and want to pass on.

This has been a useful meeting spot for newcomers to mingle at coffee hour and we'd like to keep it going!

You can leave book donations in the designated container in the office.

**—YOUR BOOK TABLE TEAM**  
SUSAN, LAUREL, GINNY, EVAN, & DEB

ALL  
BOOKS  
\$1.00!



### **CALLING ALL SINGERS!**

**Do you enjoy singing, and being with like-minded people?**

**IF YES, the USH Choir is looking for you!**

Our choir is looking to recruit new members who love to sing. With a large mix of ability and experience, we aim to contribute positively within our community through performing regularly during Sunday services, as well as collaborating with other

Unitarian Universalist churches in the area.

**All are welcome — NO auditions required!**

Rehearsals are held every Thursday evening from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the

**USH Meeting House, 50 Bloomfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105**

If interested in joining, or seeking more information, please contact Sam Moffett, Director of Music at [smoffettuu@gmail.com](mailto:smoffettuu@gmail.com)

## *Social Justice*



**February Good Neighbor Offering**  
**The REACH Fund of CT**  
**(Reproductive Equity, Access, and Choice)**

The REACH Fund of Connecticut was founded in 2021 by a group of individuals who believe that healthcare is a human right and that abortion is an essential part of healthcare. They are an all-volunteer organization whose mission is to reduce financial barriers to abortion care in Connecticut by providing financial assistance to those who receive care here.

The Values of the REACH Fund embrace those of our Unitarian Universalist faith: Compassion, Inclusivity, Intersectionality, Equity, and Autonomy.

They recognize and acknowledge the ways in which decades of systemic racism and white supremacy have and continue to perpetuate harm and violence towards Black folks, Indigenous folks, and communities of color.

They are committed to addressing the ways in which racism, economic insecurity, and immigration status multiply the massive barriers to abortion care — and work to center and follow the leadership of communities that are disproportionately impacted by reproductive oppression towards solutions that transform abortion access alongside true racial, economic, and immigrant justice.

### **West Hartford Food Bank Information**

The following is a list of all the food groups and foods that are part of the weekly bags of food provided for individuals and families. Please feel free to pick and choose those items that you are able to collect and drop off at the West Hartford Town Hall:

- **Proteins:** Canned tuna, canned chicken, peanut butter, canned beans, bean-based soups
- **Grains:** Pasta, one-pound bags of rice, cereal
- **Comfort foods:** Macaroni and cheese, chicken noodle soup



• **Fruits and Veggies:** Canned fruits, applesauce, jelly, tomato, and vegetable soups

**Grocery bags are now being collected outside the office door.**  
The West Hartford Food Bank is located at West Hartford Town Hall.

Thank You!  
~*Diana Heymann*

*RE and Chalice Clubhouse*



It's wintertime here in Connecticut and the fun is always at USH! We have exciting opportunities available for ages 0-18! Signup online [here](#) or on Sundays in person at the welcome table!

**Please note that children and youth who wish to participate in RE programming should report directly to their classes when they arrive. Locations for all classes are indicated in red under each category!**

A Quick Announcement:



Our RE department is aware of the rise of Norovirus (and the persistent Covid-19) cases among children and youth this season here in Connecticut and around the country.

**We highly encourage any RE participants and volunteers to stay home if they feel under the weather in any way.**

To do our part in promoting a safe and healthy environment for our children and youth, we are disinfecting all used surfaces and materials (tables, toys, books, etc) both before and after RE on Sundays.

If you have any questions or concerns please reach out any time via email or phone (text messaging works best) at [re4ush@gmail.com](mailto:re4ush@gmail.com) or 706-248-9438.

Thank you!

-Annie Witzler, Interim Coordinator of RE.

The Sprouts Nursery (Ages Infant-Pre-K):

Our nursery is open to all infants, young children, and their families. There are toys, books, art supplies, and plenty of room for imagination to grow free!

We have dedicated personnel and volunteers to supervise every week and the best part? You can now listen and participate in the service while you're there! Nursery go-ers can listen to the service and even participate in our Candles of Memory and Hope ritual!

