



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury

Monthly **COMMENT** Newsletter

Welcoming all in a spirit of compassion, inquiry, and service

MARCH 2023

From our Minister



Our life is March weather, savage and serene in one hour.

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

I will admit it. My least favorite month of the year is March. It's that strange time between Winter and Spring where Mother Nature can't seem to make up her mind – snowflakes or crocus? I call it mud month. March in the northeast sees every imaginable form of mud. The only time I liked March was when I lived in San Diego, and it was not mud month! This month often feels as our Unitarian ancestor, Emerson, described: savage and serene in one hour.

As I have just a few months left in my ministry with you, I've decided that no matter how savage life (and March) may seem, I will cherish the serene and follow the joy. Yes, there can be joy in this mud month! I have to remind myself during March, there is much to be grateful for, and I recall being just 5 years old making mud pies with my next-door friend. It was pure joy just being outside with a friend in the mud; laughing as children love to do. How can we find such joy now with so much responsibility, heartache, uncertainty, and grey skies? We can commit to celebrating community and all of the joy it offers.

Please join me in making mud pies out of this tempestuous and teasing month! We can laugh together at the Community Dinner, sing together at the Sunday services, and dream together as we kick off our annual pledge campaign. It's all happening in mud month, amid the savage and serene happenings of life.

Grateful for opportunities to be together,
Rev. Kathleen



UU Danbury

If you took the Man-In-Black challenge from Rev. Kathleen, and wore a sticker for a day, please email her to share your experience. Did anyone ask you about the sticker? Did you have any interesting conversations? Extra stickers can be found near the greeter table in the Fellowship Hall and you can still participate in the challenge if you take one.

Our Mission Statement:

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury is an open religious community that welcomes a diversity of people, ideas and beliefs. We celebrate together that which is good in life, and offer comfort and care in times of need. With others, we work to create a just society and a sustainable Earth. We stand as a beacon for independent thought, and encourage lifelong spiritual and intellectual exploration. - Adopted by this congregation May 16, 2008

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury is a UUA designated “Welcoming Congregation.” Our congregation is welcoming to people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender. The Welcoming Congregation program is consistent with our first UU principle in which we covenant to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We welcome all – regardless of age, race, disability, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, religious background, or political affiliation – factors that can separate people in our larger culture.

UU Danbury Cancellation Policy – During very inclement weather, our in-person Sunday Services, Religious Education and any other on campus meetings or events will be cancelled. To learn of a cancellation, please check one of the following:

1. Your email;
2. Your text messages;
3. The UU Danbury website, www.uudanbury.org.
4. Facebook, www.facebook.com/UUDanbury.

**Deadline for the April Comment –
Friday, March 17th.**

March Services – One Service at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, March 5th

Revs. Kathleen Rudoff and Sierra-Marie Gerfao with Sally Mandler
A Story of Unity: Purim

This is a service for all ages and we encourage children, grandchildren, youth, young adults, and all ages and stages to join us for a service of celebration!

Sunday, March 12th

Women’s Day

Marcia Brooker

This service will celebrate WOMEN, March being International Women's Month. We all know some names of very famous women whether politicians or movie stars. But, what about some of the wonderful accomplishments of "every day" women who have never made the headlines or been in the spotlight? Let's consider some of these women in this service.

Sunday, March 19th

To Pray Or Not To Pray

Rev. Paul Dodenhoff

People often ask, “Do Unitarian Universalists pray? If so, to whom do they pray? If not, why not?” How would you answer these questions if someone asked you? In this sermon, Rev. Paul would like to offer some reflections on the often complicated subject of prayer and how it relates to our lives and spiritual practice as Unitarian Universalists.



