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It has been a joy to serve UUC these past several months. We are starting a journey together as a community of faith. Faith is the art of living together and we are stepping into this life together in new ways and in ways that feel familiar! I have enjoyed all the meals y'all have cooked for me & Erin & we have completely enjoyed the fellowship! We look forward to more time with each of you!

As we move through Lent into the Easter season, I want to reflect with you on cracks. We often don't think much of cracks. We demonize cracks in sidewalks, but what if cracks are trying to teach us something? What if cracks are the way to God's emergence? What if what grows in the cracks is pointing us to another possible world? I think cracks are here to teach us something! I hope you'll continue with me on this journey of a hope filled life!



# Church News & Events

## Stewardship: A Poem

*Submitted by Lana Meissner*

*When Giving Is All We Have*

By Alberto Ríos (1952 –)

*One river gives*

*Its journey to the next.*

We give because someone gave to us.

We give because nobody gave to us.

We give because giving has changed us.

We give because giving could have changed us.

We have been better for it,

We have been wounded by it—

Giving has many faces: It is loud and quiet,

Big, though small, diamond in wood-nails.

Its story is old, the plot worn and the pages too,

But we read this book, anyway, over and again:

Giving is, first and every time, hand to hand,

Mine to yours, yours to mine.

You gave me blue and I gave you yellow.

Together we are simple green. You gave me

What you did not have, and I gave you

What I had to give—together, we made

Something greater from the difference.

  
*Stewardship Sunday*

**April 7**

## Stewardship: Moving Forward

*Submitted by Rev. Dr. Roberto Che Espinoza*

April is a time for spring blessings! We have much to be thankful for this Spring. We have a community that is coming together to build bridges in order to stand together. We see so much pain & suffering in the news & in our region, and reducing the distance between each other is truly inspiring!

We had our first Listening Session and over 20 people from the community attended! On Tuesday, we have a chance to come together, again, at the church center. I

hope you will join us! This listening session will be at 1pm. Our third & final listening session will be April 14 at Nancy Evangelista & Joe Dosch's house from 4-6pm. We hope you can be there with us!

Now is the time to start thinking & discerning how we move forward together! How do we steward the hope of new life this spring?! I'm ready to join you on this exciting journey!



## ... of Pastor Beto

*Submitted by Laurel Buckwalter*

As part of the installation of Roberto as pastor at UUC, there will be a concert for the church and community on **Saturday, April 27, at 4 pm** in the church sanctuary. This will be followed at 5:30 by a potluck dinner in the church center, coordinated by the fellowship board.

A lover of music, Beto has many musically gifted friends/professional musicians who have agreed to come to share their music with the community. Four will perform that evening with assistance from Erin Law and Peter O'Connor. More details will come soon, but you can look forward to singers, guitarists, and a jazz trumpet. This is a family friendly, community oriented event on the theme of "A Possible World." Save the date and invite others to join us.

The service of installation will be on Sunday morning at 10:30 in our worship service. The four guest musicians plus one more will share music as part of that service. Roberto's mentor and teacher from seminary, Dr. Nancy Bedford, will be the guest speaker.

Let's make this a great celebration of Roberto's call to ministry and community building in Alfred.

# Church People & Activities

## Isabel the Diver

*Submitted by Melissa Jusianiec*

On Saturday, February 10th, Isabel took part in the Section V diving sectionals at Webster Aquatics Center. Competing with 12 divers, Isabel was excited to complete all 11 dives and place 4th overall. She looks forward to continuing to dive over the next few years.



## Book Groupies

The UUC Book Group meets every Thursday at 3:30. Currently they are discussing Robyn Henderson-Espinoza's *Body Becoming: A Path to Our Liberation*. Although the group meets weekly, books are read and discussed by chapter or section, so you don't have to read a whole book each week. All are welcome to join!





# Church News

## A Thought on April 8

*From Newsletter Newsletter April 2024*

Maybe you've heard how salvation is like a total solar eclipse: God doesn't see our sins because Jesus' holiness covers them completely. Or maybe you've heard how trials can cause an "eclipse of faith." At WorldChallenge.org, Pastor Gary Wilkerson explains that in Greek, *eclipse* means "I am absent" or "I cease to exist," because people once thought the gods temporarily extinguished the sun. "For Christians, a 'spiritual eclipse' is a dark hour when God seems to be absent from our lives," Wilkerson writes.



Wilkerson points to Peter being sifted like wheat, Elijah and Jeremiah facing extreme discouragement, and David collapsing morally. Amid Satan's attacks, "God seems completely absent," writes the pastor. "In that dark moment of eclipse, the devil has created such chaos we can't possibly see a way out." During times of testing, Christians must cry out to God and trust his faithfulness.

Completing the eclipse analogy, Wilkerson shares Titus 3:4, the "love of God our Savior appeared." The Greek meaning of *appeared* here is *superimposed*, he writes. God looks on our fraught-filled times of eclipse and "superimposes his divine love over us."



## *Mission of the Month*

### **Matthew 25 Ministries (M25M): Palestinian Relief**

*Submitted by Lana Meissner*

The UUC Board of Elders has designated M25M as our April Mission of the Month. M25M continues to ship Palestinian relief aid in 2024. What follows is a summary of what they are doing: "We are communicating and working with partners serving the area with whom we have strong, long-term relationships to help safely and securely provide aid to the many people that have been impacted by this crisis.

"As of early February, 2024 Matthew 25 has shipped nearly 25,000 pounds of aid to partners serving the crisis area. These shipments have included essential supplies such as personal care items, paper products, blankets, and more. Matthew 25 will continue working with partners to identify how we can best support the ongoing needs of the area."

