

March 2024

Uniter



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SILVER SPRING
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WORSHIP SERVICES



All Sunday services are offered in-person in our Sanctuary and broadcast live on Zoom at 10:30 am. Please see the all-church email for the Zoom link. Masks are recommended but not required for worship services and other church functions. A section of seats in the Sanctuary will be reserved for people who wish to remain masked and prefer to sit among other people who are also wearing masks.

Sunday, March 3: Beyond Measure, Rev. Kristin G. Schmidt

For the last month we've considered what we as individuals and a congregation bring to the table. This service will include words by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., music by our choir and Musician in Residence, Lea Morris, and a reflection by Silver Spring Nursery School Director, Scott Mitchell. Join us as we celebrate the many gifts UUCSS brings to our work toward mutual liberation!

Sunday, March 10: Who Do We Serve?, Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg

In this month when we focus on service, the question arises- who do we serve, and who and what serves us? Join Rev. Caitlin for a service on Womanism, Sanctified Imagination, and Holy Troublemaker Rev. Wil Gafney.

Sunday, March 17: Empty Altars, Rev. Kristin G. Schmidt

Thanks to movements like MeToo and Black Lives Matter, long-suppressed truths about supposed saints and heroes are finally being acknowledged. On this St. Patrick's Day Sunday, we consider who our saints and heroes are, and what it means to be one in today's world.

Sunday, March 24: Palms, Power, and A Peace Parade, Rev. Kristin G. Schmidt

Empire (whether ancient Rome or today's American empire) tells us that our job, wealth, health, race, and status are what matter most. Join us this week for a dramatic retelling of an ancient story that suggests the empires got it all wrong. This is a service for all ages, and all who wish will be invited to help act out the story!

Sunday, March 31: Transformed in the Power of Love, Rev. Kristin G. Schmidt

This Sunday we celebrate both Easter and the Trans Day of Visibility in story, song, and sermon. This is a service for all ages, and afterward all kids are invited to take part in the Egg Hunt.

INSPIRE

Minister's Column by Rev. Kristin G. Schmidt



Each Sunday, many Unitarian Universalist congregations recite a covenant that includes the phrase “service is our prayer.” Originally written by Universalist minister L. Griswold Williams in 1933, ministers have made this phrase the subject of countless sermons, organizers have put it on t-shirts, and some congregations have even chiseled the phrase into their stone sanctuaries.

Rev. Williams rode a circuit around different pulpits in Pennsylvania and Ohio before serving the All Souls Universalist Church in Marion, Ohio. But he became best known for his public protest of the way Americans mistreated people of German descent during World War I, and for making windows and doors for homes for refugees. I imagine he had that in mind when he wrote these words:

*Teach me the truer trade of making doors and windows for [people's] souls:
Windows for letting in Love's widening dawn,
Doors swinging outward freely on Truth's pleasant ways.*

When this congregation included service in the mission we updated last year, his phrase “service is our prayer” came to my mind. Just as generosity makes all that we do together as a congregation possible, service gives enfleshed shape to the values we share. Service is the way to transform that which we hold most dear into kindness, compassion, comfort, and solidarity experienced by others. And in a world that can often leave us feeling powerless, service can be a reminder of the power in each of us. As Audre Lorde wrote, “When I use my strength in the service of my vision it makes no difference whether or not I am afraid.”

Continuing our year-long exploration of the different pieces of our mission, the worship theme for the month of March is “service.” Along with our Easter celebration the last Sunday of the month, worship this month will explore the ways UUCSS is being called to serve in our wider communities, what it means to be a hero today, and how to know whether our lives are serving empire or liberation. Hope to see you there!

Message From Catherine Buckler, Board President



Greetings, friends. Time flies! It's hard to believe that I've been serving as the president of your board of trustees for over half the year already. It's been such a privilege. Our worship theme this month is service and I've been thinking about how the board's work serves the community. I like thinking about the board as the chalice and the congregation as the flame. The board's job is to ensure that the light we, the community, want to share with the world is kept aflame in a beautiful, sturdy vessel.

One of the board's most important responsibilities is managing the church's finances. Despite how weighty this task can feel at times, I am uplifted by the generosity of our members. And I'm fortified by the commitment of my fellow board members to making good decisions that balance the congregation's dreams with the realities of today and the unknowns of the future.

