



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury

Monthly **COMMENT** Newsletter

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

JANUARY 2024



FROM OUR MINISTER

“Love is the Question and the Answer”

Dear Beloveds,

In her essay “Love is Revision” in the February 2023 issue of *The Christian Century* Alejandra Oliva discusses Kiese Laymon’s quote “love is revision and revision is love.” Oliva says this means love is editing, and rewriting. “In the same way you return to a piece of writing over and over again to try to make it the best version of itself you can, you should return to your relationships, over and over again, to revise and reimagine, to fix what doesn’t work and strengthen what does. Revision requires an attention that is both honest and loving—not allowing yourself to get attached to your own little flourishes and darlings when they don’t serve the project, and celebrating the parts where, for once, you’ve managed to write exactly the thing you wanted to.”

I think this applies to love in all its guises and all its relationships. It applies to lovers and partners and spouses. It applies to friends. It applies to co-workers and colleagues and classmates. It applies to life in a faith community such as ours. It applies to working for justice. The thing with love is that it doesn’t have a deadline or a publication date. You can revise and edit and rewrite forever, always getting better. Until it’s all liberating love.

And liberating love is where our Unitarian Universalist tradition is headed. What if the center of our tradition, as is being proposed, were revolutionary, liberating, love. A love based in the non-transactional, redemptive good will toward all people and our planet. A love so central that our central human task becomes to what love requires of us in any given moment. A love so profound it is both the question and the answer. Love? Love!

With Love,
Rev. Tony

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE – An Examination of Conscience for Lingering Prejudices

This month's theme is liberating love and my challenge to you is examine your conscience for lingering prejudices. Most good-hearted people are aware of prejudice and understand that even the best of us have certain biases and prejudices, sometimes unconscious, that inform our attitudes and behavior. If you're reading this, you've probably done some work on unlearning white supremacy culture, engaging, and combatting racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and other glaring prejudices. My challenge to you this month is look underneath those prejudices that loom large at the front of consciousness and peek under the psychic bed, under the emotional bed, and into the mental closet for some persistent prejudices and biases that tend to get overlooked, especially by liberals and others with a more open-minded world view. I offer three for your initial consideration, but you may think of others. Begin with fat acceptance and body image, poverty, and educationism. Do you harbor any bias toward fat people? Do you misunderstand what causes obesity? Do you sometimes see a fat person and think they'd be good looking if they lost some weight? Do you think weight loss is a matter of diet and willpower? Did you know BMI is not a good measuring scale for health and wellness? If any of these rings a bell, you may be harboring more body shaming ideas than you would have thought. Here's a great little questionnaire to get you thinking about your own ideas about weight, fat, body image and acceptance: <https://www.idrlabs.com/fat-shaming/test.php>.

What about poverty? Do you think poor people are lazy? Do you believe financial stability and financial health are a matter of industriousness, hard work, persistence, and effort? Do you tend to think less of people you know are poor? What about young adults who live with their parents? How deeply invested are you in a social safety net? Do you support a universal basic income and single-payer national health care? Do you understand how hard poor people work to survive? This quick quiz on the realities of poverty in America might help you reflect on your own attitudes: <https://www.povertyusa.org/poverty-quiz/>.

Most Unitarian Universalists place an incredibly high value on education. But do you think less of people who are uneducated? Do you think Appalachian or Southern accents sound unintelligent? Do you frequently categorize religious fundamentalists or political conservatives as ignorant? Do think less of someone once you learn they don't have a college education? Or a high school diploma? This BBC article on Educationism might be useful as you ponder your own assumptions and behaviors: <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20171219-the-hidden-judgements-holding-people-back>.

Spend some time this month with these questions, these quizzes, and thinking honestly about your attitudes toward fat people, poor people, and less educated people. Perhaps do some journaling or make some art, or talk with friend – or ME – about what this challenge go you thinking about. As always, I'd love to know how you did with this challenge. Text me or call me at 508-344-3668 or email me at revtony@pm.me.

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

Sunday, January 7th

Lizzo's Liberating Love

Rev. Tony Lorenzen

Rev. Tony reflects on body acceptance and body positivity as the way to liberating love for ourselves and others.