Rev. Paul Dodenhoff was raised in The Salvation Army during the 1950’s and ‘60s, but became interested in other religious paths very early in his teens. His own journey led him to study and work within a wide variety of religious and spiritual traditions. Eventually that journey led him to make his spiritual home within Unitarian Universalism. He received his B.A. Magna Cum Laude in Religion from Drew University where he also wrote his honors thesis, “Perfected Earth, Worthy Men,” his study of the Brook Farm transcendentalist community led by Unitarian minister George Ripley. He also pursued a Master’s program at Drew in American Religious History specializing in the study of New Religious Movements in America. After some years in business ownership with his wife, Lisa, he received his ordination as an interspiritual / interfaith minister from One Spirit Interfaith Seminary in New York City in June of 2012. His special interests are in the areas of spirituality, social justice, and the intersection of science and faith. He follows a spiritual path based on the teachings of the Buddha and Jesus of Nazareth. In June 2022 after ten years he retired from his position as minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Palisades in Englewood, New Jersey. Paul lives with his wife Lisa and their 19 year old cat, Chunka, in New Jersey. He is a self-confessed Tolkien geek and prides himself on his yearly practice of reading Tolkien’s “The Hobbit” and “Lord of the Rings” each year in autumn since 1969 when he was first introduced to Tolkien’s work. (He has very strong opinions about the film versions.)

Sunday, March 26th

I’ve Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy Down In My Heart

Rev. Dr. Kathleen Rudoff

We kick off our annual pledge campaign today with joy! Singing, dancing, and expressing joy is what this sermon on the amount is all about.

The Future of Our Congregation's Children and Youth Ministries

If you have not already done so, please be sure to click [here](#) and submit your RSVP for the all-congregation meeting on March 12th 11:30AM-1:30PM. We will be exploring the future of our ministries for children and youth during this important meeting. The Religious Education Ministry Team (REMT) will provide a taco salad bar as a light lunch. If at all possible, please plan to attend the whole meeting. It will have three parts, each with a distinct purpose.

From the Ministerial Search Committee

The following people are the members of the Committee:
Nancy Cullen, Paula Hopewell, Donna Lawrence, and Heather Smith

The Committee is charged with engaging in the process of finding a candidate to serve as a contract minister starting on August 1st, 2023. If successful in their search, they would then recommend the candidate to the Board of Trustees who is responsible for calling the minister.

From the Board of Trustees

by Gale Alexander, Board Member

I am a seventh generation Universalist. Now, that and \$4.50 will still get you coffee at Star Bucks (I think. Not a coffee drinker you see...Sacrilege!) But, as a lifelong Universalist, Unitarian Universalist since the merger, I've seen a lot of ministers. As they've come and gone in various congregations, I've enjoyed some, been indifferent to others and even had occasional disagreements with a few. What has always provided continuity for me is the community, here at UUCD and at the other congregations of which I have been a member.

As you read this we are probably at the mid-point in the selection process for a new contract minister for our congregation. No matter who the new minister will be, and no matter what style or talents they bring with them, I have confidence in the team facilitating the process to get us the best candidate. A minister is an important part of congregational life and provides certain important professional services and perspectives to a congregation. But a minister is only a part. It is our community that carries me and I know that eventually, years from now, another minister will come to serve this community, and the community that is UUCD (now over 200 years old) will continue.

From Our Director of Religious Education For Children and Youth



Dear Congregation,

I love when we have visitors and newcomers with kids, and I especially love when members of the congregation say hello to kids who are new to the community (and their parents). Thank you for your warm welcome for these families. They often leave a note on their guest cards saying things like “You all are awesome!”

But sometimes rather than needing to welcome a family we are just meeting, we are saying hello after not seeing one another for a while. We have families who attend Sunday Services primarily online, or infrequently. And while there is a good chance families with children are still here at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury nearly every single Sunday (the majority of our families have one or more children enrolled in the Our Whole Lives sexuality education programs), you may not have seen them for a while. Our Whole Lives is held at times and in locations that aren’t particularly visible to the congregation.

