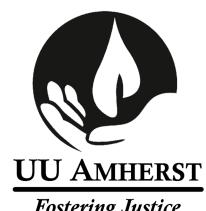
March 2020

The Foreword

The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst
6320 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221
634-3010 (x101 for office)
Office Hours Tues.—Fri. 9am to 2pm www.uuamherst.org



Fostering Justice and Compassion

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Minister Emerita

Rev. Maureen Q. Thitchener

Our Covenant

Together we promise:
To gather in compassionate community,

To celebrate diversity of thought and unity of spirit;

And to seek wholeness for ourselves, our children, and our world.

SUNDAY SERVICES IN MARCH AT 10:30 AM

The Soul Matters theme this month is Wisdom. We will take this month to focus on the third Source that informs and guides us as Unitarian Universalists: Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life.

3/1 Roots and Wings

Kristina Church

The early history of Unitarian Universalism is intertwined with a small region of Romania known as Transylvania. Our ministerial intern, Kristina Church, recently traveled there to learn more. Join her as she shares epiphanies, memories, and reflections from the journey.

3/8 Wisdom from World Religions: Sikhism Beatrice Singh-Arnone, Guest speaker

Beliefs, Practices, & Community Engagement
Beatrice Singh-Arnone is a member of the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple in
Niagara Falls. She grew up in Williamsville, is married and has two
grown children in college, and has been an elementary teacher in the
Niagara-Wheatfield Central School District for 20 years.

- 3/15 Wisdom from World Religions: Christianity
 The Christianity That Hasn't Been Tried Yet
- Rev. Michelle
- 3/22 Wisdom from World Religions: Judaism Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein, Guest Speaker

4th Sunday Worship for All Ages

Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein came to Buffalo in the Fall of 2008 to serve as the rabbi of Temple Sinai, now called Congregation Shir Shalom. Rabbi Alex is a respected leader in the Buffalo area, serving on many local boards including several Jewish organizations and the Network of Religious Communities.

3/29 Wisdom from World Religions: Cherokee John Snodgrass, Guest Speaker

Wisdom of The Water Beetle

In the Cherokee tribal creation story it is not a god or goddess who begins the work of creation, but a humble water beetle. What can we learn from this story, about being good neighbors and living with the land? (See bio on John Snodgrass on page 3.)



MINISTER'S CORNER

You know that uncomfortable, itchy feeling when a cut or wound is healing? My grandmother always told me that it was itchy because it was healing from the inside first. Whether that's medically true or just homespun wisdom, it is certainly true spiritually. We always have to heal from the inside first.

Some things at church might be feeling 'itchy' - there is a lot of change in the works, as well as new energy and emerging leadership. We are closing the chapter on a longtime and

beloved fundraiser (rummage sale), we are 'facing the music' regarding put-off repairs to our facilities and discerning how our buildings and grounds will best serve the church we are becoming, and we are creating systems that will help us be more healthy and to grow - but at the moment, they just feel like shackles to our free-spiritedness. There's a lot of 'itchy' in all of that.

But here's another thing my grandmother told me: Don't scratch that itch; if you do, the scab will come off and the healing has to start all over again. The 'itchy' means that healing is happening, wholeness is possible, we're almost there. When I arrived four-and-a-half years ago, this congregation had some open wounds from disappointment, unmet expectations, and broken trust. We have worked to repair and heal, to reestablish covenant, and to create healthy systems. We've been healing from the inside. Don't give up now. After a short season of discomfort ('itchiness'), we will experience a level of health and vitality that has been missing for too long. There is so much good happening now - so much energy and possibility! I feel it - can you?

Faithfully,

Rev. Michelle

NOTES & REMINDERS

The Goats Are Coming! The Goats Are Coming!

In January, Rev. Michelle preached about becoming known as the place where the community can gather to learn more about loving the Earth and engaging with Green alternatives to toxic systems. She mentioned the possibility of bringing in goats to help us clear some of the invasive plants on our property - and that idea sparked folks' imaginations! We will be hosting a small herd of goats over the weekend of August 22-23! We're working with Let's Goat Buffalo, a local business that engages in humane, ethical treatment of their animals - these goats have it made! This is an exciting initiative that will help the larger community know who we are and what we value, as well as inviting them to participate in Green alternatives. Stay tuned (and get involved) as planning proceeds for our first Green Goat Festival on Saturday, August 22, 11:00 am-3:00 pm.