There's a lot that is uncertain as we plan in these times. Many churches are losing members, having to let go of their buildings, rethinking how they "do" church. We at UUCSS for sure feel these pressures and know that in order to survive we need to listen to what the world is calling us to do. Every Sunday new people come through our doors. What brings them to us; what are they seeking? If we meet them with a curious heart, they will help us find our way to being relevant in today's world.

One thing that's become clear to me this year is that UUCSS's flame continues to burn bright. We are a strong community. That is the constant. That is what we have to offer. May it be ever so.

LEARN

Contemplations from Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg, Assistant Minister of Spiritual Growth



Deep Rest

If you've heard me preach this year, you've likely heard me preach about the importance of rest. I've been dwelling deeply in the work of folks like Cole Arthur Riley, adrienne maree brown, and Tricia Hershey, who reminds us in her fabulous book *Rest is Resistance*:

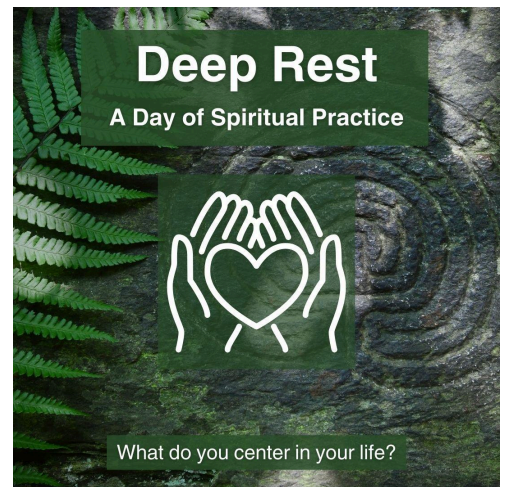
"You were not just born to center your entire existence on work and labor. You were born to heal, to grow, to be of service to yourself and community, to practice, to experiment, to create, to have space, to dream, and to connect ... We must believe we are worthy of rest. We don't have to earn it. It is our birthright. It is one of our most ancient and primal needs...when you slowly begin to believe and understand your inherent worth, rest becomes possible in many ways."

So there's my theological grounding, the womanist perspective I want to collaborate with. This is also something I'm hearing a lot from Unitarian Universalist leaders, folks I look to for advice and perspective.

UUA leader and staff person Natalie Briscoe for example, in [this article on rest](#), reminds us "Rest is more than sleep in this traumatic time. We have to focus on how we will care for our whole beings for the long haul. Hoping that "getting back to normal" will fix how we feel is not realistic. We have to care for ourselves and each other right now, the way the world is currently. We can't wait. We won't be able to move thoughtfully and faithfully into the future unless we rest now and prepare for the journey ahead."

But what does rest—Deep Rest—look like, as a practice? There are a lot of answers to this, and I want to offer us a chance to try some of them out together. So I'm doing a special Adult Religious Education offering!

This month I invite you to join me for a Saturday of Spiritual Practice, experimenting with practices related to rest and restoration, tools you can play with for a day or work into your daily life. We'll gather on March 9 from 10am until 3pm in the Sanctuary for a time of creativity, contemplation, and connection. Lunch will be provided. Registration is here: <https://forms.gle/rmXXkikTEWCdVFTS6>



Upcoming in Religious Education

Saturday March 2: Adult Our Whole Lives in Dolan Lounge; Lea Morris Workshop in Sanctuary

Sunday March 3: Elementary and Middle School Worship Breakout Groups in Fellowship House, High School Youth Group in Children's Chapel (and then in Sanctuary).

