



April 2021 e-Newsletter

Blessing Bag Project

Helping our Homeless Neighbors



Pictured: UUCY's board member—Sherry Lookofsky, participating in the Blessing Bag Project.

The Blessing Bag project was a great success thanks to our generous UUCY donors. The bags were given to people the same night we collected them! We had over 80 bags plus handknit scarves and hats, visa cards, first aid kits, feminine hygiene products and many boxes of extras. UUCY community service in action.



Looking to have something included in our next monthly e-Newsletter? Please contact Rachel Schmidt, Communications Coordinator (communications@uucy.org)

Healing Grief and Loss Labyrinth Walk

All are welcome to join in on this Healing Grief and Loss Labyrinth Walk at UUCY on **April 10 at 1:30 PM** (rain date 4/18) to hold space for the losses great and small from the past year.

You will have a chance to honor those connected to our community who we lost from COVID-19 and other causes -- and anyone else you want to remember.

A Memorial walk will be included in this labyrinth walk including names of UUCY congregants that have passed in the last year as well as any other names you wish to lift up in Memorial. Please send names of those you wish to honor and remember from our church community, our York community or the wider world.

If you cannot walk but wish to remember a loved one, please send the name to Shawn Fink at sled18@comcast.net. If you wish to virtually walk, please let us know that as well.

Each Labyrinth Walk at UUCY will invite you into a different experience. This walk will be for healing grief and loss -- one of the main uses of labyrinths around the world.

Our Walk will begin at 1:30. Depending on how many show up to walk, plan to sit on a bench and meditate, walk the grounds or just stand and hold space for those on the labyrinth until it's your turn and after your turn. We'll be allowing 3-4 people on at a time for this walk and you are invited to walk as many times as you need to to find healing from your loss.

As always, we will offer you a chance at the end to gather in small groups to share and discuss. Upon arrival, you will receive your walking prompts and invitation. Please feel free to invite friends. Please wear masks. Rain Date is April 18 at 1:30 p.m. Children are always welcome but the Labyrinth is a SACRED space and should not be played on during the walk. If you need childcare, let me know.



UUCY Ramblers: Walk safely with UUCY Friends!



Are you a walker and eager to reconnect with UUCY friends in a safe outdoor environment? Consider joining us for one or more of our four neighborhood rambles hosted by members of UUCY. We started Rambles in December and an average of 10 walkers showed up each time. There's **two Rambler Walks each week**. Each walk is an average 2- 3 miles; we wear masks and socially distance. Whether you prefer brisk or leisurely walking, all are welcome to come and walk at your own pace. If weather is an issue, contact the host to see if it is canceled.

Tuesday's at 10:00AM : Thursday's at 1:30PM

Week 1 (April 6) - Eastern Ramble meeting at John Rudy Park (main entrance, near BR), hosted by Julie Amberg (juliesamberg@gmail.com or 717-654-4203)

Week 2 (April 13) - Hollow Creek Greenway Trail (Jacobus) hosted by Deb Gogniat, (717) 578-3085 Location: 400 Valley Rd, York, PA 17403 [map to Hollow Creek Greenway](#)

Week 3 (April 20) - Carol- Pinchot Park- main parking area near bathrooms on York side- Bring a picnic lunch if weather is nice and we will stay for lunch hosted by Carol Stowell (stowellcarol@gmail.com or 717-292-0708)

Week 4 (April 27) - Community park across from Sonnewalds in Stoverstown near the March farm...Bring a picnic lunch if weather is nice and we will stay for lunch hosted by Molly March. Phone Molly 717-887-7299

Week 1 (April 1) - , we will walk up and down the avenues of the Elmwood neighborhood. Meet at the UPMC parking lot located across from the Elmwood Park on 3rd avenue off Belmont.

Week 2 (April 8) - we will meet at the Sam Lewis Park. Samuel S. Lewis State Park

Week 3 (April 15) - walk around the High Point trail. High Point https://yorkcountypa.gov/images/pdf/Parks/2020_Highpoint_Brochure.pdf

Week 4 (April 22) - we will meet at the Springettsbury Township Park. Route 30 East to Route 24 North. At the 3rd light turn Right (east) on Pleasant Valley Road. Park in the lot on the right noted by the park sign.