New Procedure for Events

Do you have an idea for an event or a fundraiser? We are developing a process for selecting events that support our mission, keep the calendar streamlined, and honor the worth and dignity of volunteers! Simply fill out a short proposal (paper copies in lobby or do online) and submit it to the Ministry Council for review (they meet the second Wednesday of each month). The Council will consider how the event/fundraiser fits into the overall scope of church life and/or community outreach. They may ask questions and request that you attend a meeting and provide more details. This system is in place to be helpful and to channel your creativity into successful events. Forms may be submitted online (see our website) and hard copy proposals should be submitted to Rev. Michelle to bring to the Ministry Council. Proposals must be approved by the Ministry Council before they can be added to the church calendar.

January Share-the-Plate Donation

Our share-the-plate collection from January which supports our annual membership in VOICE Buffalo was \$885.93. Thank you to all who contributed!

MINISTERIAL INTERN NOTES



Most of you know that we've been exploring the topic of environmental justice pretty intensely this year. Along with the **Our Place in the Web of Life** program, we've had lots of other opportunities to learn, connect, and grow through our weekly Planet Thursday offerings.

Now, Michelle, Angela, and I are excited to announce that we'll be capping off our year of transformational learning with the screening of a new documentary film, **The Condor and the Eagle**, on Saturday, April 11th.

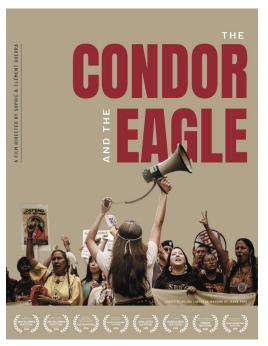
One of the executive producers of this film was the UU Ministry for Earth, and it definitely speaks to UU values and principles around environmental justice...especially respect for the interdependent web of life, of which we are all a part (our Seventh Principle).

Want to learn more? Here's a short synopsis of the award-winning film, which captured the Audience Choice Award at the Buffalo International Film Festival this year:

"Indigenous environmental leaders embark on an extraordinary trans-continental adventure from the Canadian plains to deep into the heart of the Amazonian jungle to unite the peoples of North and South America and deepen the meaning of Climate Justice."

"The Condor & The Eagle documentary offers a glimpse into a developing spiritual renaissance as the film's protagonists learn from each other's long legacy of resistance to colonialism and its extractive economy. Their paths take them on an unexpectedly challenging and liberating journey, which will forever change their attachment to the Earth and one another."

What's really exciting is that this moving film, with its epic spiritual journey for these Indigenous leaders, will be a perfect way to follow up and deepen our learning after wrapping up our book study groups of *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* this month.



So mark your calendars for April 11th, and stay tuned for more details! You won't want to miss it!

Kristina

Bio: John Snodgrass, Guest Speaker Sunday, March 29

John Snodgrass teaches Native American Religions at Canisius College, and is the author of numerous books including *Natives Discover America: An Anthropological Study of 'the White Man.'* He also studies and teaches about other religions, and lives in Buffalo with his wife and their four children.

FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Dear Beloved UU Amherst Community and Friends,

The Soul Matters monthly themes of resilience for February and wisdom for March make a lot of sense, don't they? The month of February always seems like the limbo of the calendar year, after holiday get togethers and the joy they bring us, before the time we really get outside and share each others' company again. It can be isolating for many of all ages. This requires resilience to move through. Then gratefully we embrace the emerging and lengthening light of Spring, and the light of Wisdom the Earth makes visible through its awakening. We awaken ourselves as part of this wonderful, complex, joyful planet.

