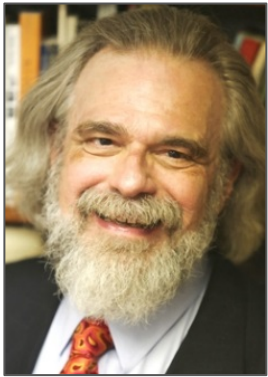




From the Minister

The Rev. Dr. Tony Johnson is serving as UCH Minister 2018-21.



At the start of 2020, I choose to be hopeful. This takes some effort, since in the U.S. and other Western nations there are reactionary tendencies in electoral politics and antidemocratic attitudes are widespread. There are louder expressions of racism, misogyny, and xenophobia, increased numbers of hate crimes, and continued (if fading) rejection of climate science. But, at the same time,

there are great energy for electoral politics challenging the reactionaries and significant grassroots efforts opposing racism, misogyny, xenophobia, hateful violence, and the destruction of the environment.

Hope is an attitude and action grounded in reality. Hope is not optimism, which is easy. Hope is a heresy that is difficult to live, since it challenges dominant beliefs and attitudes. One of the beliefs it challenges is that the failure of an action based on a belief or ideal is absolute and discredits that belief or ideal. Rather, it is from defeats that hopeful actors learn how to act more effectively. As the Czech playwright and politician Vaclav Havel said, "Hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism. It is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out."

How do you and I sustain hope?

First, I remind myself: Hope is a matter of looking to the future; it is rooted in dreams (for the future); it has the expectation that something good can – or will – happen. Hope happens in the present, and the present may be difficult, personally and politically.

Second, in the words of Katherine Paterson, "Hope is not a feeling; it is something you do." You and I must dig deep to understand our dreams and make real hope(s) out of them. Hope takes practice. There are many ways to understand the substance of your or my hope: analysis, prayer, meditation, conversation, study, singing, dancing – all aspects of the action of hope: the statement or steps that make hope real.

I find encouragement to hope in my conversations with members of the Church and others. Those who have spoken to me of their fears have also spoken of what they (and we) must do in this reactionary time.

I also find encouragement in history. In his book *Why Liberals Win the Culture Wars (Even When They Lose Elections)*, historian Stephen Prothero describes how the philosophically and socially liberal position triumphed over the conservative position in five culture wars in the U.S., beginning in the early days of the republic.

Finally, I find hope in the tenacity and vitality of liberal religious congregations, such as the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg. Even in the most repressive moments in history these have been – and will continue to be – free spaces where hope is made real by the modeling of what life can be in a free and open society. These are free spaces where individuals and families can find encouragement and joy even in difficult times. 2020 will be a year of forward movement for the Church as it chooses a ministerial search committee and begins the search of its next settled minister. That itself is the work of hope.

I wish for you joy and hope in 2020. *The Rev. Dr. Anthony P. Johnson*

Worship Services

Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Date	In the Pulpit	Title
5-Jan	Street Corner Collective	Music: A Catalyst for Social Change
12-Jan	Don Brown & Rev. Johnson	Climate Change: A Tragic Example of the Failure of Moral Principles to Guide A Democracy.
19-Jan	Rev. Johnson	Liberal Theology and Radical Action
26-Jan	Rev. Johnson	In Covenant: Speak from Experience

Share the Plate: Ecumenical Food Pantry

Each month, we share half of our Sunday plate with a local non-profit organization. This month, we share the plate with the Ecumenical Food Pantry.

Based in Messiah Lutheran Church, 901 N. 6th Street, the [Ecumenical Food Pantry](#) provides a three-day supply of food to any person with a voucher from one of 50 cooperating agencies and churches that verify family size and need. The Pantry is operated by approximately 200 volunteers; there are no paid staff. Last year, the Pantry served an average of 612 families (2,233 people) each month.

President's Message



By David Spear, President, Board of Trustees

The temperatures are cold outside, and perhaps snow is on the way, but I rejoice that the sun is above the horizon more and more hours per day. I've made peace with winter, but the sun brings me joy, regardless of the temperature.

The new year is typically a time for making resolutions for the rest of the year, and that seems even more

appropriate in the year 2020. It sounds just like 20/20 vision, so our vision of the future should be especially good this year, right? Indeed, but more about that later.