Week 5 (April 29) - we will walk the northern section of the Heritage Rail trail. We will meet at the parking lot off 30 East and Louck's Mill Road.

Writers Group

Please note that the UUCY Writers Group, which has traditionally met on Thursdays, is moving their meetings to the fourth Tuesday of the month. **Meetings will be held via Zoom from 7-9 PM.**

Zoom Meeting—

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88543509027?pwd=VTdiTnYvRDNOMzgwREdSWkVYVvY93QT09>

Meeting ID: 885 4350 9027
Passcode: 1955

For additional information on the schedule change or to learn more about Writers Group, please contact Pamela Moore at psmoore2@comcast.net.

Building and Grounds – Heartfelt Plea

Mowers Needed!

UUCY has a large property that needs to be maintained. Volunteers are needed to mow (ride or push) and/or trim. A schedule will be set up to accommodate the type of work, number of hours, and frequency that works for you. Adults of all ages and genders are welcome.

Contact Deb Lord to volunteer. Please help – mowing starts soon!

Spring Cleanup - Saturday April 17

Our annual cleanup of grounds and gardens is scheduled for **Saturday morning, April 17, 8 to noon.** Come when you can. Projects include splitting wood left from a tree that was removed, cleaning out and mulching gardens, and removing vines. Please join with others of all ages in recognizing spring with this traditional UUCY event. **Rain date is April 24.**

UUCY'S SCOUT TROOP 37



UUCY's Scout Troop 37 began outdoor in-person meetings on Wednesday, March 17, at the UUCY campfire circle while practicing masking and social distancing. **The Troop meets every Wednesday evening from 7 to 8:30 p.m.** at UUCY. The Troop welcomes any youth, male or female, age 11 to 18 years, to join in the Troop's action-packed adventures. We expect to assist with the cleanup of the UUCY grounds in April and will be attending the **New Birth of Freedom Council's Spring Camporee on April 24.** Our first campout of the season took place March 26-28 at Glen Cara in Emigsville. Our Scouts worked on fire-building, knife and ax safety, knots, map & compass, wildlife identification, and tree and plant identification. We plan to attend a week-long summer camp at Camp Tuckahoe, Dillsburg, PA in July or August and the Fall Rendezvous at Hidden Valley Scout Reservation in September. Shawn S., one of our older Scouts, has been accepted into the week-long NYLT (National Youth Leadership Training) program this summer. Ethan C. is applying for a Counselor-in-Training spot at Camp Tuckahoe this summer.

Openings still exist to join the local Scout contingent at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico in the summer of 2021 and 2022. We will shortly be offering Camp Cards as a Troop fundraiser. Every \$5 camp card you buy returns \$2.50 to the Troop and will enable you to recoup many-times that amount in local business discounts. Our Camp Cards are also good anywhere in the United States. A link is provided on the card to see discounts available in other areas using the local York camp card. If you are, or you know of, a youth, age 11-18, we really hope you will come check out Troop 37 and join in the fun.

For more information, contact Scoutmaster George Kain, 717-880-8730, ghkain3@gmail.com.



WE BELIEVE OUR MISSION MUST GO ON! RUNNERS AND WALKERS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE VIRTUAL RACE AGAINST RACISM BY RUNNING OR WALKING A DISTANCE OF 5K OR 3.1 MILES BETWEEN APRIL 17 AND APRIL 24. THIS CAN BE DONE WHEREVER YOU ARE— ON A TREADMILL, ON A RAIL TRAIL PATH, AROUND A TRACK, OR IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

DATES: APRIL 17-APRIL 24

ENTRY FEES:

***T-SHIRTS: \$10**
(YOUTH S-L, ADULT S-3X)

WE BELIEVE OUR MISSION MUST GO

- AGES 5 & UNDER: FREE!
- AGES 6-21: \$10
- AGES 21-64: \$25
- AGES 65+: \$15

THEN, PARTICIPANTS WILL SHARE HOW THEY SUPPORT OUR MISSION OF PEACE, JUSTICE, FREEDOM, AND DIGNITY FOR ALL BY POSTING A PHOTO ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, OR TWITTER, TAGGING YWCA YORK AND USING THE HASHTAG #YORKRAR.