Our Share the Plate offering will be for the Center for Empowerment and Education. Cristina Cabral is the Manager of Community-Based Programs at the Center for Empowerment and Education and will speak about the CEE. The CEE is a non-profit organization, that provides services for victims of Domestic Violence or Sexual assault in 11 towns in our surrounding area. At CEE we empower individuals to find their own voice and choose their path towards healing, as they rebuild their lives. We work to prevent and reduce interpersonal violence in the community, through prevention, education and awareness. All services are confidential and provided at no cost, 27/7, all year round.

Sunday, January 14th

Sticking to Love

Katie Grosh

"Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love." - Martin Luther King Jr. This week in January, "30 Days of Love" begins and we celebrate the life and legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. With some of MLK's radical teachings, we will explore the dynamics of love, justice, and power, and how we are called to meet the demands of liberating love for our time.

Katie Grosh is an ecumenically-minded aspiring pastor committed to connecting communities of faith to environmental justice. After majoring in geology at Carleton College, she taught environmental education at Urban Ecology Center in Milwaukee and served as a Chaplain at Camp Wilmot. She is a recent graduate of Yale Divinity School (MDiv '22) and currently works as a Chaplain at Griffin Hospital.

Sunday, January 21st

The Liberating Love of Carlton Pearson

Rev. Tony Lorenzen

Rev. Tony Lorenzen reflects on the life and liberating theology of the late Carlton Pearson, an evangelical Christian who converted to Universalism and merged his congregation with All Souls Unitarian in Tulsa, OK.

Sunday, January 28th

Liberating Love, Article Two, and UU Values

Margaret Henderson

Margaret reflects on how the proposed Article Two revision centers its approach in liberating love as the foundational UU value.

From Our Director of Religious Education For Children and Youth



Upcoming In Children and Youth Religious Education (RE)

On Sundays, children are invited to the upper level of the Fellowship Hall to attend the first part of the service with the adults. After the story portion of the service, children have the option to go downstairs for children's programming. Teens of high school age do not attend the first part of service at this time, but instead go straight to their meeting room in the cottage on Sunday mornings.

- **Friday, January 5** - Group for Caregivers of LGBTQI+ Young People
- **Sunday, January 7:** Regular Sunday morning programs; Junior High Youth Group meets Sunday evening
- **January 14:** Community Building Day for kids and teens with a Service Activity (note: Sierra-Marie will be away)
- **January 21:** Regular Sunday morning programs
- **January 28:** Regular Sunday morning programs

Couples Raising Kids Together: Strengthen Your Relationship

[Prepare-Enrich](#) is an evidence-based program designed to increase relational satisfaction, used both for premarital/precommitted couples and for established couples. Come to our Prepare-Enrich three-workshop series on **Saturday mornings 8AM-11AM, January 20th and 27th and February 3rd**. We will use a version of the program for couples who are parenting together. Participants complete a relationship assessment in advance of the program, and then as a group we will be doing couples exercises that are shown to increase relationship satisfaction in areas such as: communication, finances, conflict resolution, relationship styles, affection, and parenting.

Childcare can be arranged for those who need it. There is a suggested donation of \$98 to help us cover program materials and childcare, but couples are encouraged to participate whether or not that donation is doable for them. We need at least three enrolled couples to run this program. Participants do not need to be members of the congregation, so feel free to invite friends from across your networks. Please email dre@uudanbury.org to sign up no later than Friday, January 5th.

Please Help Spread the Word

We have active programs for kids and teens of all ages running throughout the school year, as well as nursery care available during Sunday Services. Please help us spread the word by sharing one of our Program Booklets (available in the foyer) or inviting families you know to join you on a Sunday. All are programs are designed to meet [developmental needs](#). Programs running currently include but are not limited to:

- **Spirit Play for PreK-Kindergarten:** a Montessori-based program that accompanies children through the questions of early childhood and helps them develop a vocabulary for their religious and spiritual experiences and thoughts
- **Love and Wonder in Nature (L.A.W.N.) for Primary and Middle Grades:** a child-led, play-centered program designed to help children as they begin to make meaning about their experiences in the world
- **Junior High Youth Group for 6th-9th Grade:** A community of belonging for a diverse and ever-expanding group of kids that gathers once monthly for social activities
- **Senior High Youth Group for 9th-12th Grade:** A community where youth explore identity, grow in leadership skills, and make a difference in the world together
- **Neighborhood Bridges for All Ages, Kids and Adults:** A multigenerational opportunity to meet "neighbors" in Greater Danbury and learn a little about their faith traditions

Short-Term Volunteer Opportunity

If you would like to support our children's ministry without a long-term commitment; if you like shopping, thrifting, or repurposing; or if you like to make things, there is a job for you! Those of you who were around when we experimented with telling Spirit Play (Montessori) stories in the service may remember the story baskets we filled with "manipulatives" or little props that helped tell each story.