Here are some ideas for providing a warm welcome to families who you may not have seen for some time: “It’s great to see you!” or “How are you?” Even “catch me up!”

A greeting like “Finally! I haven’t seen kids here in so long! Where are all the kids these days?!” is enthusiastic, but it can make families with kids feel put on the spot and unintentionally come across as unwelcoming. It is especially unwelcoming for a family that has been experiencing difficulty in family life and that might find it challenging to be present.

This kind of greeting also off-loads your anxiety onto the family with whom you are speaking. The same thing can happen in less direct ways when you use your time together to catch the family up on congregational business and all the things you’re feeling nervous about regarding the future of the congregation. “Rev. Kathleen is leaving, and we don’t have RE!”

(Please don’t say we don’t have Religious Education. We have a number of volunteers who work very hard on our children and youth ministries, and it dismisses and invisibilizes their work. Also please don’t say we don’t have children. It invisibilizes kids and their families, and invites a demotivating kind of guilt about not being around on more Sunday mornings. Finally, rest assured that while there is grief at goodbyes, the congregation has survived and thrived over many ministerial transitions.)

Let’s be as thoughtful about welcoming one another weekly as we are about welcoming newcomers. None of us, kid and adult alike, want to be tokens for a demographic group.

Warmly in Faith,
Sierra-Marie

Get Your Girl Scout Cookies!

All Girl Scouts in our congregation have been invited to wear their Girl Scout vests and take orders for Girl Scout cookies before and/or after service on Sunday, March 5th. There are only a small handful participating, so if you can, we encourage you to order something from each participant. Thanks for supporting our Girl Scouts.

Upcoming in Religious Education

Children are always welcome in Sunday services. Alternatively, for children who would prefer, we have nursery care as well as a child-led, play-based Religious Education program available during services. Additionally, Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education for 7th-8th graders and 10th-11th graders is currently running. Children and youth signed up for these programs will meet in March at pre-designated times included on this calendar:

- **Sunday, March 5** - Middle School OWL (NO High School OWL); Note that this Sunday's service is designed to be multigenerational
- **Saturday-Sunday March 11-12** - High School OWL Retreat
- **Sunday March 12** - Middle School OWL
- **Sunday, March 19** - Middle School OWL and High School OWL
- **Friday-Saturday March 24-25** - Possible Middle School OWL Retreat (TBD)
- **Sunday, March 26** - Middle School OWL followed by a Middle School Youth Group event unless there has been a retreat (NO High School OWL); Note that this is the last week of Mystery Buddy postcard exchanges for all Mystery Buddy participants

It's Community Dinner Time Wednesday, March 8th at 6:00 p.m.



This month's dinner is sponsored by the UUCD Book Club who will provide homemade soups (vegetarian, vegan, and more), salad, and dessert. After dinner, you will have the option of joining in the choir rehearsal or a special activity. Bring your family and neighbors for a special time of community gathering and sharing. And, if you haven't done so already at past dinners, please sign up to help with set up or clean up when the invite comes in your email.

Questions? Please contact **Diane Purvis**.

Ministry/Team News

From the *Auction Committee*

Buy-Centennial Auction Matching Funds Program

The Auction’s Matching Funds program was very successful this year!

27 folks participated, 16 of whom pledged a percentage of the Auction total, and 11 of whom pledged a discrete amount.

Altogether, this group donated **\$6,912.68!**
Sincere thanks to all who participated:

Bob Bollinger	Chris Halfar	Sally Mandler
Valerie Cochrane	Elise Jaeger	Sue Maynard
Virginia Cook	Anne Krieg	Sam McCoy
Chris Creter	Judy Lacker	Kristen Papucci
Marian & Tony DiFabbio	Donna Lawrence	Diane & Brad Purvis
Marie & Keith Dupree	Jane Leff & Randy Becker	Lisa Austin Smith
Cheryl Edelen	Melody Levy	Rich & Lola Strilowich
Karen & Joe Gillotti	Alex Makai	Heidi Winslow
Anonymous (3)		



Buy-Centennial Auction: A Great Success!