Come visit any Sunday and never miss a single sermon! **Located downstairs adjacent to Fellowship Hall.**



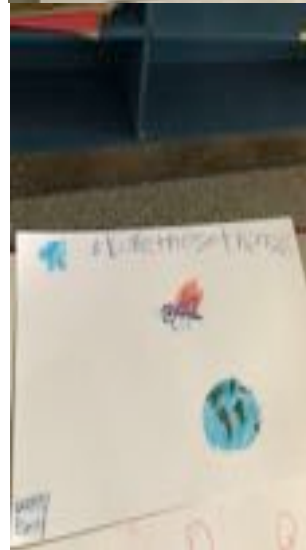
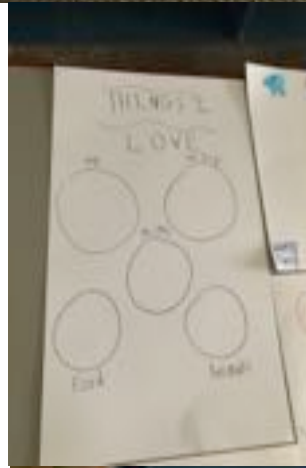
### **In The Chalice Clubhouse (Grades K-6th):**

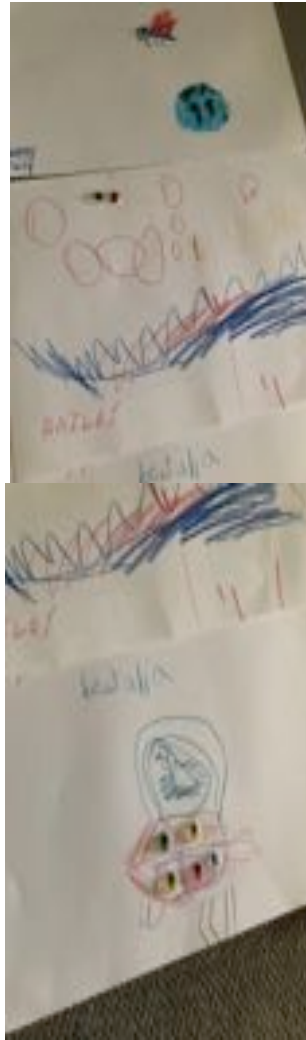
Last weekend, our clubhouse goers continued a special Valentine's Day-themed project inspired by the book *Love in The Library* by Maggie Tokuda-Hall. It tells the powerful love story of a young couple falling in love in a prison camp during the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. It reminds us of how love is truly the sustainment we need in our lives, through times of happiness and hardship.



This story is reflective of both our 2nd (justice, equity, and compassion in human relations) and 6th (the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all) Unitarian Universalist principles. All human beings experience love in different ways and need it in their lives, and to deny his basic human right is one of the greatest forms of injustice imaginable. As UU's, we stand for equality for all, and learning of the injustices of the past is a powerful tool to inform our consciousness for the present and future.

To celebrate Valentine's Day, we made our very own Book of Love containing pictures and lists of what the children in our RE program love. Below are some of the amazing things our participants came up with!





## THE CHALICE CLUBHOUSE



## COMMUNITY SUNDAY

This Sunday, February 19th, the Chalice Clubhouse participants will be able to participate in fun, age-appropriate activities to help The Youth Group prepare for their Soup Sunday. This will give participants a chance to discover what they like to do, how they best work in a team, and how being part of a community can be a fun and rewarding experience. Whether they like

decorating, sorting, washing, selling, counting, or just having fun - they'll have a unique role in our RE community this Sunday! **It all begins at 10:30 am downstairs in Fellowship Hall. We hope to see you there!**

USH Youth Group (Grades 6th-12th):



The USH Youth Group is making soup this Sunday, and it will be available for purchase after the service during coffee hour. Meatlovers and Vegetarian varieties will be available with biscuits. **Please remember to bring small denominations of cash (\$1, \$5, etc)!** All proceeds go to support the USH Youth Group! All leftovers will be delivered to local soup kitchens around the city of Hartford. Come hungry!