January also happens to be the middle of our fiscal year, which runs from July to June. Our future is indeed bright, but let's stop for a moment for a mid-year review and celebrate our good fortune at this moment.

We are in a good situation now. Our cash flow is on target to finish the year right on budget. It's somewhat difficult to predict this far in advance, since income and expenses vary from month to month and from year to year. But by looking at trends from previous years, it looks like we are in good shape.

We've been able to make some important repairs over the last year. Remember the elevette, new carpet and paint, and a new HVAC system for the lower level? We had just enough in our capital funds to address these without dipping into our operating fund or affecting the annual budget. At some point, we will have to refill the coffers for other major items, but for now, we've addressed some major items that were high priority.

We are on the verge of hiring our new Director of Religious Exploration (DRE)! That search committee has been working hard for the last few months to fill this position and will soon be able to give us an update. The process is confidential, so I know very few details, but I have been repeatedly assured that all five candidates who applied were very strong.

General Assembly

Registration is open for 2020 General Assembly (GA), to be held next year in Providence, RI. GA is the annual meeting of our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Attendees worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy for the Association through democratic process.

The theme next year is "Rooted, Inspired, & Ready!" As noted at the GA website, "We are in touch with our theological roots, we are engaged in transforming our faith, and we are fired up to take action in the wider world."

This month is also the approximate midpoint of Rev. Johnson's time with us. After 17 months together, we are well integrated and working fluidly together. There is trust among the leadership, and we share the same goals for our future.

Table with 2 columns: Date, Trustee. Rows include 5-Jan (Joe Melillo), 12-Jan (Patti Hazell), 19-Jan (Guy Dannelley), 26-Jan (Dennish Hursh).

Our church office is also functioning well. As you probably know from your own work experience, not every boss can be an effective leader and help people work together well. We are currently very fortunate.

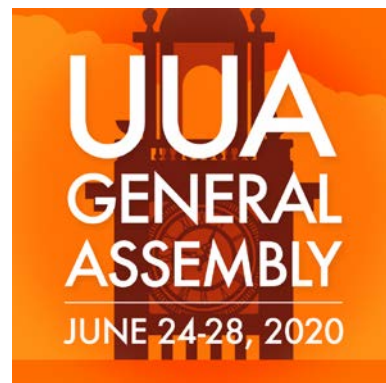
There is also excellent collaboration in preparing the Sunday services, which I think is evident each week. Attendance is slowly increasing each month. Thanks also to everyone who greets visitors and makes them feel welcome.

Please also thank Rev. Johnson for the numerous hours he spends meeting with various teams and committees, planning for the future, managing the budget, providing pastoral care, and much else. As with every minister, much of his work is done away from the spotlight. He regularly works above and beyond the call of duty.

This is a good moment in the life of our congregation. We are vibrant. We are joyful. Even in our imperfection, we are loving and positive. Let us enjoy this moment. Even as we make plans for the future, let us not overlook the goodness that is right in front of us.

Let us stop and smell the roses, even as we plant more roses for the future. We have been planning and working diligently for many years, and we will continue to do so, but take a moment to simultaneously acknowledge that we are in a good situation. Let us celebrate this moment.

David Spear



New Membership Class

The Membership Action Council welcomes all and sundry for an introduction to Unitarian Universalism and the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg! The class runs from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020. Content includes *Jeopardy!*, discussion of Unitarian Universalism (past, present, and future), and specifics about the UCH congregation. At the end of the class, those who wish may sign the membership book. In any given class, about half the group are simply seeking information, i.e., there is no compulsion or expectation that attendees will join the church.

Please contact [Bart Carpenter](#), [Denny Byrne](#), or [Dan Vaughn](#) for additional information. We will send advance reading material to those who pre-register. All are welcome, and please feel free to refer a friend.

– Submitted by Bart Carpenter

Famous UUs in the U.S.	7 Principles	UCH Folks	Lay-Led Ministries	UU History
<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>
Next New Membership Class: 9:00 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 25, Clover Lane				
<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>
<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>

Volunteer & Community Engagement Fair

Did you know: through UCH you can help keep a neighboring highway clean, practice yoga or meditation, talk about some excellent fiction or non-fiction books, participate in charity walks, work with our children on Sunday mornings, beautify the church grounds, and many other diverse activities?