Our spring awakening this year will mingle with our study of *Indigenous People's History of the United States*. This history by Roxanne Dubar-Ortiz seeks to shift our understanding of US History by challenging "readers to learn US history through a narrative that centers the story, the experiences, and the perspectives of Indigenous peoples. . . Upending myths and misinformation that have been promulgated by leaders and media, it asks readers to reconsider the origin story of the United States taught to every US school child." - from the UUA website section on **Common Read 2019-2020.**

It is with great pleasure that I am able to say we have over thirty people including youth who will be participating in discussions here at UUCA. Planet Thursday sessions on 3/5, 3/19, and 3/26 will follow a three-part study guide. Youth group will study the version for Young People during FD sessions on 3/8, 3/15, and 3/29. We would like to celebrate and discuss our increased Wisdom after class on the 29th. More details to come in What's Up Wednesday.

Truly yours, Angela Warren

Lending Library

Our church has a glass cabinet (between the rear windows) in the Emerson Room filled with books on religious and spiritual themes that you may borrow on the Honor System. Sign out fiction, nonfiction, memoir, or even a children's book. There are a few digital items available, too. No due dates; please estimate in the spiral notebook how long you plan to keep it.

Some recent additions: Buddha by Karen Armstrong, Intro to Buddha by Jane Hope (illustrated, and suitable for young adult readers); The Sacred Writings of the World's Great Religions edited by S.E. Frost, Jr.; Ethics for the New Millennium by His Holiness the Dalai Lama; Islam and the Future of Tolerance, a dialogue between Sam Harris and Maajid Nawaz; As a Man Thinketh, by James Allens Allens Allens and Company Staries of Law Ministry and Landardhin adited by Board and Company Cod in Net Great

Allen; All are Chosen: Stories of Lay Ministry and Leadership edited by Beard and Comstock; God is Not Great, How Religion Poisons Everything by Christopher Hitchens; When God Was a Woman by Merlin Stone; Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography by Roger Shattuck; Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life by Karen Armstrong; and Revelations: Visions, Prophecy & Politics in the Book of Revelation and The Gnostic Gospels, both by Elaine Pagels.

In the Living Room (where the comfy couches are), there are Nature and Social Justice selections on the bookshelves in the corner. No sign-out sheet there, but please return borrowed items promptly. Contact Marie Evans if you have questions.

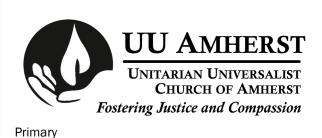
MARKETING TASK GROUP

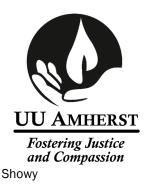
For the past several months, the Marketing Task Force has been meeting and reviewing the marketing for church as suggested by the 2018 Strategic Plan. We reviewed the existing marketing material and identified the logo as something we wanted to improve, because the existing logo's proportion between image and words made it hard to read and use in digital and print material. After a spirited debate, the group decided to replace the existing logo's "UUCA" with "UU Amherst" since this says we are in Amherst and not Albion, Akron or other locations in WNY. We also replaced the existing tagline "We are a welcoming community with a shorter version of our mission: "Fostering Justice and Community." The full church mission statement is: "To challenge ourselves and the community to foster more compassion and justice in the world."

Additionally, there are three versions of the logo - Primary, Showy (for larger uses) and Simple (for use over photo backgrounds, mainly digital). (See samples below.) The Logo Guideline document, approved by the board this month, is available from the office to assist you with using these logos. Please feel free to ask questions!

Respectfully,

Lauraine Marcus & Devon Southall Marketing Task Force Chairs on behalf of the rest of the team: Maria Ceraulo, Elaine Cusker, Douglas Funke, Emily Garrett, Scott Harrigan, David Kofke, Dian Tucker







SOCIAL JUSTICE

Friends of the Night People is a non-profit organization that provides food, clothes, and medical help, free, to anyone that needs help. The UU Church of Amherst team serves food once a month on the fourth Sunday from 4:15 pm to



7:00 pm. We each wear an apron, a cap, and plastic gloves as we stand to serve the cafeteria style line. The experience is a wonderful community service for needy folks who so appreciate our service. We need your help and are looking for more volunteers. If you are interested in helping, please contact any one of us so we can schedule you at your convenience. Thanks so much for your attention and consideration. Our Church Team: Carol Wells, Pat Burke, Anne Gayley, Eileen McCallister, Ellen Doyno, Marilyn Carmichael, and others as they are able.

