

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION *in the Assabet Valley*



August 23, 2026
The Art of Dying

Our Ministers:

**The Rev. Dr.
Cynthia L. Landrum**
Minister

Yaakov Trek Reef
Intern Minister

Our Board Officers:

Brendon Chetwynd
President

Trisha Guditz
Vice President

Lee Coopride
Treasurer

Elizabeth Michaud
Clerk

Our Program Staff:

Rayla D. Baldwin-Mattson
Director of Religious
Education

Chris Hossfeld
Music Director

Cynthia Menard
Spiritual Growth &
Community Center
Director

Our Administrative Staff:

Meg Rivers-Wright
Parish Administrator

Christine Towle
Publicity Coordinator

*Our Program
Support Staff:*

Trevor Berens
Accompanist

Justin Marble
Nursery Care Coordinator

*Our Administrative
Support Staff:*

Mike Silkonis
Sexton

Bradshaw Mattson
Tech Assistant

UUCAV is a UUA Welcoming Congregation. We warmly welcome gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people into our community.

Large print orders of service and hymnals are available from an usher.

Assisted Listening Devices are available when worship is in the Sanctuary.

UUCAV has a masks-optional policy throughout the church. Several back rows in the sanctuary & those with accessible seating are “mask-required.”

UUCAV is on the web at uucav.org and on Facebook, Instagram & YouTube.

August 23, 2026: 10:00 a.m.

Gathering

Prelude (Video)

**“Let the Mystery Be”
by Iris Dement**

Everybody is wondering what and where they all came from
Everybody is worrying 'bout
Where they're gonna go when the whole thing's done
But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me
I think I'll just let the mystery be

Some say once you're gone you're gone forever
And some say you're gonna come back
Some say you rest in the arms of the Savior if in sinful ways you lack
Some say that they're coming back in a garden
Bunch of carrots and little sweet peas
I think I'll just let the mystery be

Everybody is wondering what and where they all came from
Everybody is worrying 'bout
Where they're gonna go when the whole thing's done
But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me
I think I'll just let the mystery be

Some say they're going to a place called glory
And I ain't saying it ain't a fact
But I've heard that I'm on the road to purgatory
And I don't like the sound of that
I believe in love and I live my life accordingly
But I choose to let the mystery be

Everybody is wondering what and where they all came from
Everybody is worrying 'bout
Where they're gonna go when the whole thing's done
But no one knows for certain and so it's all the same to me
I think I'll just let the mystery be

I think I'll just let the mystery be

Welcome & Announcements

Nancy Maldari, Worship Committee

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

(CONT'D →)

Land Acknowledgement

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

Dave Sansone

Poem

"The Laughing Heart"
by Charles Bukowski

Centering

* Covenant and Affirmation

(Spoken in unison)

Love is the spirit of this church,
and service its law.

This is our great covenant:
To dwell together in peace,
to seek the truth in love,
and to help one another.

(Sung in unison)

From all that dwell below the skies
Let words of love and peace arise
Let joyful songs of praise be sung,
through every land, by every tongue.

Video

"When I Get To Heaven"
by John Prine

Homily

"The Afterlife"

Dave Sansone

Video

"Wasted Days"
by John Mellancamp/Bruce Springsteen

How many summers still remain
How many days are lost in vain
Who's counting out these last remaining years
How many minutes do we have here?

Wasted days
Wasted days
We watch our lives just fade away to
More wasted days

How much sorrow is there left to climb
How many promises are worth a dime
And who on earth is worth our time
Is there a heart here that I can call mine?

Wasted days
Wasted days
We watch our lives just fade away to
More wasted days

(CONT'D →)

How can a man watch his life go down the drain
How many moments has he lost today
And who among us could ever see clear
The end is coming, it's almost here

Wasted days
Wasted days
We watch our lives just fade away to
More wasted days

Wasted days
Wasted days
We watch our lives just fade away to
More wasted days

Wasted days
More wasted days
We watch our lives just slip away to
More wasted days

Joys and Sorrows

Ann Sadler, Lay Minister

Joys and Sorrows is a time for the things on our hearts and minds to be heard by the gathered community. If you would like a follow-up call by a lay minister or the minister, email caring@uucav.org.