We now have a group of young children who hear a Spirit Play story each week. We need people willing to gather materials and assemble our Spirit Play baskets. A typical basket includes a fleece underlay cut to specified dimensions and a small assortment of other items (example items: wooden figures, dollhouse accessories, ornaments, paperclips, magnifying glasses, strips of fabric).

You can sign up to make as few as one single basket. If you love doing it, you can sign up to make several more. Funds are available for any purchases. We can also use volunteers who don't want to be responsible for an entire basket but would like to offer a unique skill -- in particular woodworking or sewing -- to help those volunteers making baskets. If you can help, please email Director of Religious Education, Sierra-Marie: dre@uudanbury.org.

Neighborhood Bridges: Resources for Learning About Sikhism

Our Neighborhood Bridges program is an opportunity for people of all ages to learn about and connect with the faith communities around us. In January we will learn about Sikhism. Let's learn together! Please join us at 6:45PM, after the Community Dinner, on Wednesday January 10th for a Sikhism 101. We are also planning a visit to a local Sikh community, so stay tuned for information. In the meantime, check out this [Sikhism information sheet and resource list](#) prepared by Randy Becker who is coordinating this month's program.

From The Board of Trustees

by Jeff Asher



Happy Holidays to all!

With all that is happening in the world, I thought I would turn to the mundane for this, the first 2024 Comment article from your UUCD Board.

I expect for some it will be a relief not to talk about the news.

Rather, I will discuss two policies that were approved by your Board at their December 7th meeting.

Gifts: Under what circumstances should the Board approve your generous gifts?

It turns out not to be a trivial question. Restricted gifts for funding unbudgeted activities can cause problems. Think about the Board’s quandary (hypothetically) in approving the generous donation of a nude painting. Or a hot tub installation?

So, the Board has approved a Policy and Guidelines (created by Gale Alexander and Jeff Asher) to ensure that we are equally respectful of all gifts and donors. The takeaway: Unrestricted cash is the best way to donate to the UUCD.

Task Forces: The Board has found that a limited-time task force that focuses on a specific area is quite efficient. This approved policy (created and proposed by Jeff Asher) lists the Board’s protocols for creating an ad hoc task force, keeping up with its work, and receiving its final report and presentation.

In this way, we can ensure that the Board best utilizes the hard work of those task force members and takes timely actions as a result of their work.

We wish you all health and prosperity in the New Year.

Treasurer and Stewardship Help Needed!

Can you help out with Treasurer's duties? Or if accounting isn't your bailiwick, can you help us get the message out about pledging this spring? There is an urgent need for volunteers to help with both of these positions now that 2024 is here. We're flexible and will take any offers of help!

If you can help or have any suggestions, please contact **Margaret Henderson** or another Board member.

P.S. Thank you to Dave Lias and Jyo Buyyala for helping out around the edges! But we still need volunteers!

Upcoming Events

Chalice Circles are back – If you would like to join a Chalice Circle or would like more information about Chalice Circles, please contact Rev. Tony. New circles will be forming in January.

Claudia Schmidt

Folk and Acoustic Concert in Danbury

4 pm, Sunday, January 7, 2024



Claudia Schmidt is one of the most popular folk, blues, and jazz musicians from the Midwest. Her smoky alto voice, multi-octave range, and skillful playing of the 12-string guitar and mountain dulcimer have been showcased on *National Public Radio's A Prairie Home Companion*. As a gifted storyteller and songwriter, she incorporates a wide range of musical influences into her original material. With over 20 albums recorded and award-winning compositions, **Claudia Schmidt's Music at the Ridge** concert on January 7th, 2023, promises to fill your heart and refresh your soul.