Your chance to learn more about these opportunities and many others comes on **Sunday, January 26, 2020**, during the Volunteer & Community Engagement Fair. We will be hosting many lay-led ministries and other organizations that are looking for new people to join their ranks.

The Fair will be held in the Common Room following worship. Each participating group will have a display explaining its purpose and work, handout materials, and a sign-up sheet for new members. Someone from each organization will be at the display to discuss the group’s activities, the time commitment involved, and the need for new members. Each group also will provide some snacks to go with your coffee!!

We also would like to help UCH members and friends recognize service to the church as an integral part of one’s spiritual journey. In working together on a variety of projects through our church, we help build the beloved community that we seek.

By working together in a variety of ways, we can do great things building a stronger community of communities. The Fair is a fun way to find out what all is going on and how you can be a bigger part of the action. Please join us on January 26, 2020, to Share our Service and Strengthen our Spirit. For additional information, please contact [Guy Dannelley](#).

– Submitted by Guy Dannelley



Examining Whiteness: White Identity Development

Since 2017, a lay-led group of UCH members and friends has been exploring [Examining Whiteness: An Anti-Racism Curriculum](#) and developing thought-provoking synopses. In response to continuing requests for updates, the lay-led group presents "Examining Whiteness in 2020." This month's focus: *White Identity Development*.

White normative culture unthinkingly sets up the sanctioning cues. From a prior participant: "I was oblivious to this concept before, but it’s powerful for me now that I’ve begun to understand it."

- 🎧 "How Can I Have a Positive Racial Identity? I’m White?" – TED talk by Ali Michael, PhD – 16.5 min. (listen via your computer as you complete other tasks) [YouTube](#)
- 🎧 "Finding Myself in the Story of Race" – insightful story by Debby Irving, TED speaker and author - 15.18 min. – (listen via your computer as you complete other tasks) [YouTube](#)

– Submitted by Cordell Affeldt and Kate Quimby

Men's Overnight Shelter

[Susquehanna Harbor Safe Haven](#) (SHSH) is a residential facility offering support and stable housing to men who are/were chronically homeless. It is managed by Christian Churches United of the Tri-County Area. In winter, this includes the overnight Shelter, known as Winter Overnight Safe Haven (WOSH), which operates December through March. Homeless men are offered a warm, safe place to sleep at the SHSH building, thanks to volunteers from area churches and civic organizations. Two chaperones welcome up to 24 guests, offer hot beverages and snacks, get a decent night's sleep, and leave the next morning in time to prepare for work or a weekend activity.

UCH is participating in the chaperone program by supplying volunteers for the nights of January 8-11, 2020. Serving as a volunteer at the winter overnight shelter is simple, safe and so rewarding! Each night two volunteers from an area church or civic group arrive about 7:30 p.m., put on the coffee pot, set out cocoa and granola bars, and move mattresses and blankets from a closet into the large sleeping room. Beginning at 8:00, up to 24 homeless men are admitted and checked in by a professional staff member, who greets most by name. The men choose a mattress and settle in, chatting with acquaintances and the chaperones, reading, or going right to sleep. All are well behaved and weary, having walked a mile or two in the cold to the shelter after spending the day on the streets. They are grateful for a warm, safe resting place and know that anyone who causes problems will be sent away.

The staffer leaves about 9:30, and many of the guests are asleep before lights out at 10:00. Volunteers sleep in a separate room next door, lulled off by the sound of snoring and George mumbling in his sleep.

Chaperones are up at 6:00 a.m. the next morning to fix coffee for early risers, who walk to jobs. Saying goodbye to guests by 7:00, hearing many a "Thank you" and "Bless you," they finish with a brief cleanup and are able to leave for breakfast by 7:20. Please contact [Meg Conners](#) if interested in volunteering.

– Submitted by *Meg Cannors*

Women's Overnight Shelter

Christian Churches United (CCU) of the Tri-County Area has opened a walk-in winter shelter for women and non-binary people in the Wesley House of Grace United Methodist Church at 216 State Street, Harrisburg. This is the only cold/severe weather shelter where woman and non-binary people can walk-in to get out of the elements with no application or program requirements. The shelter opened Dec. 20 and will remain open through March 31.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED (evening hours): Volunteers are needed to help support this new shelter. Volunteers provide intake and hospitality to guests from 7:30-10:30 pm each night (only – no overnight stay required). The position is open to males, females, and non-binary volunteers.