Prayer /Meditation

Dave Sansone

Video

"Hurt"
by Johnny Cash

I hurt myself today
To see if I still feel
I focus on the pain
The only thing that's real

The needle tears a hole
The old familiar sting
Try to kill it all away
But I remember everything

What have I become
My sweetest friend?
Everyone I know
Goes away in the end

And you could have it all
My empire of dirt
I will let you down
I will make you hurt

I wear this crown of thorns
Upon my liar's chair
Full of broken thoughts
I cannot repair

Beneath the stains of time
The feelings disappear
You are someone else
I am still right here

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

(CONT'D →)

What have I become
My sweetest friend?
Everyone I know
Goes away in the end

And you could have it all
My empire of dirt
I will let you down
I will make you hurt

If I could start again
A million miles away
I would keep myself
I would find a way

Exploring

Homily

“Life and Death”

Dave Sansone

Sharing Our Gifts



In July and August we share our offering with four organizations - **International Institute of NE, Native Plant Trust, Red State Access Project, and Worcester RISE for Health.** You may donate by cash, check, online at uucav.org/donate, or text (978) 310-3309.

Make a Donation
to UUCAV

Offertory (Video)

“Sometimes You Can't
Make It On Your Own”
by U2

Tough, you think you've got the stuff
You're telling me and anyone
You're hard enough

You don't have to put up a fight
You don't have to always be right
Let me take some of the punches
For you tonight

Listen to me now
I need to let you know
You don't have to go it alone

And it's you when I look in the mirror
And it's you when I don't pick up the phone
Sometimes you can't make it on your own

(CONT'D →)

We fight all the time
You and I...that's alright
We're the same soul
I don't need...I don't need to hear you say
That if we weren't so alike
You'd like me a whole lot more

Listen to me now
I need to let you know
You don't have to go it alone

And it's you when I look in the mirror
And it's you when I don't pick up the phone
Sometimes you can't make it on your own

I know that we don't talk
I'm sick of it all
Can - you - hear - me - when - I -
Sing, you're the reason I sing
You're the reason why the opera is in me

Well, hey now
Still I've got to let you know
A house doesn't make a home
Don't leave me here alone

And it's you when I look in the mirror
And it's you that makes it hard to let go
Sometimes you can't make it on your own
Sometimes you can't make it
Best you can do is to fake it
Sometimes you can't make it on your own

Returning

Homily

“Hospice and Personal Stories”

Dave Sansone

** Please rise in body or in spirit*

(CONT'D →)

Postlude

“Spirit In The Sky” by Norman Greenbaum

When I die and they lay me to rest
Gonna go to the place that's the best
When I lay me down to die
Goin' up to the spirit in the sky
Goin' up to the spirit in the sky
That's where I'm gonna go when I die
When I die and they lay me to rest
Gonna go to the place that's the best

Prepare yourself you know it's a must
Gotta have a friend in Jesus
So you know that when you die
He's gonna recommend you
To the spirit in the sky
Gonna recommend you
To the spirit in the sky
That's where you're gonna go when you die
When you die and they lay you to rest
You're gonna go to the place that's the best

Never been a sinner. I never sinned
I got a friend in Jesus
So you know that when I die
He's gonna set me up with
The spirit in the sky
Oh set me up with the spirit in the sky
That's where I'm gonna go when I die
When I die and they lay me to rest
I'm gonna go to the place that's the best
Go to the place that's the best

Following the service, there will be a listening session offered in the Youth Room for those who would like an opportunity to share their own personal stories surrounding death and dying. This session will be led by one of our lay ministers, Ann Sadler, and Dave Sansone.

* * *

Thank you to:
Sharon Brownfield, Zoom Host
Joe Stadolnik, Tech Helper
June McKnight, Latika Joshi, Ushers
Our staff and leadership

To our visitors...Thank you for coming! ♥

We hope you found what you're looking for and that you'll return.
Here's how to keep connecting with our people and programs:

- Fill out a Visitor Card in your pew or online (QR code)
- Watch these pages for newcomer events:
 - **Newcomer Coffees** - Meet the minister and other newcomers
 - **UU Journey classes** - Learn about UU history, spirituality, mission, and traditions
- Check out our website, www.uucav.org
There is so much happening at UUCAV! Our homepage and "Church Life" tab detail our events and programs.
- Subscribe to our e-newsletters & email groups (QR code)



Visitor Card



**Subscribe to
Newsletters**

Summer Plate Sharing

International Institute of New England - UUCAV partners with 7 area churches to act as the primary contact in helping refugees resettle and get a start in the USA. *Roy Miller*

Native Plant Trust - Conserves and promotes New England's native plants to ensure healthy, biologically diverse landscapes. *Sharon Brownfield*

Red State Access Project - Provides free, safe abortion medication to those who need it in states that restrict or fully criminalize abortion. *Ben Atherton-Zeman*

Worcester RISE for Health - Builds and provides effective, culturally sensitive, trauma-informed, and community-grounded healthcare interventions that eliminate barriers and help refugees and immigrants achieve health equity and self-sufficiency.
Kamlyn Haynes