**Youth wishing to help with the soup preparation should arrive roughly an hour before service at 9:30 am.**

**We hope to see you there!**

### *Events & Happenings*

#### Monthly Gatherings

**The Lunch Bunch** – Our next gathering is **Tuesday, FEBRUARY 21, at NOON in Fellowship Hall**. Please brown-bag *your own* lunch and beverage... you'll ensure having something you enjoy! Following Sunday's informational "Semi-Annual Meeting" we may be continuing conversations around ministers, finances, and security — or, about AI (artificial intelligence) and how its ubiquity is changing how educators are fashioning their

classroom activities. Whichever direction the conversation takes, it should be interesting. Please contact [janicecnewton@gmail.com](mailto:janicecnewton@gmail.com) to sign up so we can arrange enough places at the table.

**Social Justice** – Interested in justice work? Come meet with us to learn the latest about ongoing activities and discover new initiatives. Our next ZOOM meeting is **Tuesday, FEBRUARY 21, 7 – 8 p.m.** Everyone's invited... contact [Judy Sullivan](mailto:Judy.Sullivan@ussh.org) for information.

**Disability Support Group —**

This group meets online the first Saturday of each month at 10:30 a.m. The zoom link is sent a few days prior to the meeting. In this group participants discuss the challenges of physical disability (chronic illness, chronic pain, impaired senses, impaired mobility) and emotional pain (loss, mental illness) and the stresses of caretaking a loved one. What is said in the group stays in the group. Email **Gloria Bent** for more information at [bentgloria@gmail.com](mailto:bentgloria@gmail.com) or call **860-904-7768**.

**Pizza and Movie Nights** – Join us, **Friday March 10**, for conversation, pizza, a movie, and more conversation (about the movie). Movies are recommended by your friends at USH who have found them interesting, perhaps provocative, and worth seeing. The March feature is still up in the air and will be determined shortly. Sign up at the Caring Network table at coffee hour, or email [Janice Newton](mailto:Janice.Newton@ussh.org) to register. \$15 covers pizza, salad, dessert, non-alcoholic beverages. Feel free to bring your own beer or wine, if that's your preference.

Generally, we begin gathering at 5 for libations and conversation. The pizza arrives at 5:30; we aim for a 6:15 'showtime'.

**Second Saturday Sing-Along – March 11**

Join us at the next Meeting House Sing-Along — Fred Louis and Ed Savage offer an opportunity to join in song on the second Saturday of each month from 2 to 5 p.m. Song sheets and some loaner copies of Rise Up Singing will be available. Bring along your own 'Rise Up Singing' if you have one, as we have used it a lot in other months. We will also use the NEW "Rise Again" sequel – 1200 more songs to sample.

Contact: Fred Louis ( [FLouis@yahoo.com](mailto:FLouis@yahoo.com)) or Ed Savage 860-966-8155 (mobile) ([EdSavage03@yahoo.com](mailto:EdSavage03@yahoo.com))

**INVITATION FROM THE BOOK GROUP**

*Our UU Book Group invites you to join us in reading our March selection – **The Lincoln Highway** by Amor Towles (see preview\* below).*

*Enjoy the reading.*

*If you want to participate in (or listen to) a discussion of the book and related issues, join us on Thursday, March 9 at 2:30, by Zoom.*

**Please contact Ginny Allen at [fiddlenurse1@gmail.com](mailto:fiddlenurse1@gmail.com) if you'd like more information or if you want to join. An email with Zoom link will be sent a day or two before the meeting.**

**Book Selections 2022/23**

**Second Thursday of each mont**

**March 9 – *The Lincoln Highway* by Amor Towles**

**April 13 – *Power: The limits and prospects for human survival*  
by Richard Heinberg**

**May 11 – *Beloved* by Toni Morrison**

**June 8 – *The Book of Lost Friends* by Lisa Wingate**

**July 13 – *Matrix* by Lauren Groff**

**August 10 – *Mismeasure of Man* by Stephen J Gould**

\*Our March selection:

**"The Lincoln Highway" by Amor Towles**

In June, 1954, eighteen-year-old Emmett Watson is driven home to Nebraska by the warden of the juvenile work farm where he has just served fifteen months for involuntary manslaughter. His mother long gone, his father recently deceased, and the family farm foreclosed upon by the bank, Emmett's intention is to pick up his eight-year-old brother, Billy, and head to California where they can start their lives anew. But when the warden drives away, Emmett discovers that two friends from the work farm have hidden themselves in the trunk of the warden's car. Together, they have hatched an altogether different plan for Emmett's future, one that will take them all on a fateful journey in the opposite direction—to the City of New York.