The results are still being tabulated, but as of this writing, the 2022-23 Auction’s total profit (including Matching Funds) is **\$20,743.68**. All of these funds will be used in our 2022-23 Operating Budget.

Our Beloved Community was also very generous in their donations to the 8th Principle organizations: more on that in next month’s *Comment*.

Grateful thanks to...

- **Our Hardworking Auction Committee:** Ginny Cameron, Val Cochrane, Nancy Cullen, Eva DeFranco, David Lias, Lisa Horton, Barbara Myers & Diane Purvis
- **Our Behind-the-Scenes Tech Team:** Chris Creter and Joanna Ribisi
- **Jerry Phelps and Auction Performers:** Chris McCarthy, Jen McPartlin & Deb Oria
- **Our Auctioneer: Peter Horton**

Our Donors of gift cards, dinners, events, food offerings, services, and more:

Shelly Albini	Eva DeFranco & John Bonansinga	Melody Levy	Rev Kathleen & Phil Rudoff
Jeff Asher	Lisa & Brad Greene	Alex Makai	Cheryl Rykowski
Randy Becker & Jane Leff	Margaret & Keith Henderson	Sally Mandler	Annie Senol
Bob Bollinger	Dale Hill	Sam McCoy	Suze Shaner
Board of Trustees	Paula Hopewell	Gary Mummert	Heather Smith
Marcia Brooker	Peter & Lisa Horton	Barbara Myers	Lynn Taborsak
Joan Campbell	Elise Jaeger	Deb Oria	Truus Teeuwissen
Val Cochrane	Anne Krieg	Jerry Phelps	Carl Tichler & Suzanne Perry
Ginny Cook	Mary Ann Kulla	Diane Purvis	Nancy Tramontana
Chris Creter & Tim O'Donnell	Sherry Kyriacou	Melene Rose & Todd Zagorec	Sue Walsh
Nancy Cullen	Judy Lacker	Yvonne Ruddy-Stein & Jeremy Stein	Camilla Warden
Cheryl Edelen	Donna Lawrence		
Corporate Donors:	Bridgewater Chocolates	Honeybean Catering	Sally of Salon 10
Cathedral of St. John the Divine	The Creter Group	Housatonic Valley Regional Land Trust	Salon 53

From *Buildings and Grounds*

Help Needed!

There is an urgent need for two people to join the Buildings & Grounds Administration Team (BGAT). With support and guidance from the Board, this committee makes day-to-day decisions about what must be done to maintain our facilities. It collects bids for things like snow plowing or asphalt paving and makes recommendations to the Board. Time required: 2-4 hours per month. If interested, please contact **Gale Alexander** or **Margaret Henderson** immediately.

From the *Caring Circle*



Our Caring Circle is Available

Our ‘Care Coordinator’ receives requests and answers questions for the Caring Circle.

Karen Gillotti is the contact person for March and April.

Valerie Cochrane is the assistant.

If you have a need, please contact **Karen**.

Please note that your call will be returned as quickly as possible but it may be at the end of the day.

From *Team Green*

On Sunday mornings we ritualize that we love and care for the earth. One way to do this is to minimize the hazardous waste in our homes and to transfer it to the experts to properly dispose or de-contaminate it.

If you live in CT, visit www.HRRA.org for many resources for caring for our earth, including Hazardous Waste collections in the towns in our vicinity. **The next Danbury Hazardous Waste Collection Day is April 15 between 9 and 2 at the Public Works Facility, 53 Newtown Rd.**

If you live in Putnam County, NY, contact 845-808-1390 for Hazardous Waste collection info or contact your town recycling office.