4th to 6th Grade OWL in Fellowship House, 7th to 9th grade OWL in Dolan Lounge, Parents as Religious Educators Small Group Ministry in Children's Chapel

Saturday March 9: Deep Rest Workshop in Sanctuary

(Register here: <https://forms.gle/rrmXKikTEWCDVFTS6>)

Sunday March 10: Elementary, Middle, and High School Worship Breakout Groups in Fellowship House,

4th to 6th Grade OWL in Fellowship House, 7th to 9th grade OWL in Dolan Lounge, Parents as Religious Educators Small Group Ministry in Children's Chapel

Saturday March 16: Adult Our Whole Lives in Sanctuary

Sunday March 17: Elementary, Middle, and High School Worship Breakout Groups in Fellowship House,

4th to 6th Grade OWL in Fellowship House, 7th to 9th grade OWL in Dolan Lounge, Parents as Religious Educators Small Group Ministry in Children's Chapel

Saturday March 23: Adult Our Whole Lives in Sanctuary

Sunday March 24: All Ages Palm Sunday Worship Service with Paper Bag No Rehearsal Pageant

Saturday March 30: Adult Our Whole Lives in Sanctuary

Sunday March 31: All Ages Easter Sunday, including Egg Hunt following the All Ages Worship Service

Adult Owl Starts March 2

For the first time in a long time, UUCSS will offer Adult Our Whole Lives (OWL) for anyone aged 18 to 100+.

Honest, accurate information about sexuality changes lives. It dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, fosters healthy relationships, and improves decision-making. It also helps participants accept and affirm their own sexuality throughout their lives—hence the name.

The class will meet Saturdays, March 2, 16, 23.

Register online for Adult OWL: <https://forms.gle/LzWLzNFFEEQ1yBEH6>.

There is no cost to attend. If you are interested in Adult OWL but the dates don't work, or you have other questions, please contact Sara Scott at recoordinator@uucss.org.

If you're interested, please reserve these dates in your calendar:

Adult OWL Workshop Schedule - Saturdays, March 2, 16, 23

10am-12:15pm Workshop #1

12:15-1:15pm Lunch

1:15-3:30pm Workshop #2

And we ask you to reserve Saturday, April 6 on your calendar—be on the lookout for more information! If you have something you'd like to collaborate with Rev. Caitlin about for Adult Religious Education, please let her know by emailing amsg@uucss.org.



Questions, comments, want to get involved? Email Rev. Caitlin at amsg@uucss.org or our RE Coordinator Sara Scott at recoordinator@uucss.org.

Rev. Caitlin's "office days" are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (and Friday and Saturday are her usual days off). Her Google Voice Number is 301-679-5832, and you can schedule zoom meetings with her via this link: www.calendly.com/revcaitlin (or reach out to schedule a coffee or what have you).

CONNECT

Events

Recurring and committee events can also be found on the Church Calendar at <https://uucss.org/calendar/>

UUCSS Youth Gatherings

The families of UUCSS high school age youth are reconnecting. The teens have already enjoyed an escape room adventure and bowling. Additional gatherings are being planned and we would like all high schoolers to know about them and join in. Visitors welcome! Events will typically be the first and third Sunday of each month. Ideas for future events include a mini golf outing, more bowling, helping at Shepard's table together, and more. If you have a high schooler and want to learn more, please join our ParentsOfTeens email group by sending an email to "ParentsOfTeens+subscribe@uucss.groups.io" (no subject or message body needed). Contact Moderators@uucss.groups.io with any issues.

Bring Food Donations Sunday, March 3

UUCSS collects food donations for the food bank at the Silver Spring Christian Reform Church on the first Sunday of every month. Please bring canned fruit in its own juice or water, canned vegetables with no added sodium, canned meats (chicken, salmon, tuna), low-sodium soups, meals in a can (such as chili, beef stew, spaghetti), whole wheat pasta, and pasta sauce, low-sugar cereal and oatmeal, dried beans or rice, nuts, oils, and vinegars to church on **Sunday, March 3**. If you will not be at church this Sunday, you can leave your donation in the kitchen, labeled "Food Bank Donation." Thanks!

Lea Morris Residency at UUCSS March 2

Award-winning singer/songwriter Lea Morris will launch her U.S. "Be the Light" tour in her hometown of Silver Spring with two events at the UU Church of Silver Spring (UUCSS) on Saturday, March 2.

From 2-4 pm, Lea will share her multilayered "SoulFolk" songs in a fun, accessible workshop free of notation and perfectionism. All songs will be taught by ear—no need to read sheet music.

A concert at 8 pm will feature Lea's unique versions of original, contemporary, and traditional songs. The concert will be streamed online for those who can't attend in person. (The workshop will not be streamed.)