Music at the Ridge Sunday Concerts are hosted at:
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury
24 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, CT 06811 *just off I-84.*

<https://musicattheridge.org/>

[Concerts of Music at the Ridge | Eventbrite](#)



Unitarian Universalists are people of all ages, many backgrounds and many beliefs. We create spirituality and community beyond boundaries, working for justice and more love in our lives and in the world.

In person & live streaming
at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

New Group for Caregivers of LGBTQIA+ Young People

Parents of LGBTQIA+ young people, please join us in gathering on the **first Friday of every month from 7:30-9PM** for mutual support and celebration of our kids. Our December meeting will take place on December 1st. Please RSVP to dre@uudanbury.org.

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

Making the Community Dinner a Real Community Affair



Our next Community Dinner will be on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 6 pm. For months now, this congregational year and last, we have been fed by various groups in our congregational community, but it is only fitting that we kick off a new calendar year with all of us doing our part. So, January's Community Dinner is potluck/covered dish. Bring some food to share with all for a real smorgasbord of delight. Bring your already prepared (and heated as needed) food by 6 pm. Be sure to make a tag to let people know what is in your offering so those with food allergies can be alerted. We will provide beverages, dessert, cutlery, plates, and etc. Let's make it a feast!

You will have the option to also help by signing up to clean up afterwards. At 6:45 pm, we will move into a program about Sikhism, our Neighborhood Bridges focus for January. At 7:30pm, the Choir will have its rehearsal.

Watch for your email invitation - and start thinking about what favorite yummy you will want to bring to share. (And, yes, it is totally fine to bring some commercially prepped foods bought at the market or elsewhere... and don't let not having something to bring keep you away. We are a generous congregation so we know there will be plenty for all.)

So - food, fellowship, learning, music: who could ask for anything more? Any questions, contact **Randy Becker**, dinner coordinator.



January 13th: Suze Shaner and Dan Brodax are facilitating **Movies with a Message**, using **Spiritual Cinema's** movie shorts the second Saturday of each month **from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.** These nights will consist of 1-3 short movies that explore the big questions about life and living (i.e, Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we bound? and What can we become when we live at our highest level of potential?) with discussion afterwards. We will supply water and popcorn. Feel free to bring your takeout dinner. Donations to UUCD accepted.



Generally speaking, people do not like to talk about death. Joni Lowe and Marcia Brooker invite you to have such a conversation with members of this congregation beginning in February. The Death Cafe will be offered to give participants an opportunity to explore different aspects of death and/or the dying process. The cafe is conversational amongst a small group of attendees so everyone one may ask questions and share. The group will be limited to 8 people and will meet on Sundays right after the service every other week beginning February 25th. Sign up to claim your spot, grab your tea/coffee after the Sunday service and come downstairs for community and conversation. Please contact **Joni Lowe** or **Marcia Brooker** for questions or to sign up.

Ministry/Team News

From the *Social Action Council*

Soup Kitchen Corner

by Judy Lacker

On Saturday, January 6, some members of Soup Kitchen Team 3 (Team Leader **Lynn Taborsak, Bob Taborsak, Diane Purvis, Nancy Brown, Linda and Steve Schneider and Jyo Buyyala**) 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 ddhhsandwiches@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.

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.



From the *Caring Circle*



Our Caring Circle is Available

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

Joan Campbell is the contact person for January and February.

Joan Stapleton is the assistant.

If you have a need, please contact **Joan Campbell**

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

UUA Events

30 Days of Love 2024: January 15 - February 14



Decriminalization will be one of the weekly themes for 2024's 30 Days of Love celebration. See more details at <https://sidewithlove.org/30-days-of-love-2024>.

As in other years, you can expect to receive several different offerings weekly, each from a different voice within Unitarian Universalism, such as a time for all ages, a meditative or grounding practice, a prayer, a blessing, and a reflection grounded in personal story.

We offer these resources knowing various people will use them in a range of ways. Some may take a quick break during their lunch hour to watch a video blessing or read the week's prayer; families might start a family meal reading one of the written reflections and then engaging in conversation; Board members and committee chairs might use the Grounding Practice to kick off that week's meeting agenda.