From the *Social Action Council*

Soup Kitchen Corner

by Judy Lacker

On Saturday, March 4th, some members of Soup Kitchen Team #1 (Team Leaders Judy Lacker and Rose Schlemmer, John Miglietta, Brian Teagarden, Jane Leff, Randy Becker, Sally Mandler and Gary Winn) will be returning to the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen on Spring Street to help serve take-out meals that were cooked in volunteers' homes as well as bagged sandwiches for lunches and breakfasts and hot lunches for Pacific House also prepared in volunteers' homes as well as through donations. Unfortunately, we are not yet able to serve the guests a meal inside because of the Covid pandemic.

You can also help feed our neighbors with a gift card in any amount from any local supermarket. Lynn Taborsak has also been scheduling the sandwich donations so we have just the right amount each day at Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen. If you are interested in making sandwiches, please email her at ddhsandwiches@gmail.com. We can all be an important part of the fight to end hunger in our community!



In the past couple of years, we have lost some of our **Dorothy Day volunteers**. Please consider volunteering to be on a DD Team - it only involves a few hours, 3 Saturdays per year. You will find it to be a very rewarding experience. Please contact **Judy Lacker** for more information or to sign up.

Please note that we have resumed collecting non-perishable food donations on Sunday mornings. Please place your food donations in the basket in the foyer. You can sign up to help transport the weekly collection to The Dorothy Day Hospitality House on Spring Street.



Food Donations

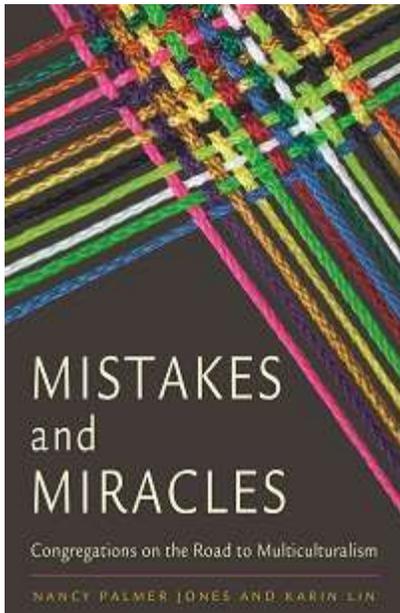
Upcoming Events



UUCD Men Conversing over Coffee meets on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting is on Wednesday, March 8th at 10:00 a.m. at UUCD in the Fellowship Hall Lower Level. For more information contact **Gary Mummert** or **Joe Gillotti**.

Chair Yoga - All aspects of this class are designed to lead a person to a feeling of wellness and learning to become calmer. Come join our happy group, it's great value in so many ways, on Mondays 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. at UUCD. Participants must contact their doctor or medical provider for approval before attending this Chair Yoga Class. To register, or if you have questions or concerns, contact **Joe Gillotti** any evening during the week after 7:00 pm.

The discussions of "Mistakes and Miracles," the Unitarian Universalist Common Read for 2023



Many of the Unitarian Universalist congregations in the United States are commonly reading "*Mistakes and Miracles - Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism.*" This paperback book (also available as an e-book) challenges us to think about ways in which our congregation might expand our multicultural inclusion as well as avoid some of the pitfalls experienced by other congregations.

On three Wednesdays in March (March 15, 22, 29) join **Randy Becker** as we explore the various sections of the book, seeing if we can find lessons for ourselves.

We will gather from 7:00 -8:30 p.m. on those evenings in the Fellowship Hall Lower Level. Come, join us ... no registration is needed.

The book is available from the inSpirit Bookstore of the Unitarian Universalist Association:

<https://www.uuabookstore.org/Mistakes-and-Miracles-P18521.aspx>
and on Amazon (<https://tinyurl.com/2p8ad2re>).