You can purchase tickets for the workshop, the concert, or a reduced-price COMBO ticket for both events. Concert and Combo ticket holders will receive a streaming link prior to the event.

To keep the event accessible to our entire community, we are offering tickets on a sliding scale.

Get your tickets at <https://bit.ly/lea-uucss>.



Sunday Book Group

Our next meeting will be on **Sunday, March 24 at 7 pm** to discuss *The Secret Life of Groceries: The Dark Miracle of the American Supermarket* by Benjamin Lorr. The New York Times described the book as “a deeply curious and evenhanded report on our national appetites.”

Ben grew up in the UUCSS and is the son of members Kathy and Richard Lorr. If you want to join the discussion, just let us know (rlorr4@gmail.com), read the book, and come to the meeting. We will meet at the home of Jerry Herbers and on Zoom. Ben will be on Zoom from Brooklyn to answer your questions.

Women's Book Group

We meet on the third Monday of each month at UUCSS. We gather at 7:30 and we welcome readers who would like to talk about books and life. We are usually finished by 9 pm. Carpooling might be arranged.

Contact: Deborah Weiner, dweiner04@gmail.com.

UUCSS Yard Clean Ups for 2024—Please Mark Your Calendar Now

We have an awesome “Green Team” of gardeners that help to maintain & improve our landscaping. No task is too big or too small, as folks work together to get the work done. Tasks often include weeding, weedwacking pulling invasive shrubs and vines, laying mulch, and planting new native pollinator plants. If you like gardening—we’d love to have your help!

Mark your calendars now for 2024 clean up days—always the second Saturday of the month!



April 13

May 11 (continued below)

June 8

July 13

August 10

September 14

October 12

November 9

2024 Primary Elections Postcard Campaign

Reclaim Our Vote and Center for Common Ground, UUA partners, will begin postcard campaigns in the next couple of weeks. Defending Democracy will provide postcards, labels, and instructions. The campaigns are aimed at getting voters out for the Georgia and Virginia primaries. Studies show that people who vote in the primaries are more likely to vote in general elections. The postcards for GA should be mailed between 4/22 and 5/9; for VA between 4/26 and 6/3.

If you are interested in sending postcards, please let Florence Fultz, UUCS Defending Democracy member, know at vogelsang5@rcn.com. Please request in multiples of ten.

Registration for the Women's Retreat is OPEN!

Sign up at [UUCSS main: 2024 Women's Retreat Registration \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com/uucss-main-2024-women-s-retreat-registration) no later than **3/24/24!**

The Women's Retreat is Friday April 26 to Sunday April 28 at the Claggett Center near Frederick, MD, and is for anyone who identifies, at least in part, as a woman. This is a wonderful weekend for connection, spirituality, and fun!

Details about the weekend, including location, cost, accommodations, and sample agenda are included in the registration form (see link above) and will also be provided in the Information Sessions being offered. Information about requesting financial assistance or donating to the scholarship fund is also included.

The Claggett Center can accommodate 30 attendees, so please register early before it sells out.

The retreat committee is offering two Information Sessions to address frequently asked questions about what to expect, accommodations, activities, and how to register. This is a great opportunity for anyone who is new to the Women's Retreat and would like to learn more before committing or for anyone who wants to offer any suggestions for agenda items.

Wednesday, March 6 at 7:30pm at www.uucss.org/zoom1

Sunday, March 10 after church in the sanctuary (in-person).

What people say about the retreat:

- Getting to know other UUCSS women, time for personal reflection, and time for silliness and fun.
- Opportunity to get away from everyday life and have meaningful conversation and fun with UUCSS wise women.
- Getting to know other women in a relaxed atmosphere, also not having to think about meals!
- Spending time together - walks, spiritual practice, conversation and shared meals.

What newcomers should know:

- I went to my first retreat when I was very new to the congregation. Being a little shy, I was nervous that I would feel awkward and have a hard time finding my place. As it turns out, it was one of the most welcoming spaces I've been in and I think I've only missed one since!
- It's a great opportunity to get to know the women of UUCSS much better. And it's a great gift to yourself, a weekend away from "regular" daily life in a beautiful setting. No cooking! No clean-up! Ample opportunity for quiet time alone, as well, if that's what you need.