GREEN SANCTUARY/CLIMATE JUSTICE

Thanks again to the 45 folks who participated in our Eco Challenge! With the completion of the "Our Place in the Web of Life" curricula for youth and adults (during Planet Thursday) this puts us more than half-way towards the renewal of our Green Sanctuary Certification. For our next projects, we need people to make connections with local green groups. If contacting people is in your skill set and you have time in the next several months – we need you on our team! If you are involved in local green groups, let me know too! Best way to contact me is by email: devon_buffalo@yahoo.com but feel free to chat with me at church too.



So what are our next projects?

- One is already up on our Green Sanctuary board in the church lobby, a suggestion, discussion and voting board for Green Ideas to improve the "green-ness" of our beloved church. Please check it out when you can participate by voting and making suggestions.
- Next, we will be working with the congregation to pick an Environmental Justice project in collaboration with other local groups. This is a required project for our GS certification.
- We are also in the planning stages of an public environmental festival (possibly the afternoon of Saturday, August 22) featuring the invasive-weed eating goats from Let's Goat Buffalo. More details in the coming months!

Best, Devon Southall



SAVE THE DATE
Saturday, April 11, 2020
Time TBA,
Place: UU Amherst
Film Screening:

The Condor and The Eagle

Synopsis: Four indigenous environmental leaders embark on a extraordinary trans-continental adventure from the Canadian plains to deep into the heart of the Amazonian jungle to unite the peoples of North and South America and deepen the meaning of "Climate Justice". See a trailer for the film at https://vimeo.com/359405536

FREE screening (invite your friends!) with free-will offering to benefit the UU Create Climate Justice Campaign. Hosted by UU Amherst, UU Ministry for Earth, and UU Service Committee.



Do you like to sing or play an instrument? The Church Musicians is a new informal group gathering after church to practice singing for services, coffee houses, and other church functions. We'll be adding instruments as soon as we can, and arranging a practice schedule to suit most participants. Come to our "Open Music Room" sessions after church to see where you might fit in! Held in either the music room, now the Faith Development office, in the FD wing, or in the Chapel.

BOARD NOTES

Dear UU Amherst members and friends.

The Board Notes took a one month hiatus, with no column in the January 2020 newsletter. I will blame that on the lack of things to report due to the holiday lull in activity. Now with that past us, we're getting back into action and starting to make progress again on some of our goals for the year. Here's a status update:



- We have contacted a third architect for a quote for a formal review of our buildings and grounds, and a rough plan for enacting our vision for the future of our facilities. Once we have all quotes, we will obtain some expert advice to review them, and then the Board will meet with each firm to discuss their report and address questions.
- We have formed a task force to investigate options for replacing and modernizing the sign at the entrance to the church grounds.
- The Marketing Task Force has developed recommended formats for official use of the church logo. Most notable is that we will brand ourselves as "UU Amherst" rather than "UUCA". The Board has approved the Task Force recommendations. Look for an announcement soon.
- The Welcoming Task Force has developed a diverse list of outreach activities to help bring people to UU Amherst (see how I did that?) and hopefully learn more about us.
- We have a final draft of a personnel policy manual, and we are continuing to work on the broader set of policies that guide our actions and activities.

That's it for now; I hope you have a great month. Spring is not too far away!

David Kofke, Chair, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Practicing Gratitude and Generosity Rev. Michelle

There's a story told by one of my colleagues about a woman on a subway train in New York City. "The station's crowded, and as she leaves the train, she realizes she is holding only one of her gloves. She looks back into the car and sees the matching one on the seat, but it's too late to rush back and retrieve it. Suddenly, as the doors begin to close, she flings out her arm, and tosses the remaining glove on to the seat, alongside its mate. The doors shut, and the train pulls away." (Phyllis O'Connell, quoted in Quest, CLF, 11/97)

I love this story. I love the spontaneity and creative generosity of the woman's action. Many of us might have noticed that we only had one glove and sighed as we made plans to stop by a store and get a replacement pair. We might have a passing thought of hoping someone could at least use the lost glove, but there aren't many folks who would find a single glove useful. Her quick decision to throw the mate onto the train might seem frivolous, but it speaks to a habit of generosity. Another colleague, Rev. Victoria Safford notes, "It happened in an instant, but that was planned giving, through and through. Something in her past, or everything in her past, prepared that woman for her gesture, habits of living and giving practiced and refined her whole life long."

