

SEPT
2020

Parish Notes

The Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Concord



Minister's Musings

Thank you. Seriously. For allowing me to have generous time off this summer, to breathe, to replenish, to regain perspective, to listen to wise and entertaining voices on podcasts, audio recordings, and on film. And to read and reflect, connect with family and friends, and to sit and pay attention to my body, to my breath, and to the chatter in my mind holding me hostage.

Looking back I am surprised (and not) by how long it took to return to a place where I did notice my breath once more, for my body and mind to calm down enough to feel anything but the gross sensations that show up when you push and run only to push harder and run faster. Several weeks into my "break" I realized I was approaching my vacation with the same abandon of the months before: "I can get this done (and then I can slow down) if only I keep pushing through today - the garden projects, the basement cleanup, the repainting, the moving and decorating of rooms,..."

Emerging from the grip of the "go-go-go" took time and an explicit re-engagement with my daily practice. My reactivity began to fade, my anxiety toned down, my sense of overwhelm softened - my curiosity and wonder returned. And then I read "See No Stranger," Valerie Kaur's "Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love." OMG. This is the emotional, spiritual, and inspirational road map I so needed to find right now. A road map to loving others, loving opponents, and to loving ourselves. A road map to living with and into the grief and rage that bubbles up each time I learn of another injustice experienced by a person of color, a trans person, a woman, someone poor, disabled or queer. "Love is the spirit of this church" we proclaim each week.

Yes, and yet what does that actually imply? What does love mean when what we need is a deep transformation of our culture, of how we are with one another? "See No Stranger" has the answer. Seriously. Read it. Now. As in, don't just add it to your stack. Kaur's "revolutionary love compass" makes tangible the aspiration of love as the spirit of our church.

As she writes: "Love is more than a feeling. Love is a form of sweet labor; fierce, bloody, imperfect, and life-giving - a choice we make over and over again. Love can be taught, modeled, and practiced. It engages all our emotions: Joy is the gift of love. Grief is the price of love. Anger protects that which is loved. And when we think we have reached our limit, wonder is the act that returns us to love."

So I return to you filled with gratitude, open to the joy I know you bring to my heart, and ready to dive in and practice "revolutionary love" for this world that is wounded and hurting. I have faith that the darkness many of us experience, in the words of Valerie Kaur, is the "darkness of the womb not the tomb." Let us birth a new world together, always remembering to breathe and then to push, and then to breathe again, and to push some more, before returning to the breath. Let us find a balance, listening to our individual and communal bodies, trusting our bodies to find the balance that allows us to sustain what we start and to start what we can today.

With love & affection - and a bushel of hair that hasn't seen scissors in almost six months. :-)

Michael

CONNECTING IN LOVE AND SERVICE
GROWING SPIRITUALLY
TRANSFORMING OURSELVES AND THE WORLD

September Worship Services

Live stream our worship services at concorduu.org/live

Online services stream at 10 am each Sunday followed by interactive Zoom Room offerings. Each week's service theme will be published in our weekly eBulletin.



Rev. Lyn Marshall's Message of Renewal

September has always felt more like the New Year to me than January, so I'm grateful that our first monthly theme for this church year is Renewal. It was also supposed to be our theme last April, but we were three weeks into all-online church when April began, and Adaptation felt like the only relevant theme.

Of course, adaptation remains deeply relevant, but I am ready, and I hope you are ready, to consider how we will renew our spirits, renew our connections with one another, renew our courage and creativity and passion in a changed and still-changing world.

I'm excited that we will be joining the many congregations using Soul Matters worship themes this year. We used their curricula for our children's program last year, and found their materials to be user-friendly and deeply grounded in Unitarian Universalist values. This year we will be using the same themes throughout the church - for worship, for covenant groups, and for religious education for all ages. This aligns with our commitment to sharing wisdom across diverse life stages and experiences by putting us all on the same page, so to speak - encouraging families to consider the theme together. It makes multigenerational worship richer and more inclusive. It feels like - renewal!

When the pandemic hit and we closed the building, children's religious education suffered. Sunday school went by the wayside as we scrambled to adapt, and Zoom check-ins for families were poorly attended. Of course they were! Families were also scrambling to adapt, and Zoom was suddenly work, school, and social life. No one needed one more Zoom meeting in their lives. The curriculum developers at Soul Matters, however, were scrambling too - working to develop programs that made sense in a physically distanced, mostly-virtual world. I am looking forward to renewing our children's programming in ways that meet the needs of families and kids. I'm excited to find creative ways to renew connections across generations, helping children (and adults!) know themselves as members of a community that loves them.

This is not likely to be the year that "things go back to normal." I invite all of us to lean into the theme of Renewal together - let us renew our commitment to one another, to our own spirits, and to the world that so needs us to demand a deeper justice. In spite of, and because of, all the disruptions to our sense of "normal," may we dwell together in peace, seek the truth in love, and help one another. See you in church, remembering that church is not the building!