Please contact WomensRetreat@uucss.groups.io with any questions.

Women's Retreats: A Short History by Jo Paoletti

As spring creeps towards us, my mind turns to the Women's Retreat. Before Covid, this event had gone on for around twenty-five years, and we actually managed a Zoom retreat over a weekend in May 2020. Seeing it on my calendar again stirs up so many memories!

The first women's retreat took place in the early 1990s at the Claggett Center near Frederick. It was designed as an intensive weekend version of the adult religious education course "Cakes for the Queen of Heaven", an introduction to feminist theology and earth-based spirituality. As a working mom with two young children, it had been hard to commit to a weekly evening class. But this promised a weekend respite, a chance to get to know other UU women and an intriguing question: How would your life be different if you had been brought up believing God was female?

It was a small group; we gathered in the white farmhouse on the Claggett property. If memory serves, the course was led by Maude Clark, Hank Dahlstrom, and Sherri Sanborne, none of whom I knew well. For the next few years, the retreat continued its emphasis on feminist and earth-based theology, and was scheduled as close as possible to the spring equinox.

In the late 1990s, we made two major changes to the retreat. The first was to relocate to Rising Phoenix, a retreat center in western Maryland, which was operated by a Presbyterian minister who envisioned an interfaith woman-centered space. For years, we made the long trek to Flintstone, MD, happy to be rewarded with lovingly-prepared meals, a breathtaking view of the mountains, and a spacious hot tub. The other change was to widen the focus of the retreat to include other theologies (or none). I remember a friend saying she really needed a retreat, but as an atheist, she felt uncomfortable with polytheistic paganism. We adjusted and became more inclusive. A transwoman member of UUCSS attended for several years, and was welcomed without discussion.

Eventually, our lovely host retired and Rising Phoenix was sold to Loyola College in Baltimore and turned into a (very) Catholic retreat center. We already had our reservation, which they had to honor, but it was a sad visit. The handmade quilts were gone, and every room had dorm-style bunk beds. The hot tub was scheduled for removal.

Still, the Women's Retreat lived on, back at the Claggett Center. It's a weekend of sharing, laughing, dancing, massages, long walks, a good cry or two, and a lay-led worship service that honors the pagan origins of the event.

I end with a few of my favorite retreat memories.

- Bringing my teenage daughter and her best friend to the retreat, and watching them make friends with women ranging in age from the 20s to the 80s.
- Creating masks with plaster bandages and colored tissue paper. Mine signified the mystery of aging as I turned fifty. It still sits on a shelf in my bedroom.
- The dance party when we danced to Saffire's "Bitch with a bad attitude", DJ'd by Lucille Rowe, the impeccably ladylike designer responsible for our beautiful sanctuary.
- Playing hooky with Carol Cissel to watch the NCAA women's tournament and hatch the idea for the 2010 UUCSS women's calendar.

I look forward to more spiritual shenanigans in 2024.



Committee Updates

Annual Budget Drive Update



Each year, the ABD is an opportunity to learn more about how UUCSS resources are put to use to achieve our mission. It is also a time for building fellowship, providing feedback to our church leadership, and making your pledge of financial support to UUCSS.

This year's ABD theme is: What Will We Bring to the Table? In February, UUCSS members hosted several gatherings in homes and at the church to share what we value about UUCSS. The ABD Committee has received very positive feedback about this year's campaign, offering our community time to reconnect in small groups and have fun together! And many of you put your baking skills on display (and on the table) on Feb 18 at our Cupcake Competition—thanks to all who participated, and importantly, all who pledged during this event!

As a result, as of February 20, pledges to this ABD campaign skyrocketed from 37 to 77 households/people having made their pledges, leaping by a whopping \$135,333 (from \$142,189 to \$277,522)! That was a leap from 1/3 to 2/3 of our goal of \$425,000! By the time you read this article, with your help, we will be even closer to achieving our ultimate goal. Stay tuned on Sundays for the latest updates on the numbers!