During the month of March we will be reminding you of the importance of contributing to the life and vitality of this church through generous and consistent giving. Your giving supports the ministries of UU Amherst, as we change lives to change the world.

Caring for One Another

Christine Boczarska and Faith Pham are sisters and dedicated members of our Caring For One Another group. They provide occasional meals to church members on an as-needed basis. With the meal they generally include a "goodie bag" and a card on behalf of the Caring Group. They often submit healthy recipes for the monthly *Foreword*. The recipes are easy and usually use fresh vegetables. In the past these have included vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and ethnic recipes. Many members have expressed their appreciation both for the meals and the recipes they have provided.

As the weather continues to be on the chilly side, we offer a hearty breakfast muesli that's a healthier choice than processed cereals you'll find in the grocery store aisle. Make a batch on the weekend to have on hand for busy mornings.

Breakfast Muesli

2 1/2 cups rolled oats (not quick oats)

1 cup bran or rye flakes

1/2 cup sliced almonds

1/4 cup sunflower seeds

1/4 cup pumpkin seeds (without shells)

or walnuts or pecans

1/4 cup unsweetened coconut flakes

Heaping 1/4 tsp cinnamon

1/8 tsp ginger

1/8 tsp nutmeg

1/8 tsp salt

1/4 cup grade B maple syrup or honey

1 tsp vanilla

1 cup of your choice of dried fruits - dates, raisins, craisins, cherries, blueberries, apricots, pineapple



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large mixing bowl combine ingredients except for the liquids and dried fruits. Stir dry ingredients until well mixed.

Add liquids. Mix the dry and wet ingredients until they are evenly coated. Spread mixture on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake 6 minutes, stir. Bake for another 6 minutes, stir. Add dried fruit and bake about 6 minutes, stir.

Only bake until all ingredients are toasted, but not burnt. Cool and store in airtight container. Makes about 4



AMHERST LITTLE FREE PANTRY UPDATE

We have seen a greatly increased need from Thanksgiving to the present, and our shelves need restocking of the basics: cereal, tuna, canned fruit and fruit cups, canned or boxed soup, juice/milk drink boxes, pasta (including lasagna), pasta sauce, toilet paper and deodorant. Non-perishables only and no glass. Please remember to bring even a few items when you are here for service or a meeting.

We are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with no questions asked. You don't have to wait to get help. All are welcome.

The Little Free Pantry Team meets the first Sunday of the month at 12:00 pm. For questions or comments please contact Maria Ceraulo. at amherstlittlefreepantry@ uuamherst.org.

Like us on Facebook: amherstlittlefreepantry

Don't forget to call your minister!

With health privacy laws, hospitals no longer call churches to let us know when someone has been hospitalized – so it is up to you to contact us if you or someone you know is experiencing health challenges and may want a visit. When in doubt, call!



Welcome Visitors!

Please leave the parking spaces on the right in front of the sidewalk leading into daycare open for our first time visitors! It's just a simple way to let them know they are valued!

Thank you.

Connections and Welcome



UU Amherst Rental Space

Various rooms at UU Amherst are available to rent for private events, weddings, memorial and naming services, instruction, group meetings, and community use. The building includes a well-equipped kitchen and banquet room that seats 96 with audio/video capability. For rental information, email administrator @uuamherst.org or call the Church Office, 634-3030 x100.

UU MEMBERS GET-TOGETHER THIS MONTH



Poetry as Practice, Reeb Room Sun, March 8, 12:00 pm

Dorothy Reade will present poems on "resilience." Questions? Contact Diane Bofinger, dbofinger@buffalo.edu or 716-689-8954.



Caring for One Another, Dining Room Tues, March 17, 1:30 pm

Volunteer group to help members in need: sick visits, ride to church, sending cards, etc. For information, contact Ron Palmere at caring@uuamherst.org.



Support for Loss & Change, Living Room Thurs, March 19, 3:00 pm

All are welcome as we gather to support each other through life's difficult experiences.