TO REGISTER:

To register, visit www.ywcayork.org. For questions, call 717-845-2631.

Please join the UUCY Team for the Race Against Racism. We can use your support. You can walk, run or relax at home & think about running.. April 17-24 #YORKRAR. Please consider a donation to our UUCY Team. A big thank you to Donna Alcorn for setting up the UUCY Team.

You can click on the links for more details.
<https://www.ywcayork.org/blog/2021/02/04/rar/>
<https://www.classy.org/team/345942> UUCY Team link



UUCY's Knitting Group



We meet from 10 a.m. to 11:30 AM every Tuesday morning. All year long!

Our traditional meeting space is the Carriage House Sun Room where we have pretty good light and can sit in a circle. In nice weather, we bring lawn chairs and sit outside. If you like to knit or crochet or even have spare time to have a conversation, please feel free to drop in as often as you want. We have spare yarn, patterns and needles in the closet in the Leader Room so we can even get you started if you want to learn! Not everyone makes things and not every member is a UU. Most of us are retired, though we always enjoy hearing a younger perspective! This group has been meeting for many, many years and welcome new comers!

Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85673585334?pwd=UDFrSGM4NnJYdFppRFpHdHlMVHh5QT09>

Meeting ID: 856 7358 5334

PassCode: 714721



Membership Committee would like to make this a monthly column in order to fight the isolation caused by the Pandemic, and to simply help us to get to know each other better. This will be an opportunity to learn about each other, and to develop our interpersonal relationships for the future. We are inviting all members, and friends of UUCY to participate. We will provide you with a set of common questions, such as "How many years have you been a UU?" and "How long have you been attending UUCY?." There will also be a set of fun, and thought provoking questions such as ---- "What is your favorite book?, or "What would your theme song be?", or "What was the best advise you were ever given?. " Or you may choose to share your story with us.

If you are interested in participating please contact the membership committee membership@uucy.org. Or be prepared for the membership committee to contact you!

Getting To Know You



Hello my name is Paul Duryea and I joined the Unitarian Society of York about 1981 after moving to York County in 1979. My first experience with UU came in 1958 as a high school student going to All Souls Unitarian Church in New London, Connecticut. That was a lay led congregation with a variety of speakers for Sunday service, usually with a sermon talkback after coffee hour.

Then I went off to college at the University of Rhode Island and nothing much happened then except a few YRUU (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists) camping weekends.

After college I was assigned to work in Baltimore, MD by my employer, Bethlehem Steel, and after a year or two I joined the First Unitarian Church at Franklin and Charles Streets in downtown Baltimore. During our married years Barbara always pursued her own spiritual journey and never joined a church but loved being in nature. Several activities at First Unitarian meant the most to me including a book club that met prior to Sunday service, and coffee hour after service. I also enjoyed exploring downtown Baltimore on Sunday mornings with my young daughter.

So finally I found the Unitarian Society of York and would bring my three daughters to Sunday School and enjoy the services. Barbara and I taught RE classes for several years during the 1980's and when my father passed away in 1995 the memorial service was held at USY.

In 2001 we moved from the farm in Glen Rock to Dover and I became more active in the church and helped by leading the green sanctuary committee to achieve the Green Sanctuary Congregation designation from UUA, leading an after school mentoring program at Crispus Attucks, raising funds to dig water wells in Africa, helping in the construction of the labyrinth, and designing and helping in the construction of the community garden. Now I enjoy Matt's adult RE especially diversity and inclusion training and Terry's thoughtful sermons.

UUCY's Sponsored Immigrant

We're excited to announce that our congregation has so well positioned our Sponsored Immigrant, that they are ready for independence. Our sponsorship closed at the end of March, and we have likewise closed the immigration fund. Learn more by reading the letter from Carol Stowell (below). We are very proud of how our congregation came together to support someone so deserving and in great need. While sponsoring an immigrant is something we would consider doing again, we know that Carol is retiring from leading such an effort and thank her for her tireless service.