In early March, the ABD campaign will enter its wrap-up stage. This means that if you have not completed your pledge—we need you to do so NOW—TODAY! After Feb 26, the ABD Committee and board members will begin reaching out to anyone who has not yet had an opportunity to pledge to invite them to do so without delay. This will allow the board and staff to start to plan for the next church year.

As a reminder, you can pledge by:

- Filling out your pledge card and dropping it in the collection basket on Sunday
- OR simply scan the QR code on the back of the card to pledge online
- OR go to the ABD page of the UUCSS website and complete the pledge form here: [UUCSS Annual Budget Drive Pledge Form - Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring](#)

Finally, don't miss the ABD Celebration at the service on **March 3** which will feature special music, updates on our progress against our pledge goal and more!

A New Way to Give on UUCSS.org!

You can now make donations to UUCSS right from a new "Giving" button on our website. The payments are processed by Vanco, the same service that offers the mobile giving app we've been using for a few years. Just like with the app, you can pay with a bank account or credit card. After you choose the fund you want to donate to (ABD, General Collection or Capital Campaign 2022), select either "One-time" or "Recurring" payment. One-time payments can be made immediately or scheduled for a future date. Recurring payments can be made monthly, every week, or every two weeks. (It's a good idea to select an end date for recurring payments.) Questions? Contact collector@uucss.org.

Member Spotlight: Jiwon Kim



Jiwon Kim and her family came to the United States from South Korea when she was 17. In her own words, she was “bright eyed and bushy-tailed” and ready for an adventure. She studied Spanish literature in college and eventually found a job with the National Library of Medicine from which she recently retired. She enjoys being able to structure her day and do the things she wants without the time pressures of work. This has been a paradigm shift and something she’s still learning about.

Unless you ask Jiwon, you may not realize that she is a deeply spiritual person. In South Korea her mother exposed her to Buddhist, shamanistic, and indigenous pagan religious traditions. While her father was agnostic, her father’s sister brought her into Catholicism for a while, and then she found Protestantism. She and her husband Scott tried Unitarian Universalism at a large local church, but never fully connected. By happenstance she talked with

Nicole Levesque at a neighborhood gathering and heard about UUCSS. When they started attending, they felt immediately welcomed by Dorothy Hale, among others.

Religious ceremony is not something that Unitarian Universalists are known for and it’s hard to imagine how we compare given her diverse religious background. But for Jiwon, UUism opened a path of living intentionally and better at practicing what we preached, bridging the theoretical with action making our rituals more meaningful in their totality. She cherishes UUCSS Sunday services, which often bring tears by touching her heart and soul—to her deeper self and to the Divine like nothing else. She values UUCSS as a place where ceremony, meaning, and action walk hand in hand.

Staff Hours and Contact Information

Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg, Assistant Minister of Spiritual Growth

Caitlin is most available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays--Mondays and Fridays are her flex days (either used for writing and planning or as days off, according to the needs of the church and her family). You can email her at amsg@uucss.org, text her at her Google Voice number (301-679-5832), or schedule a meeting with her via calendly: www.calendly.com/revcaitlin.

Michael Holmes, Music Director

Michael works Thursday evenings, Sunday mornings, and is available at other times by appointment. Michael can be reached at musicdirector@uucss.org.

Jeannette Jackson, Administrator

administrator@uucss.org

Rev. Kristin G. Schmidt, Minister

Rev. Kristin works Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Mondays are her writing days and Friday is her day off. She is available at minister@uucss.org and 202-780-7164. If you experience a pastoral care emergency outside normal office hours or over the weekend please text or call her. You can schedule an appointment with Rev. Kristin at www.calendly.com/rev-kristin-schmidt

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FIRST CLASS

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Submissions are due by the 17th of the prior month.

Uniters are published monthly September-June by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring.

Send information and visuals to uniter@uucss.org.

Format guidelines for submissions: Text must be in a form that it can be edited, either in a Google Doc (preferred), Word file, or in the body of an email that can be copied and pasted. Graphics must be in a format in which they can be repositioned and resized—jpeg is greatly preferred.

Co-editors are **Lynn Cave** and **Caroline Stauss**.

To receive a PDF email version of the newsletter, contact the church office at administrator@uucss.org.

To receive a mailed copy of the **Uniter** for the year, please send **\$24 to UUCSS, Attention: Collector**.