



Cedarhurst
Unitarian
Universalists



P.O. Box 358 Finksburg, MD 21048

FROM THE MINISTER

It is December and one of my many favorite times of the year. There are so many things I love about the season – being with family, celebrating the Holy Days, putting up decorations, and singing and listening to songs. I love holiday music, from ancient chants, to Deck the Halls, to the latest cover of Baby it's Cold Outside (if you have not heard it – check it out, John Legend does a great job!). I love singing and hearing the music.

I come from the Methodist Tradition where a Sunday service is not complete without at least 4 hymns. Methodists are known for writing hymns, but one of my favorites is written by a Unitarian – It Came Upon a Midnight Clear. Little did I know, when I was singing in the Methodist gothic style church with the stained-glass windows that my favorite song was by a Unitarian Edmund Hamilton Sears.



The hymn was written by Edmund Sears in a time when Unitarians were disputing whether they were primarily Christian or more expansive to include transcendentalism. In this atmosphere, Sears was able to write a song that held both the transcendental and the ancient call for peace together in one hymn. It is a carol that is filled with a message of hope and peace. Hope that there will be “Peace on earth to all goodwill”

The original version of the hymn did not mention the Christ child or the shepherds, but is a song that was focused upon those that sung it through the ages. The angels come with a blessing and an imperative call – that there will be peace on earth. The land becomes still, battles cease, suffering is addressed - all on a midnight clear.

In this season of winter holidays, may we find peace and bring peace to this earth by listening to the best within us. Let us hear the words that remind us as we sing, that peace on earth is possible and its message is clear to all who will listen.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Amy

REFLECTIONS

Pandemic Reflections After Twenty-One Months

By Becky Zimmerman

As I reflect on the first twenty-one months of no-more-life-as-usual due to COVID-19, I'm surprised to find that my first feeling is one of gratitude. The pandemic slowed me down. A LOT. I needed that, and did not know it. I've had more time than I ever wanted to reflect on everything – my daily activities, my career goals, my faith, my activism, my family relationships, my friendships.

That last one has been an unexpected, and welcome, benefit to the disruption of life as usual. I have deepened existing friendships, made new friends, and reconnected via social media with people from my past that I realized had shaped me throughout my life.

When Cedarhurst began Zoom services in March of 2020, I have to admit that I really hated it. Seeing everyone on Zoom served as a weekly reminder that we couldn't be together. But now, I find myself looking forward to connecting in this way. I watch to see who joins the Zoom, what their surroundings look like (who'd have thought we'd be looking inside each other's living spaces every week?). And the funny moments – our four-legged family members climbing around and behind and on top of us. Hearing choice words from time to time when someone forgot to mute.

And the guest speakers we've been able to invite because there are no geographic restrictions! This has been wonderful! Of course having our own Rev Amy every other week has provided some continuity and stability, much needed during this time. And Amy is truly available to us just about any time we are in need. I encourage you to "use her" when things get tough, or when you just want to talk about anything at all. She is *there* for us.

I'm learning to let negative feelings go. They were threatening to undo me for a while there, and I knew that I would be no good to anyone if I let that happen. For many months, I was angry at the misinformation spreaders, the conspiracy theorists, the capital rioters, the election fraud insisters. But I had to let it go. I started keeping a log every night before bed that I call "Blessings of the Day". I've kept it almost every night since about the first of August. It has made a definite difference in my outlook. I write down anything from "I heard a bird singing outside my window" to "my son called" to "I ate a healthy snack instead of Cheetos".

I regularly call on the positive energy of the universe – some call it God – to help me through each day. Sometimes I get really discouraged, I lose hope, I struggle to be optimistic. But you, my Cedarhurst family, have helped me keep things in perspective, and I thank you for that! This congregation is a wonderful mix of backgrounds, spiritual experiences, life events, world views. We learn from each other. We grow, we change, we argue, we hurt each other's feelings sometimes. Then we forgive. We reconnect. We remember why we're here. This is Cedarhurst, and I'm glad to be with you on this journey, especially during a pandemic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT CEDARHURST UU

GAME NIGHT—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 AT 7:00 PM

No reservations required -- just Zoom in and have fun! [Zoom link here](#). The ID is 979 3656 6320 and the Password is 368946 .

BOOK CLUB SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12 AT NOON

Second Sunday Book Club is on **Sunday, December 12th** at 12 noon on Zoom.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP—TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14 AT 5:30 PM

On the Second Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm is the Cedarhurst Caregiver Support group. Join in to share/support the folks doing this arduous task. Maybe learn some stress relief techniques or just vent—it's all safe here.

BALTIMORE CLUSTER MEETING - FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17 AT 6:00 PM

Enjoy the company and get to know others in the Baltimore area cluster and bring a cocktail or mocktail to enjoy. [Zoom link here](#). The ID is 917 7193 7553 and the password is 360645

MONDAY MUSINGS - THIRD MONDAY (DECEMBER 20) AT 7:00 PM

Monday Musings meet the third Monday of each month at 7 pm on Zoom. All are welcome. We gather to ponder quotes on a different topic each month. December 20th we will discuss "Holding History". Quotes are provided by UUA's Soul Matters worship literature. You are welcome to share quotes as well.