NEW! 1st & 3rd Monday Yoga Coming Soon
Starting September 21st via Zoom | check eBulletin for more info.

Centering Saturday | September 26, 2020 | 8-10 am

Led by Jeanne Ann Whittington | [Register here.](#)

Mindfulness Practice Group | Private Zoom
Meets the Second & Fourth Mondays | 6 – 7:30 PM

If interested in joining them please email Craig Whitson craig.listening@gmail.com

Insight Meditation Sangha | Zoom
Meets the Third Friday, Zoom link found on calendar, eBulletin | 4 – 6 PM

For more information and complete listings of retreats, please visit concorduu.org/lifespan-faith-development/contemplative-practices/

Here is an online resource shared by Zoe Picard.



During this global crisis we all need pathways to calm, clarity and openheartedness. While it's natural to feel fear during times of great collective crisis, our challenge is that fear easily takes over our lives. Mindfulness and compassion practices can help us find an inner refuge, and deepen our loving connection with each other.

Tara put together a care package on her website that includes talks and guided meditations to support you through these difficult times. You will find it here: tarabrach.com/pandemic/

Here's a preview to what's on the list. In the [short talk](#) and [guided meditation](#) below, we'll explore how the practice of RAIN can free us from the grip of fear...click on image below.

You are also invited to participate via livestream with a global community of spiritual friends for her weekly class each Wednesday night at 7:30 eastern time—now available on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#). They begin with a 1/2 hour guided meditation, and then offer a talk at around 8.



These are difficult times for all.

Wholly Roller Concert

Sunday, September 14 @ 4:00 PM

The Wholly Rollers will be performing in a free concert at Canterbury Shaker Village on Sunday, September 13th at 4:00pm. Masks are required and the audience will be socially distanced. Bring a chair and your favorite beverage or snack. Family groups will be allowed to sit together. Remember: the Rollers were responsible for “social distancing” long before the Covid epidemic. Some folks, when they heard we were performing, would distance themselves 10 or 12 miles away!



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY WISHES

- 4.....Rachel Burlock
- 6Chris Johnson
- 7.....Warren Haslam
- 9Becky McWilliams
- 12Clayton Savoy
- 13Liz Whiting
- 14.....Ann Burnside
- 14.....Dima Soule
- 15.....Richard Blood
- 15.....Andy Duncan
- 23Ugo Tosco
- 24Bobbie Herron
- 28Dick de Séve
- 29Erin Stewart



Colorism

This symposium explores how our collective history as well as societal and parental influence have impacted children's perceptions of themselves and others based solely on skin color. It also examines how these perceptions affect children's well-being and future roles in our changing society.

SYMPOSIUM
PANEL DISCUSSION
Q&A

IT'S MORE THAN SKIN DEEP
SKIN COLOR AND ITS
IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Sept 12, 19, Oct 3, 2020
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Virtual Online Event



A Virtual Symposium

Sept 12, 19, Oct 3 from 10:00-11:30 AM

Organized by the Racial Unity Team in Exeter, NH, this symposium engages parents, teachers, community, and youth in an honest and meaningful dialogue about colorism. The symposium features scholars Dr. Kabria Baumgartner, Dr. Aria Halliday and Dr. Frederick Bell.

Register here <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScyyunRfIyqfoHSPYMhc8dJvm757fkaf5xi2T8osCzUbsJQMQ/viewform>



FORM YOUR TEAMS NOW!!

UU Action NH Trivia Night Fundraiser

Friday, September 18 @ 7PM, on Zoom

Test your knowledge of culture, science, history and general trivia against your friends and rivals on Friday, September 18 at 7:00 PM.

Trivia Knight, the pub trivia game company, will host this fun, interactive, online game in which you'll work with your teammates to dazzle your opponents with your knowledge.

Participants are encouraged to assemble their own teams prior to registration. If you come alone, we will be happy to put you into a team.

This event is a fundraiser for UU Action NH, so we're asking for participants to donate \$20 for a ticket. However, no one will be turned away for lack of funds. **You must register in order to receive a link to the Zoom meeting for the event.**

You can get your tickets at www.UUActionNH.org/events

GREEN TEAM

Please come help spruce up the church grounds! The Green Team will be working every 4th Sunday through October 25 from 11:30-2:00 PM. October 25th will be a Green Team work day and our fall cleanup day.



Solutionary Rail Webinar

Thursday, September 10, 8 PM EDT

It is a strategy for electrifying America's long distance railroads for both passengers and freight, taking vast numbers of heavy trucks off our roads, plus many people out of cars and airplanes.

Join Zoom Meeting | <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86547246094> | Meeting ID: 865 4724 6094

Bill Moyer of Vashon Island, Washington has dual and intersecting paths as an activist and artist. In 2003, he co-founded the Backbone Campaign with friends from an artist affinity group. In the last 17 years, Backbone has emerged as a leader and innovator in the theory and practice of “artful activism.” Bill works with progressive change agents and organizations around the country to design and produce creative protest actions and provide training in grand strategy and creative tactics.