[Check out last year's offerings while you wait!](#)

Love Resists is a joint campaign of the Unitarian Universalist Association and Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Notes on Two Hundred Years (and More)

by Douglas H. Parkhurst

At its beginning American Unitarianism, or liberal Christianity as the faith was often known in its early manifestations, mostly by-passed Connecticut. This despite much of the state's geographic proximity to the Congregational churches of eastern and central Massachusetts where the "Unitarian Controversy" was ongoing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Connecticut, called the Land of Steady Habits, probably exceeded Massachusetts as the most religiously orthodox of the New England colonies and states. The Connecticut and New Haven colonies each were settled by Puritans in the 1630s and the two became one under the Connecticut name three decades later. The so-called Standing Order, the governing class in politics, religion, and societal norms, though its influence slowly weakened over the decades, retained much of its powerful Calvinist sway in Connecticut well into the nineteenth century. This even after the Congregational church was disestablished in the state in 1818.

There was religious dissent in Connecticut, however, in the form of Anglican (later Episcopalian), Baptist, Quaker, and as time passed Methodist and a few Universalist societies and churches. There was Unitarian dissent, too, though early on and with one notable exception this centered mostly in individuals and not in groups. Unitarians were a distinct minority in Connecticut for most of the denomination's independent history, even into the twentieth century.

The Rev. Stanley Griswold (1763-1815) has been called "the first apostle of Unitarianism in Connecticut." A graduate of Yale College, a Calvinist stronghold, he came to what is now First Congregational Church of New Milford in early 1790. Rev. Griswold believed salvation could be achieved through good works. He adopted other liberal views, such as denying the total depravity of human beings, offering communion to all, and advocating universal salvation (this last a fundamental tenet of Universalism). Though popular with many members of his flock, Stanley Griswold left New Milford in 1802 under pressure from the orthodox establishment. An enthusiastic supporter of Jeffersonian democracy (he was a Democratic-Republican in a Federalist state) Griswold first moved to New Hampshire where he edited a newspaper. Later he went west and entered politics, serving as secretary of Michigan Territory, as an appointed U.S. senator from Ohio, and as a federal judge in Illinois Territory.

For nineteen years minister of First Church of Christ in New London, the Rev. Henry Channing (1760-1840), also a graduate of Yale, became an early Unitarian in Connecticut. It was said that by 1791 he "was giving up the eternal generation of the Son" and in time his evolving Arminian theology became suspect to the orthodox establishment, although he apparently never preached Unitarian doctrine. Henry Channing's nephew was William Ellery Channing, later a leading light of nineteenth century Unitarianism. William was tutored by Henry for two years before William entered Harvard College. After a successful ministry, Henry Channing left New London in 1806 of his own accord and became minister of the Congregational Church in Canandaigua, New York. He later returned to New London and was elected to the Connecticut legislature as a member of the Toleration party, which opposed the Standing Order and favored disestablishment of the Congregational church. Another early Connecticut Unitarian was the Rev. John Sherman (1772-1828), grandson of statesman Roger Sherman. He, too, was a Yale graduate and settled at First Church of Mansfield in 1797. At first a strict Calvinist, Sherman came under the influence of English Unitarian thought and accepted belief in God as a Unity, not a Trinity. In 1805 he authored *One God in one person only: and Jesus Christ a Being distinct from God...* While he was much loved by his parishoners, the Calvinist clergy around Mansfield grew alarmed and called a

council to examine Rev. Sherman's theological opinions. The council was friendly but advised he leave the Mansfield church with a favorable recommendation for a future settlement. John Sherman moved on and in 1805 was invited to minister to a religious society in Oldenbarneveldt (Trenton Village), New York. This group is now called The Unitarian Church of Barneveld. After resigning this pastorate in 1810 Sherman established an academy and built a resort lodge nearby at Trenton Falls.

The Rev. Abiel Abbot (1765-1859), unlike the three ministers mentioned above, was a graduate of Harvard College. Initially a teacher and tutor, for some years Abbot held Calvinist opinions and in 1795 became pastor of First Society in Coventry, Connecticut. Orthodox in preaching, Rev. Abbot's personal theology evolved toward liberalism and his views regarding "the Trinity, the Death of Christ, and the Atonement" became suspect. In 1811, under pressure from the orthodox establishment, he left First Society and until 1819 taught at Dummer Academy in Byfield, Massachusetts. After farming for a few years Abbot moved to Peterborough, New Hampshire, where he ministered to the Congregational Society, Unitarian, starting in 1827. Active in town he was instrumental in establishing the town's free public library, the Peterborough Lyceum, and Peterborough Academy. In 1989, at Peterborough's 250th anniversary, Abiel Abbot was remembered as the town's most influential citizen.