BETTY and the BABY BOOMERS

SUNDAY, MARCH 5 – 4PM

24 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury CT

When Betty Boomer, Jean Valla McAvoy, Paul Rubeo, and Steve Stanne began singing together more than 35 years ago, the name made sense—a play on Betty’s name and the fact that all are children of the baby boom. Bassist Robert Bard fit right in demographically when he joined later on. If they’ve had second thoughts, it’s too late to change now. “Betty and the Baby Boomers” appears on the covers of the band’s five CDs, and the name is known to folk music fans from the mountains of Connemara in Ireland to the Catskills overlooking New York’s Hudson Valley, their home base.

The folk genre covers many styles. The Boomers’ take on it is suggested in a review of their second recording, *Tumbling Through the Stream of Days*, in the folk song magazine *Sing Out!* It described the group as “a refreshing reminder of the halcyon days of American folk music” and the CD as “an enthusiastic testament to the sheer joy of singing and playing music.”

In addition to original songs from Jean, the Boomers draw on sources including traditional tunes, Americana roots music, contemporary artists like Greg Brown, Bruce Springsteen, and Dougie MacLean, and classic “folksingers” like Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and Phil Ochs. Whatever the source, each song is “Boomerized” – set in distinctive arrangements with three and four part harmonies. The singers’ voices differ in range and color; they combine in a unique and resonant blend that is the Boomers’ signature. Their vocals are coupled to impressive instrumental work on guitars, Dobro, bass, bodhran, and kazoo, or sometimes — “Look Ma, no hands” — uncoupled in a *capella* selections.



MUSIC AT THE RIDGE
24 Clapboard Ridge Road
Danbury, Connecticut
www.musicattheridge.org

Tickets:
In-person and
Live-streaming
At Eventbrite.com



Notes on Two Hundred Years (and More)

by Douglas H. Parkhurst

An Every Member Canvass, sometimes known as a Stewardship Campaign, is and has been (as in many Unitarian Universalist churches) the primary fundraising activity of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury (UUCD). This annual effort takes place in late winter/early spring. It is timed to allow the church's financial team and board of trustees to create a budget to present at the UUCD's annual meeting later in the spring and for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

In these times of quarter million dollar budgets the pledges made during the yearly canvass account for something in the neighborhood of seventy percent of the UUCD's annual income. It can be interesting and instructive to examine church income and expenses for earlier years. Let's take a look back at the First Universalist Society of Danbury's proposed budget for a fiscal year during the mid-twentieth century, 1949-50. Discussion of this budget began at the December 9, 1948, meeting of the board of trustees chaired by Wallace Parkhurst. Also discussed "at length" was the church's Fair Share amount of \$225.00 requested by the Universalist Church of America for the denomination's Unified Appeal.

At the board meeting on January 13, 1949, a report from Clifford Taylor stated that weekly offerings were being collected at a "very high percentage rate." During this meeting the board voted to reorganize the church's governance with the creation of six standing committees. One of these would be Finance and Budget to be chaired by William Wood.

There appears to have been no meeting of the church trustees in February. The next meeting was held on March 10th and lasted well over three hours. The 1949-50 budget was discussed at length as well as a possible offering to be dedicated to Fair Share. Arthur Olson advised that the Danbury Universalist Church would receive a payment of \$720.00 in aid from the Connecticut Universalist Convention, a ten percent reduction from the \$800.00 received the previous year. The board scheduled the church's every member canvass for Sunday afternoon, March 27th.

A letter to church members and friends was prepared announcing the upcoming canvass with details of the proposed budget.

Dear Friends:

...The EVERY-MEMBER CANVASS will be held on March 27, 1949 in the after-noon from 2:00 - 4:00 o'clock. At that time canvassers will call upon you for your pledge for the coming year. Last year the Church took a big step forward. It steps forward again this year. It is our sincere hope to meet or balance the budget by your generous help. IT CAN BE DONE!

Last year this Church raised approximately 43% of its budget by pledges [Note - 54% in this proposed budget]....If this Church were to receive 100 pledges of \$1.00 per Sunday, IT WOULD OVER-SUBSCRIBE THE BUDGET.