Bill is also the co-author and project lead for Solutionary Rail, a book produced by the Backbone Campaign in late 2016. Solutionary Rail provides the guiding vision for a people-powered campaign to electrify America's railroads and open corridors to a clean energy future. Rail, unique among forms of mass transportation, can easily be electrified and is being electrified around the globe. Because electricity is increasingly coming from clean sources such as sun and wind, rail has the potential to serve as a clean and reliable form of transportation while invigorating communities along the way. Solutionary Rail proposes overhead rail electrification (possibly in combination with batteries) powered by renewable energy, utilizing rail corridors for efficient long distance transmission, as well as track modernization and mode shift of freight from trucks to trains.

The CoViD-19 pandemic has revealed deep flaws in our society and economy. Solutionary Rail offers a path toward a clean transportation and energy infrastructure by tackling some of the most difficult decarbonization challenges. It also offers a vision for an infrastructure that supports localization of manufacturing, food security, and rural resilience by creating a more equitable, efficient and accessible transport infrastructure in service of the public good. Solutionary Rail continues to grow an unconventional alliance to manifest this vision.

Community Plate Update

It's been 6 months since a real Community Plate collected tangible donations. Thankfully, the transition to a virtual plate via credit cards has been smooth, at least from my eyes. Also, many thanks to the talented staff and volunteers in our church who make this happen.

Since there are no blue request forms in the virtual office or our virtual church, please email me directly if you have a plate request. Tell me why a certain non-profit or project is close to your heart. I will bring the request to our monthly Zoom meeting and get back to you.

Also, if you are interested in joining the Community Plate Committee, let me know.

Thank you for supporting our many and varied community plates.

Deb Bruss - deborahbruss@mac.com



Caring Circles Update

by *Lea Smith*

Most of our Caring Circles leads have slowed down or stopped with their routine check-in phone calls but they will welcome you to reach out to them if you are in need. If you are in need of groceries, financial assistance, or other support during illness or quarantine, please contact your lead directly.

We currently have 9 Couriers, and we have 30 Leads for 28 Circles. **THANK YOU!** A few leads have had to step down so we do have about 20 households who are not in a Circle.

Might you be willing to take a turn as a Lead so these folks know they have someone to ask for help if the need arises?

In the meantime, if you are not in a Circle because your Lead resigned, or you are newer to the church, and you are in need of help, please contact Lea Smith at lea@concorduu.org or 603-224-0291 ext 4#. If you have forgotten who your lead is, or are more comfortable making your request confidentially to church staff, Lea would be happy to help you out.

Since Caring Circles started, through August 17.....

- We have provided practical assistance with shopping or other errands to 22 congregants.
- We have answered 13 requests for financial help.
- We have run at least 40 individual errands. In addition, some of our couriers are helping someone out on a recurring basis, like weekly shopping.

SEPTEMBER Special Events & Ongoing Events

Please see our calendar online for the most up-to-date listing of events happening through Zoom:
www.concorduu.org/calendar

Remember to keep your eBulletin for private Zoom links

All meetings & rehearsals are through Zoom unless otherwise noted.
Links are available through private emails or public calendar listings.

Showing Up For Racial Justice | Sept 3 | 7 PM



Games & Chocolates | Sept 4 | 6:30 PM



Water Communion | Sept 13 | 10 AM | details TBD



Wednesday, 9 @ 6:30 PM | Board Mtg
Thursday, 10 @ 5 PM | Worship Associates
7 PM | CHOIR Rehearsal

Fall Equinox | Sept 25 | 7 PM | details TBD



Friday, 18 @ 7 PM | First Youth Group
Monday, 21 @ 6 PM | New Yoga Class
Saturday, 26 @ 10AM
No.NE District UUA Assembly & Annual Mtg

Centering Saturday

September 26 | 8-10 am | Free-Register Here
Led by Jeanne Ann Whittington



Office Hours by Appointment

Although the church building is still closed, the church office will be open **Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment**. We will be wearing our masks when you arrive, and we ask that you do the same. Please contact Lea (lea@concorduu.org or 603-224-0291 ext 4#) or Heidi (heidi@concorduu.org or 603-224-0291 ext 2#) for an appointment. Heidi and Lea are also available by phone and email on other days, so please do not hesitate to reach out if we can help you in any way.

We miss you and wish we could welcome drop-ins, but we currently do not have custodial services so proper disinfection is an area of concern in light of COVID-19.

Parish Notes Deadline Schedule:

ISSUE	DUE
OCT	Wed. SEPT 21

Please email articles and images by end of day to ParishNotes@ConcordUU.org

Staff

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Officers

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Custodian of Trust Funds | Jack Wakelin

Assistant Treasurer | Lorraine Ellis

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Anne Drewniak

Jim Schlosser

Tom O'Brien

eBulletin

Information for the upcoming week's events, happenings, and announcements are due at 6 pm on Wednesdays of each week.

Please email short articles and images to ebulletin@ConcordUU.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

If you could grow a field of anything, what would it be and why?