The next orientation for volunteers will be on Monday, Jan. 6, from 6:00-7:30 pm at the shelter. To register for the orientation or for more information about the shelter contact Shelter Coordinator Gillian Sumpter at gsumpter@ccuhbg.org or 717-770-9189. Please also feel free to [make a donation](#) to support the new shelter.

– Submitted by *Jim Cavanaugh*

Roe v. Wade

Roe v Wade was decided January 22, 1973 – exactly 47 years ago this month. Please consider writing letters to the editor in support of this life-saving decision.

The Reproductive Justice Allies of UCH and the PA Religious Coalition for Reproductive Justice are teaming up to encourage all UUs to speak out by writing to the editor of your local newspaper, pointing out that countless lives have been changed since that momentous decision. Since it became the law of the land, access to safe, legal abortion has saved women's lives and thus in a real sense, their families.

And we have a positive way to stand up for reproductive justice: Ask that all legislators support [House Bill 1586](#), the Sex Education and Affirmative Sexual Consent bill, because a very cost-effective way to prevent unwanted pregnancies is through sex education.

Note: the annual interfaith service for reproductive justice will be Sunday, March 29.

– Submitted by *Jim Cavanaugh*

Gather the Spirit for Justice

Gather the Spirit for Justice (GTSFJ) is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that brings together Allison Hill residents, area organizations, businesses and churches to address issues of social justice and economic equity. It was jointly founded by UCH and the Shared Ministry. It now operates out of Christ Lutheran Church, 124 South 13th Street. The following message is excerpted from GTSFJ newsletters.

Fall Fundraiser

GTSFJ extends its deepest thanks to those who helped the organization achieve its \$8,000 fall fundraising goal. Your support shows the value of the services and support we offer to the Allison Hill community, and the potential of our ongoing efforts. From each of us to all of you, GTSFJ extends a heartfelt thank you.

Winter Gifts (through Jan. 5)

GTSFJ is accepting donations of winter hats, gloves and socks for distribution to guests on an as-needed basis at Community Hours, 10:00 a.m. – noon Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please place items directly on the Christmas tree in the UCH foyer any time up until January 5. Guests at Community Hours are more often adults, but some items for children will find good homes as well. Thank you for your thoughtfulness.

Kudos to John Abbott

The end of the calendar year also brings to a (near) close months of hard work and dedication from GTSFJ board member John Abbott who worked diligently to make our new space look and feel a bit more like home. John spent countless hours both on- and off-site removing old debris, disconnecting and replacing fixtures, coordinating with contractors, and working to make GTSFJ's space more habitable for our guests and volunteers. While the work is not 100 percent complete, John has put his heart and soul into making the work a success, and for that we are forever grateful. Thank you, John!

Judy Linder Retirement

A very special thanks is also due to GTSFJ treasurer Judy Linder. Over the past 18 months, Judy has guided the board through challenging financial, organizational, and physical transition; ensured our finances are sound and secure; and worked with John Abbott to obtain services and financing needed to renovate our new space. She has been an instrumental part of GTSFJ and has contributed countless hours and resources to our efforts to strengthen community in Allison Hill. Judy currently volunteers at the Common Ground Community Center, and she and husband Larry served as regular fixtures at Common Ground Cafe. Sadly, Judy recently announced her plan to step away from the GTSFJ board to tend to personal matters.

Judy's work, presence, and devotion will be greatly missed. The GTSFJ board extends our deepest thanks to Judy for her enduring spirit to see GTSFJ succeed and offers her and the Linder family our very best wishes in the future!

January Dates:

🍷 Purge Party, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 4

GTSFJ is seeking volunteers to join us on January 4th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for a Purge Party, where we will be moving items from the red room in the basement over to the community center space and discarding items we don't need.

🍷 Open House, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 18






GTSFJ will hold its inaugural open house in our new space in the lower level of Christ Lutheran Church! Please join us for light refreshments as we celebrate the progress and show guests recently completed renovations in our new home. We are very excited for this event and hope you will join us!