What would become the first Unitarian church in Connecticut, now called the Unitarian Universalist Society in Brooklyn, was organized as First Ecclesiastical Society in 1731 in the Mortlake section of the towns of Pomfret and Canterbury in the northeast part of the state. It was known as Second Church of Pomfret before the town of Brooklyn was set off in 1786. Orthodox ministers served the church during its first decades. In 1813 a young ministerial candidate, Luther Willson or Wilson (1783-1864), attended Yale College and Williams College, was ordained and became associate of the Calvinist pastor, Rev. Dr. Josiah Whitney. Before long Rev. Willson expressed doubts as to the doctrine of the Trinity and the supreme deity of Jesus, alarming some congregation members as well as Dr. Whitney and orthodox leaders in the area. Church and ministerial councils were called and a protracted controversy ensued between constituents of the Brooklyn "society" and members of the Brooklyn "church" [see note below]. In 1819 the congregation split, with the society (Unitarian) retaining ownership of the church building [see note below] and the church (Trinitarian) moving to a new location. Rev. Willson departed to become minister of the Church of Christ in Petersham, Massachusetts. In 1822 Rev. Samuel J. May (1797-1871), a Harvard graduate, a liberal and later prominent Unitarian minister and reformer, was called by the Brooklyn society and served until 1836, returning for one year in 1847.

Some years after this the Brooklyn society made history in another way. In October 1871 it ordained Celia Burleigh (1826-1875), the first woman Unitarian minister. Rev. Burleigh pastored the Brooklyn society for two years until she resigned due to illness, though the society listed her as their minister until her death. In 1878 the Brooklyn society again ordained a woman, Caroline Rich James (1827-1901) who served in Brooklyn for three years.

For more information about the growth of Unitarianism in Connecticut in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including in the Danbury area, refer back to the 'Notes on Two Hundred Years...' article of June 2022.

Note - A dual form of local ecclesiastical government was common in New England.

Note - The Brooklyn Unitarian Universalist church, built between 1771 and 1774, stands today and is a beautiful example of colonial New England church architecture. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Note - Sources consulted in preparing this article are varied and interesting. These include *Connecticut* by Albert

E. Van Dusen, 1961, which may be found in libraries. *A History of Unitarianism...*(volumes I and II) by Earl Morse Wilbur, 1945 and 1952, can be read on Internet Archive. The Connecticut State Library has *An Inventory of Unitarian Church Records in Connecticut* which can be viewed on-line. This inventory includes bibliographical information as well. The *Dictionary of Unitarian Universalist Biography* is an internet source and contains a wealth of information. Some town and county histories and local church histories can also be accessed on-line and may contain information not readily available elsewhere.



Dear Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Danbury,

We cannot thank you enough for your thoughtful and generous gift on 11/21/23. With your help, ARC placed more of the greater Danbury area’s homeless residents into permanent supportive housing than any other organization. Over 500 people participated in ARC’s Domestic Violence Prevention classes. ARC’s Comida Food Pantry served far more fresh food to far more hungry families than ever before. And, ARC was able to distribute tens of thousands of dollars to help struggling families avoid eviction in the midst of a pandemic.

Though times are tough, and families are struggling to make ends meet, ARC has been blessed to see an increase within the community of kindness, generosity and love.

We continue to be inspired by good people like you, who are helping ARC fulfill our mission “to alleviate the causes of violence, suffering and hate, while advancing peace, justice and human Dignity.

Thank you,

Rabbi Ari Rosenberg
Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your recent gift to the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Disaster Relief Fund.

Your gift allows the UUA to provide financial assistance to UU congregations impacted by natural disasters. In addition to facilitating their own disaster recovery, congregations receiving disaster relief funds have discretion to provide financial assistance to their members, as well as to support local partner organizations serving the community at large.

Your gift is already making a difference and benefitting people whose lives have been turned upside down.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher Hartley".

Christopher Hartley
Deputy Director, Stewardship and Development

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.

Deadline for the February *Comment* –
Friday, January 19th.