In April 2020, after nearly 2.5 years in detention at York Detention Center, B.C. was released to the care of Ellen and Arthur, David and Carol and UUCY. How generous our community has been this past year to support this immigrant and during a pandemic, no less!! We provided housing in our homes and the community, took him grocery and clothing shopping, invited him for meals, and gave him opportunities for meaningful work in our homes. Fortunately he had an outstanding lawyer, Ben Hooper, from the Pennsylvania Immigration Resource Center (PIRC) who represented him while in detention and now in the community. All of us learned about the challenges asylum seekers like B.C. face in our immigration system, especially during the Trump era. We learned that he and his brother had been political dissidents against the dictatorship in Cameroon, that his brother was murdered during a peaceful protest and B.C. escaped prison

with the help of others. He flew to Ecuador and then walked for six months to the Mexican-Texas border, where, rather than entering illegally, he requested asylum.

The Department of Homeland Security jailed him in the York Detention Center where he languished for nearly two and a half years without legal representation (since immigration is a civil matter, no free lawyers are provided). But this industrious young man spent his time in the prison law library teaching himself English and law, until it was time to represent himself in his complex case. He lost his case but caught the attention of PIRC attorney Ben Hooper who, recognizing that his case had merit and could establish valuable precedent for many other immigrants, appealed his deportation order. That is when UUCY got involved, as the COVID outbreak provided an opportunity for him to be released into our custody as his sponsors.

B.C. has proven over and over again how resilient, hard working, intelligent and caring he is. He has worked his way into so many of our hearts and if it weren't for the pandemic, we would all know him better. Now he has arrived at another crossroad. B.C. has established connections with other immigrants in the Harrisburg/ Camp Hill area and has moved to a very nice apartment owned by one of his friends. This past weekend, Charlie Seitz, Sue Bupp and Carol Stowell helped him to move in with donated furniture from members and friends of UUCY.

B.C.'s immigration case is pending but his lawyer is optimistic. As he said: "95% of our job is waiting." His asylum case remains "pending" but his work permit has been granted. We expect this to be finalized sometime this summer and he is excited to be fully independent again. So after talking it over with him, the church leaders and his lawyer, we have decided to close the UUCY Immigration account at the end of March. At B.C.'s request, the money in the account will be paid to his landlord to cover the next five months rent. He is so grateful for your financial contributions and support during this time. If you have set up a monthly contribution, this is end at the end of the month and you don't need to do anything else.

In the meantime, he wants to stay in touch with us so feel free to call him. You can also reach out to Carol Stowell for his new address...Once we have in person services, we hope to bring him back to York so he can enjoy some personal Sunday time with us as well...Be well, B.C. we will miss you in York but are so thankful you have been part of our lives here at UUCY this past year.



Get out those gardening gloves cause the weather is warming up and so is the ground! Planting will begin sometime this month, and the Community Garden has a developed plan that will need volunteer support to help start and then maintain throughout the season. Partnering with St. Paul's Food Pantry and the Fresh Foods Farms, our dedicated UUCY Community Garden provides fresh organic fruits and vegetables for those who don't have other access to fresh produce.

Volunteers are needed to tend to the grounds, including planting, weeding, and cultivating during the producing months. Get connected with nature and give back to the community in this socially distanced and safe activity by contacting Richard Burrill rich.burrill7@gmail.com.



Our Daily Bread casseroles will be due next month (in May). You can pick up casserole tins **starting May 1st**, and we will need to have the casseroles on May 10th for serving on the 12th. In March our generous cooks created 21 casseroles to share with the community.

That's all for now, but be sure to keep an eye on the Community Facebook page, where we'll post more activities and opportunities to engage in Social Justice. If you have ideas, questions, or want to get engaged, please always feel free to email the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@uucy.org.

Social Justice Committee

We've made it a full year through the global coronavirus pandemic, vaccines are rolling out, and spring is here again. We're glad to be here with you all and to continue the work of Social Justice. This month, we're focusing a little bit inwards on how you can help our congregation's efforts on promoting Social Justice while also presenting some opportunities to engage with the wider community.

First off, we think it's important to inform you about the overall state of the **Share the Plate program**. This past year, we have seen the collection plate collections lagging, with a 50% decrease from the pre-pandemic levels. This means our partners are seeing fewer funds. We highly encourage everyone to set up a recurring payment for the weekly collections – it's totally okay to do so for small amounts such as \$1-5 dollars just like you might toss in to the basket. Every little bit helps!