🍷 Gather the Bands, 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 19 (off-site)

The third annual "Gather the Bands" fund-raiser will be held at Appalachian Brewing Company (ABC), 50 North Cameron Street, in Harrisburg. Entertainment includes the local duo, Hard Travelin'; producer, songwriter and guitarist Ethan Mentzer, son of UCH member Anita Mentzer; and national recording artist Todd Wright. Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$35 at the door; children under 12 are free.



GTSFJ is also accepting donations for its silent auction. Ask them to donate to the silent auction! Gift cards and/or gift baskets from local restaurants, spas, retailers, and local service providers are welcome. Contact info@gatherthespirit.org to pre-purchase tickets or to make an auction donation.

Date	Time	Group	Location
Sun 5	noon	QueenSpirit (Monthly)	Clover Lane
<p>QueenSpirit is a co-created women’s spirituality circle that normally meets on the first Wednesday of the month. This month, we will be welcoming in the New Year with our annual planning Circle. Since New Years Day is the first Wednesday, we are meeting instead at noon on Sunday, January 5, just after service. Please bring your calendar, iPad, or whatever format allows your thoughts to flow most easily.</p> <p>Please bring a favorite snack or beverage to share. All women, and those who gender-identify as women, are welcome. Please bring a favorite dish, dessert or beverage to share. Potluck lunch at noon. Circle starts at 1:00 p.m., ending by 3:00 p.m. Contact Rebecca Waldemar for further information.</p>			
Mon 6	6:30	Amrit Yoga (Weekly)	Clover Lane
<p>Amrit yoga is a form of hatha yoga developed by Yogi Amrit Desai. The entire process moves and stretches every part of your body for an energetic workout and includes a calming, meditative relaxation at the end.</p> <p>No experience necessary! Contact Ed Sykes. Repeats every Monday.</p>			
Tue 7	6:45	Mindfulness Meditation Group (Weekly)	Clover Lane
<p>Mindfulness is an acquired skill, practiced while meditating but vital in our everyday lives. Mindfulness is helpful in reducing stress, managing pain, focusing attention, and overcoming habitual negative behavior. Mindfulness can also point the way to spiritual practice, calming the mind and developing awareness and insight.</p> <p>The ability to be mindful is strengthened through consistent practice. Mindfulness Meditation Group provides a space for us to practice together in support of one another. Contact Chuck Daley. Repeats every Tuesday.</p>			
Fri 10	6:30	Open Conversation with the Minister	Clover Lane
<p>The Minister is eager to hear from you! Please join Rev. Johnson in Fuller Chapel from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for an open discussion of whatever is on your mind. No reservations necessary – come as you are. Light refreshments will be served.</p>			
Sun 12	9:30	Sunday Morning Forum (Weekly)	Clover Lane
<p>Facilitated by Fred Binkley, Barb Pearce, and others, the group meets for an hour of discussion on Sunday mornings at Clover Lane during the hour prior to services, with varying topics. Forum meets twice in January. Topics are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Jan. 12: Current events and/or impeachment issues and/or other political mayhem, led by Fred Binkley. 🕒 Jan. 19: Advocate Janelle Crossley will lead a follow-up presentation about current transgender issues. <p>Please contact Barb Pearce for additional information.</p>			

Date	Time	Group	Location
Sun 12	6:30	Philosophy and Literature Group (Monthly)	Clover Lane
<p>The Philosophy & Literature Group meets on the second Sunday of each month, normally at 7:00 p.m. at Clover Lane. This month, the group meets to discuss <i>This Fight Is Our Fight: The Battle to Save America's Middle Class</i>, by Elizabeth Warren. From the internet:</p> <p>Senator Elizabeth Warren ...has written a book that is at once an illuminating account of how we built the strongest middle class in history, a scathing indictment of those who have spent the past thirty-five years undermining working families, and a rousing call to action.</p> <p>The remaining books for 2020 are listed below in alphabetical order. At the January meeting, we will decide which books to read in which month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📖 <i>Blowout</i>, by Rachel Maddow. Story of the richest most destructive industry in history, the petroleum industry. 📖 <i>Bountiful Calling</i>, by Fred Burton. Novel about the lives of people on both sides of the gas fracking controversies. 📖 <i>Elephants on the Edge</i>, by G. A. Bradshaw. An analysis of the social life of elephants 📖 <i>How to Be an Antiracist</i>, by Ibram X. Kendi. "...a bracingly original approach to understanding and uprooting racism and inequality in our society – and in ourselves." 📖 <i>An Indigenous People's History of the United States</i>, by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. This Beacon Press book is winner of the 2015 American Book Award and is the UUA Common Read. 📖 <i>Information Wars: How We Lost the Global Battle Against Disinformation</i>, by Richard Stengel. 📖 <i>Man's Search for Meaning</i>, by Victor Frankl. Universal insights out of a concentration camp. 📖 <i>Reality is Not What It Seems</i>, by Carlo Rovelli. A description of the journey that scientists took on their way to understanding quantum gravity. 📖 <i>This Land</i>, by Christopher Ketcham. Expose. Dark humor illuminates political, ideological, physical threats to our parks, forests, and rivers. Focuses on misdeeds on public lands." 📖 <i>Upstream: Selected Essays</i>, by Mary Oliver. "Dear Bear, it's no use, the world is like that. So stay where you are, and live long. Someday maybe we'll wise up and remember what you were: hopeless ambassador of a world that returns now only in poets' dreams." <p>Please contact Don Brown for information.</p>			