### *Caring Network*

**The Caring Network** has had a number of requests for Pastoral Care during the past few months. Generally, we have been able to reach out to the individuals and meet their needs. However, there are situations when contact with a minister is preferred. If you wish to speak to a minister, please contact me and I will give you the contact information. You can reach me by phone (860/212-6923), by email ([janicecnewton\(at\)sign@gmail.com](mailto:janicecnewton(at)sign@gmail.com)) or see me on Sunday. I will usually be at the Caring Network table at the entrance to Fellowship Hall. Please also know there is a wide range of community services available to those in need by calling the Community Info Line at **211**, and the Nationwide Mental Health Crisis and Suicide Prevention hotline is available by calling or texting **988**, where you can speak with a counselor.

~ Janice Newton, Chair



*In and Around Greater Hartford*



The latest financial reports for **FY Nov-Dec 2021** have been posted, click [HERE](#) to view.

The **2021/22 Annual Report** is available [HERE](#)

The Board Meeting minutes for **November and December 2022, and January 2023** have been posted. To view the USH Directory, Reports, meeting minutes and other church business information online, click [HERE](#). Contact Karolina Wojtyska at [hartfordusociety@gmail.com](mailto:hartfordusociety@gmail.com) for the username and password.

**2022 – 2023 USH Board of Directors**

**Eve Pech: President**

**Dana Donovan: President-Elect**

**Jon Covault: Treasurer**

**Sarah Harmon McKenzie: Secretary**

**Peter Meny: Spiritual Life Council Chair**

**Paul Cipriano: Administration Council Chair**

**Judy Sullivan: Social Justice Council Chair**

**Tina Davies: Community Within Council Chair**

Have a question or comment for the board? Send an email to: [ushboardofdirectors@gmail.com](mailto:ushboardofdirectors@gmail.com).

**Missed Last Week's Enews? Click Below:**

**<http://www.ushartford.org/nourishing-spirit/newsletters/>**

**See Articles and News for USH and the Surrounding Area you may have missed or find a link to the USH Facebook Page [HERE](#).**

**Please consult our Online Calendar regularly for all upcoming events coordinated by the Unitarian Society of**

**Hartford: [www.ushartford.org/events/](http://www.ushartford.org/events/)**

**To submit a Calendar Request (also for an online USH Zoom Room gathering) click [HERE](#).**

**E-News Contributors please note: The deadline for USH E-News submissions is *Tuesday at 12 Noon*. Please include the dates that your submission should be featured in the 'Subject' field. Announcements about upcoming events typically appear for two consecutive weeks maximum, unless other arrangements have been made with the editorial team. Articles should be sent as email file attachments, and images need to be sent separately as jpeg, jpg, png, tiff, bmp, or gif files. Thanks for cooperating.**

**USH Staff:**

**<http://www.ushartford.org/staff-members/>**

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Annie Witzler, Interim Religious Education Coordinator  
**[re4ush@gmail.com](mailto:re4ush@gmail.com)** | 860-233-9897 ext. 104

Patty Peck, Bookkeeper, Office or Phone by Appointment  
**[ushtreasurer50@gmail.com](mailto:ushtreasurer50@gmail.com)** 860-233-9897 ext. 102

Karolina Wojtysko, Office Administrator & Building Rentals  
**[hartfordusociety@gmail.com](mailto:hartfordusociety@gmail.com)** | 860-233-9897 ext. 100

**USH Calendar of Events**



The calendar for February 2023 can be viewed **[HERE](#)**.

Please contact the office with any questions or concerns.

The deadline for USH Enews submissions is **Tuesday at Noon.**

Please note in the subject line "USH Enews." Thank you for your submission!

Email to: **[hartforduociety@gmail.com](mailto:hartforduociety@gmail.com)**



*Photo by: Kevin Girouard January 2023*