However the budget can be BALANCED if there are to be received 60 pledges of \$1.00 per Sunday. If the people of our Parish could see their way to meet either of these two proposals OUR CHURCH WOULD HAVE A DEBT-FREE YEAR.

With your whole-hearted support, this can be a banner year for the Universalist Church of Danbury TO GO OVER THE TOP IN PLEDGES.

*Sincerely,
The Finance Committee*

<i>Proposed Estimated Budget for 1949-50</i>		<i>Estimated Income for 1949-50</i>	
<i>Minister's Salary</i>	<i>\$2,300.00</i>	<i>Christmas Offering</i>	<i>\$150.00</i>
<i>Parsonage Rent</i>	<i>600.00</i>	<i>Easter Offering</i>	<i>150.00</i>
<i>Organist</i>	<i>260.00</i>	<i>Thanksgiving Offering</i>	<i>60.00</i>
<i>Heat (coke)</i>	<i>350.00</i>	<i>By Pledges</i>	<i>2,500.00</i>
<i>Gas & Electricity</i>	<i>75.00</i>	<i>Loose Collections</i>	<i>150.00</i>
<i>State Convention Quota</i>	<i>10.00</i>	<i>Income from Funds - State</i>	<i>145.00</i>
<i>Organ Upkeep</i>	<i>60.00</i>	<i>Income from Funds - Local</i>	<i>70.00</i>
<i>Hodge Insurance Co.</i>	<i>75.00</i>	<i>U.Y.F.</i>	<i>120.00</i>
<i>Duplex Envelope</i>	<i>15.00</i>	<i>MMT CLUB</i>	<i>180.00</i>
<i>Water Rent</i>	<i>12.00</i>	<i>State Convention Aid</i>	<i>720.00</i>
<i>Printing & Postage</i>	<i>100.00</i>	<i>Misc. - to be raised</i>	<i><u>393.00</u></i>
<i>Flowers</i>	<i>25.00</i>		<i>\$4,638.00</i>
<i>Safe Deposit Rent</i>	<i>6.00</i>		
<i>Fair Share Offering</i>	<i>200.00</i>		
<i>Misc. Expenses</i>	<i>50.00</i>		
<i>General Upkeep of Property</i>	<i><u>500.00</u></i>		
	<i>\$4,638.00</i>		

Some explanation will be helpful regarding the above. It was reported at a board of trustees meeting in late 1947 that the church "constituency" numbered approximately 173. The board sometimes met at the church at 347 Main St., Danbury, and other times at the homes of board members. Wallace Parkhurst was this writer's father. The United Appeal was the Universalist denomination's version of today's Annual Program Fund of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Rev. John P. Christensen succeeded Rev. Harry Adams Hersey as minister after the latter's retirement in mid-1948. Rev. Christensen lived with his family at the church parsonage at 8 Division St., Danbury. Adelaide Grabert was continuing her long tenure as church organist and choir director. The church building was heated by a coal/coke furnace with a hot air system, which not long after was replaced by an oil burner boiler and steam heat. The Universalist Youth Fellowship (U.Y.F.) was the 1940s successor organization to the Young People's Christian Union (Y.P.C.U.) The MMT (Meet Me There) Club was a couples group which organized church suppers, social events, and fundraisers. Several internet inflation calculators show that \$4,638 in 1949 dollars would be worth approximately \$56,000 today.

General Assembly registration is now open!



This year the Unitarian Universalists' annual conference, known as GA (General Assembly), will be held in Pittsburgh June 21-25.

So why think about it now, in February? Two reasons: Pittsburgh is close enough that we might rent a van and drive together; and, registration fees go up March 1 -- and again May 15. Registration details are at <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>. Please note that this year there's a special rate for folks who have never attended GA before, or for those under 25. Also, **as always, there are scholarship funds available** for those who need them.

If you're thinking about going - even if you're not sure yet - please email Margaret and let her know.