CUU READ ALOUD - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22 AT 7:00 PM

The Read Aloud Group is open to everyone and is very casual. Each month a topic is chosen and participants bring a short reading related to that topic. We take turns reading and discussing the readings. You can also just come and listen and take part in the discussion or just listen. The Zoom ID will be on the CUU calendar. Call Beth Schilpp at 443-904-1304 with questions. Hope you can join us

MINISTER OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Amy's Office Hours are 3-5 PM on Wednesdays. Office Hours are presently over Zoom for the first hour (3 to 4 PM) and outdoors in-person for the second hour (4 to 5 PM.) Any changes will be reflected in the calendar and announcements.

We are always looking for volunteers to serve as lay leaders, zoom support, and building support persons. As lay leader, we would supply you with a script and walk you through the process. For zoom and building support, you would need to be comfortable with zoom. We would also train you on the audiovisual system in the building. These are a great way to get more involved in Cedarhurst UU and our services. Even one Sunday a month or every other month would help. Please let Alan Bogage know if you want to volunteer. abogage@msn.com



CONGRATULATIONS!

After weeks of preparation and planning, the 2021 Fall Auction benefitting Cedarhurst Unitarian Universalists was successful. Together, the friends and members of Cedarhurst raised \$12,396. The money raised supports our popular Scrip program to the tune of \$3,900 and the Operating Budget was enhanced by \$8,490. This is an excellent accomplishment for our self-supporting congregation.

At the close of the auction, Bidders received an email from Bid Beacon listing their winnings and making it possible to settle-up online. Then the Great Cedarhurst Auction Swap took place in the parking lot on November 20. As in past years, people came a bit early and stayed a bit late to enjoy this outdoor opportunity to say hello and catch up with people not seen in person since the arrival of pandemic safety precautions.

Part of the Auction fun is to take a closer look at some additional dimensions. Thanks to you, Cedarhurst received 91 donated items. Thirty-one bidders exchanged 356 separate bids, averaging almost a dozen bids by each during Auction week. Clearly a good number of the items were hotly pursued.

Huge thanks to the donors of the 12 meals and activities reserved for bidding on Saturday evening, November 6th for the first-ever Live Online Auction hosted on Zoom. These 64 "seats" at meals and trips basically sold out during the Zoom event, with only three seats remaining. Additional favorites were the two beautiful, hand-embroidered designs donated by Sharon Kennedy. One changed bidders 27 times and the other changed 32 times. Together they raised almost \$500 for our Cedarhurst community.

Another clear favorite was the Scrip Cards offered by Jay Levenson. A Scrip card is prepaid for use in local grocery stores. As an incentive, Jay offered an additional \$25 scrip card with each \$100 purchased. There were 40 offered and there was only one remaining when the Auction closed.

The Fall Auction has been a favorite social event at Cedarhurst for many years. The meals and activities have always helped to fill one's social calendar throughout the year. It has certainly been an important source of financial support. The pandemic forced us to switch to an online auction and through it all, we have managed to retain the continuity and fun on behalf of Cedarhurst. Thank you, everybody, for yet another successful Fall Auction!

With Appreciation! Barb Bradley, Sherry Dean, Cindy Hirshberg, Linda Joy, Sharon Kennedy, Beth Schilpp, Maria Warburton, The 2021 Fall Auction Committee

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CEDARHURST UU

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar [here](#) for most current schedule.

1 Dec	Wednesday	Ladies Who Lunch	12:00 PM
4 Dec	Saturday	Christmas Card Class	10:00 AM
4 Dec	Saturday	Get Out The Vote Postcards	12:00 PM
5 Dec	Sunday	Online Sunday Service	10:00 AM
5 Dec	Sunday	In Person Lunch at Carroll Lutheran Village	12:00 PM
7 Dec	Tuesday	Religious Services Committee Meeting	7:00 PM
8 Dec	Wednesday	Ladies Who Lunch	12:00 PM
8 Dec	Wednesday	Minister Office Hours	3:00 PM
8 Dec	Wednesday	Board of Trustees Meeting	7:00 PM
11 Dec	Saturday	UUA Compass Webinar	1:00 PM
11 Dec	Saturday	CUU Virtual Game Night	7:00 PM
12 Dec	Sunday	Online Sunday Service	10:00 AM
12 Dec	Sunday	Compass Navigating the Paths to Liberation Together	12:00 PM
12 Dec	Sunday	Book Club	12:00 PM
14 Dec	Tuesday	Caregivers Support Group	5:30 PM
15 Dec	Wednesday	Ladies Who Lunch	12:00 PM
15 Dec	Wednesday	Minister Office Hours	3:00 PM
17 Dec	Friday	Baltimore Cluster Holiday Mixer	5:30 PM
17 Dec	Friday	Night to Night Shelter Dinner	6:15 PM
17 Dec	Friday	UUA Compass Webinar	6:30 PM
19 Dec	Sunday	Online Sunday Service	10:00 AM
19 Dec	Sunday	Congregational Life Committee	12:00 PM
20 Dec	Monday	Monday Musings	7:00 PM
22 Dec	Wednesday	Ladies Who Lunch	12:00 PM
22 Dec	Wednesday	Minister Office Hours	3:00 PM
22 Dec	Wednesday	CUU Read Aloud	7:00 PM
24 Dec	Friday	Christmas Eve Service	5:00 PM
26 Dec	Sunday	Online Sunday Service	10:00 AM
29 Dec	Wednesday	Ladies Who Lunch	12:00 PM
29 Dec	Wednesday	Minister Office Hours	3:00 PM

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