One hundred percent of all donations goes directly to relief efforts. Please be generous when making out your check to UUC with M25M in the memo line.

### **PRAY FOR THOSE AFFECTED BY WAR**



# APRIL

## Mission of the Month



"Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush." ~Doug Larson

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site	<b>2</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 6 pm Boy Scouts	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 11 am Sit & Be Fit 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 3:30 Book Group 6 pm: Knit Night	<b>5</b> 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 7 pm: AA	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:30 Youth Breakfast  10:30 Worship Communion	<b>8</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site	<b>9</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 6 pm Boy Scouts	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 11 am Sit & Be Fit 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 3:30 Book Group 6 pm: Knit Night	<b>12</b> 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 7 pm: AA	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 10:30 Worship  8:30-3:30 Farmers' Spring Market	<b>15</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site	<b>16</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 6 pm: Boy Scouts	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 11 am Sit & Be Fit 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 3:30 Book Group 4:30 Advisory Mtg 6 pm: Knit Night	<b>19</b> 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 7 pm: AA	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 10:30 Worship	<b>22</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site	<b>23</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 6 pm Boy Scouts	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 11 am Sit & Be Fit 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 3:30 Book Group 6 pm: Knit Night	<b>26</b> 1 pm: UUC Offices Open 7 pm: AA	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 10:30 Worship	<b>29</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site	<b>30</b> 11:30 am: Nutrition Site 6 pm Boy Scouts				

## April Board Members of the Month

Deacon ..... Mary Smith (msmith648@msn.com; (607) 382-8825)  
 Elder ..... Lana Meissner (fmeissnerl@alfred.edu; (607) 661-5159)  
 BOCE .....  
 Fellowship .....  
 Trustee ..... Jim Ninos (jninos@gmail.com; (607) 661-9781)

Whom do you call? Flowers or lay leading—call an Elder; greeting or coffee hour—call a Deacon;  
 Sunday school—call BOCE; building issues—call a Trustee.

### April Fools' Day

April Fools' Day isn't a religious holiday, though it may date to Pope Gregory XIII and his new calendar. In 1582, he shifted New Year's Day from April to January, and people who didn't believe the change were called April fools. April Fools' Day may also be connected to the lightheartedness that comes with warmer weather, as well as to medieval Christian festivals that involved pranks, disguises and a temporarily inverted social order.



These daffys outside the Church Center aren't laughing!

*Published in: Newsletter Newsletter 16*

## Upcoming Sunday Leaders

If you are not able to serve as scheduled, please switch with someone listed on the charts below and notify the Church Office. If you are unable to find someone to switch with you, please contact either the Elder of the Month or the Deacon of the Month.

Date	Greeter	Lay Leader	Flowers	Coffee	Usher
April 7	Sharon Burdick	Lana Meissner	Lana Meissner	Mindy Smith	Jusaniecs
April 14	Watsons	Dave Porter	Regina Burke	C. Chambers	Jusaniecs
April 21	Schulzes	T. Watson	T. Watson	S. & S. Smith	Amie Acton
April 28	(Installation)	Caiti Dewey	S. Burdick	Fellowship Bd	Amie Acton
May 5	B. & C. Rees	Amie Acton	Communion	Edwards/Ninos	J. Meacham
May 12	Tim Nichols	M-L Cartledge	Cartledges		J. Meacham
May 19		Heather Meacham	Bill Sortore	Perkins Family	J. Meacham
May 26		Deb Stephens	Deb Stephens		J. Meacham
June 2		Anna McHale	Communion	Soule/Sortore	

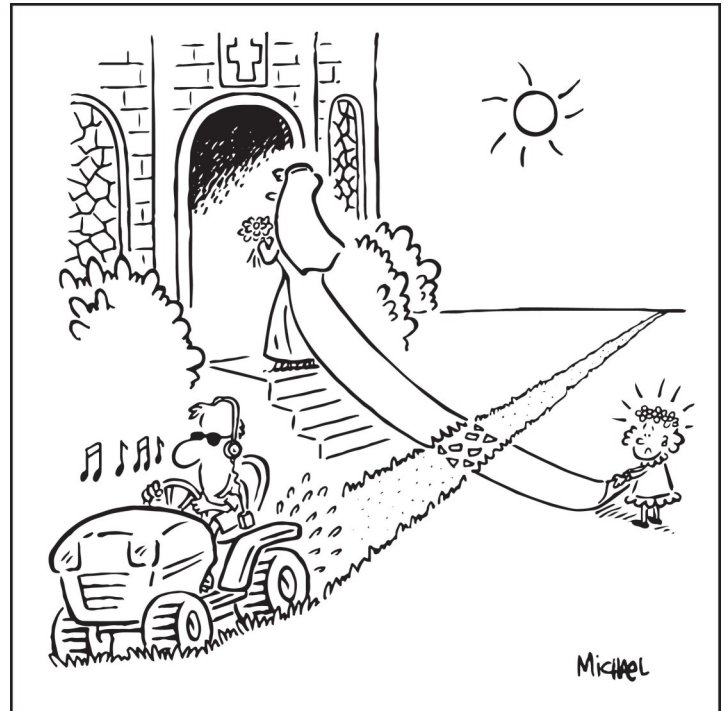
# Just for Fun

## A Reason to Laugh

The week after Easter, some churches observe Holy Humor Sunday — a tradition dating back to the fourth century. Early Christian theologians coined the term “*risus paschalis*,” or “the Easter laugh,” saying God played the supreme joke on death. Some believers celebrated Bright Monday, gathering the day after Easter to mock Satan’s defeat.

On the first day of April, remember that “we are fools for Christ” (1 Corinthians 4:10, NIV). Then later in the month, take time to smile and laugh, knowing that victory is yours, thanks to Jesus.

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