UU Amherst Book Club, Dining Room Sun, March 29, 12:00 pm

Meets monthly to discuss books we've read on selected topics.



Young Adult Meet-up, Whitney Young Room Sundays, Noon-1:30 pm

Come to the coffee hour in the Emerson Room for snacks and conversation. For information, or to be added to the email or text lists, contact Diane Bofinger at youngadults@uuamherst.org or 716-418-3272.



CONNECTIONS CAFÉ

FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAY 9:15 A.M.

EMERSON ROOM — OPEN TO EVERYONE

Casual way to learn more about what's going on at the church. Meet new people, get questions answered, learn how to become a member.

CONVERSATION THEME CHANGES EACH SESSION

Helpful Reminders

Be A Coffee Hero!

Sign up to help with coffee hour after services. Put your name on the sheet by the coffee pot on Sundays or contact Margot Shoemaker.

Sense-itivity Helps

We have many friends who have chemical sensitivities, whether due to asthma or allergies. We can be more welcoming and inclusive by refraining from wearing scents at church.



Just a reminder to save your Dash's receipts and put them in the collection box in the Donation Center in lobby. Proceeds from collecting these go to the Global African Village. More at globalafricanvillage.org.



Financial Literacy Program

Sunday, March 15, 1:00 pm Emerson Room

Guest Speaker: Laverne Merriweather, Financial Literacy Expert

Watch for details to come.

UU AMHERST FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Blue Mountain Meditation, every Tues. 7:00 pm (Reeb).

Planet Thursday, every Thursday, 6:00-7:30 pm.

Sun, Mar 1

9:15 am Connections Café 10:30 am Church Service

12:00 pm Young Adult Meet-up (WYR) **12:00 pm** Little Free Pantry (LR)

Mon, Mar 2 Office Closed

Tue, Mar 3

1:30 pm Women's Afternoon Study Group (LR)

Wed. Mar 4

7:00 pm Preaching by Parishioners (Fahs)

Thr, Mar 5

12:00 pm ROMEO'S Lunch, Buffalo Brew Pub

Fri, Mar 6

7:00 pm Cocktails & Conversation

Sat, Mar 7

12:00 pm Andy Tucker Memorial Service (Chapel/Em)

Sun, Mar 8

10:30 am Church Service

11:45 am Young Adult Meet-up (WYR) **12:00** pm Poetry as Practice (Reeb)

Mon, Mar 9 Office Closed

Tues, Mar 10

12:30 pm Current Events Lunch (Em)7:00 pm Board of Trustees Meeting (Fahs)

Wed, Mar 11

7:00 pm Ministry Council (Fahs)

Sun, Mar 15

9:15 am Connections Café
10:30 am Church Service

11:45 am Young Adult Meet-up (WYR)
1:00 pm Financial Literacy Program (Em)

Mon, Mar 16 Office Closed

Tue, Mar 17

12:30 pm Women's Lunch (Em)

1:30 pm Caring for One Another (Em)

5:00 pm Finance Meeting (Em)

Wed, Mar 18

1:30 pm Social Justice Meeting (LR)7:00 pm Preaching by Parishioners (Fahs)

Thr. Mar 19

3:00 pm Support for Loss & Change (LR)

Sun, Mar 22

10:30 am Church Service

11:45 am Young Adult Meet-up (WYR)

Mon, Mar 23 Office Closed

Tue, Mar 24

1:30 pm Women's Afternoon Study Group (LR)

Sun, Mar 29

10:30 am Church Service

11:45 am Young Adult Meet-up (WYR)
12:00 pm UU Amherst Book Club (DR)

Mon, Mar 30 Office Closed

MINISTER'S OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday-Thursday Fridays, sermon writing @home Monday: Rev. Michelle's day off

MORE PROGRAMS ONLINE

UU A,mherst hosts a number of community groups each month as well as private services for a variety of occasions. See the complete calendar online at

uuamherst.org/calendar.

HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT?

Email: administrator@uuamherst.org
For Newsletter: by 10:00 am on the 16th
For Order of Service: by 10:00 am Wed prior
For Website: two weeks prior to event

For all church list serve: daily during the week. For What's Up Wednesday: Tuesdays by 11:00 am



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