Philosophy & Literature

Tue 14	6:30	Women's Night Out (Monthly)	Off-site
<p>Women's Night Out is a lay-led ministry that focuses on the friendship and support of its members and giving back to our local community. We normally meet on the second Tuesday of the month at a local restaurant, alternating locations between the East and West Shores. Each month at dinner, participants take a collection. Proceeds are divided between the Ecumenical Food Pantry and UCH.</p> <p>Our group meets Tuesday, January 14, at the Thai Palace, 3608 Market Street, Camp Hill. Please RSVP to Ann Sitrin (717-766-4767) by the Sunday beforehand.</p>			

Women's Night Out
Thai Palace

Wed 15	6:30	Clover Grove (Monthly)	Clover Lane
<p>Clover Grove is a group of earth-centered and pagan spiritualists that meets on the third Wednesday, with a program that varies based on the cycle of seasons and forces of nature. This month, we gather to hobnob pagan ideals, knowledge and feasts! As always, we like to look ahead into the New Year and pre-set what we are planning for the upcoming months. Join us as we prepare for new vision for 2020.</p> <p>Please contact Wayne Minich for further information.</p>			

Clover Grove
2020 Planning

Date	Time	Group	Location
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Tue 21	10:00	CroneSpirit (Monthly)	Clover Lane
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The lay-led ministry CroneSpirit meets from 10 a.m. - noon in Fuller Chapel on the third Tuesday of the month. Our topic this month is *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone, Part 2*. We are:

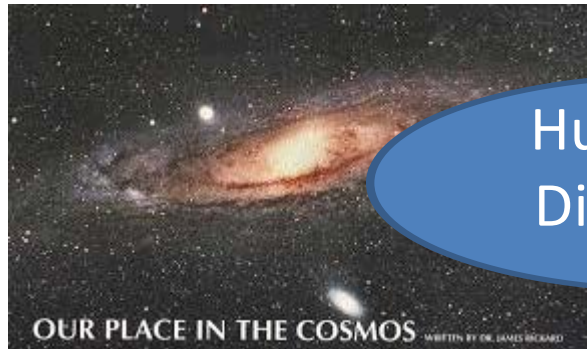
- 🕒 A discussion group for women over 65, both UCH members and non-members
- 🕒 Honoring a crone tradition of conscious female aging and self-power
- 🕒 For personal enrichment, such as through intellect, knowledge, comfort or companionship, anticipating a maximum of 10 women
- 🕒 Sharing, listening and learning, without gossip to or about each other

We look forward to seeing you. For information, please contact [Joan Hellmann](#).



Wed 22	7:00	Humanism Lay-Led Ministry	Clover Lane
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The Humanism Lay-Led Ministry will host a discussion on "Discovering our place in the cosmos." Join us and find your place. Please contact [Rachel Mark](#) for additional information.



Member News

Congratulate fellow UCH members!

Graduation

UCH member Tabitha Lewis graduated from Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) in December, with an associate of arts degree in Theater. Congratulations, Tabby!



Anniversary

UCH member Joyce Stoltzfus and her husband, Ralph Detrick, celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary Dec. 29. Contratulations, Joyce and Ralph!