This month, our Share the Plate Partner is the **Queer/Trans People of Color Advisory Group (QTPOC)**, which acts as an adviser to the LGBT Center of Central PA's Board of Directors.

They offer monthly meetings to discuss the needs for Queer/Trans Communities of Color, and plan events and programming by sharing ideas and building community to support each other. Learn more by visiting their website at: <https://centralpalgbtcenter.org/qt poc>. And please make donations throughout the month to support this equally BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ partner.

The Social Justice Committee will continue to actively support the LGBTQ+ community of York by participating in local events this year. We are proud to be a Supporter of the first ever York County Pride, presented by WellSpan Health. This virtual event is set for June 5th at 11am and was recently featured in local news. We are also happy to announce that the UUCY will become a Preferred Partner of the Rainbow Rose Center, which will help connect supporters of the Rainbow Rose Center, York County's LGBTQIA+ center, to the UUCY and vice versa.



We are Unitarian Universalists who come together to advance justice for all. Join Us!

UUJusticePA's Annual Meeting will be held virtually this month. Happening on **Friday, April 23rd from 7-9pm and on Saturday, April 24th from 9am to 4pm**. The organization is also joining a partnership with We the People, on Tuesdays at 4pm, to answer questions on what's going in in State Government.

Learn more about how #JusticeMarchesOn by visiting their website and becoming a member: <https://uujusticepa.org/>. We also want to remind you to make sure you sign up for your mail in ballot again this year.

The **Social Justice committee** and the **Adult Religious Education committee** are considering the development of a Speaker's Series. The purpose of this series would be manifold:

- Provide an opportunity for community-wide and in-depth education and conversation on issues related to our Seven Principles and Social Justice Mission
- Engage and partner with likeminded organizations working toward similar goals as co-hosts
- Possibly provide an opportunity to generate revenue for the use of our facilities
-

The goal of the Speaker Series would ultimately be to enhance the UUCY's recognition in the community and further our Social Justice Mission by hosting topic speakers who are experts in their field with a relatively high regional or national profile to draw considerable community interest. Prior to pursuing this idea, we want to engage you as the congregation in determining your level of interest in this endeavor as well as your desired topics for this Speaker Series. Please take a moment to complete a survey which you can expect to receive in the coming days.

Children & Youth RE April & May

Starting on Easter Sunday, April 4, UUCY will begin its transition back to in-person RE. After gathering significant feedback from parents and facilitators, we have decided that we are comfortable proceeding with outdoor events and small groups. These events and small groups will take place at 10:00 am (except for Easter Sunday) and will follow UUCY COVID Policy Guidelines as well as current CDC recommendations. Should weather prevent an outdoor event or small group from taking place, we will shift that Sunday's programming online through Zoom.

The events will be multigenerational and we hope that parents will participate. When the small groups meet, parents will have a few options: 1) Between 8-10 adults will be able to attend worship in the sanctuary while socially distanced and masked; 2) a UU Parent RE Discussion Group facilitated by Mr. Matt; or 3) a social gathering with other parents. We do ask that parents remain on the premises. Below is a schedule for April and May. June and beyond are still under consideration and we welcome your feedback. If there are any questions, please email our Director of Lifespan Faith Development, Matthew Shineman, at dlre@uucy.org.

April

4th - Easter Event (11:30am - 1:00pm)

11th - School-Age Small Groups

18th - Earth Day Event

25th - School-Age Small Groups

May

2nd - School-Age Small Groups (MS & HS Youth to attend Coming of Age Service)

9th - Flower Communion/Mother's Day Event

16th - School-Age Small Groups

Adult Faith Development Corner

April Congregational Read: *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson

"In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative.

She tells us stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system—a rigid hierarchy of human rankings." ...LITLOVERS

Numerous copies are available through Martin Memorial Library.

We will gather to discuss the book on Wednesday, April 28th, 7 – 8PM

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3685600239?pwd=UGs1TXplQXhLcEF5TnlHRDd3R3pvZz09>

Meeting: 368 560 0239

Passcode: 1955

Racial Justice Resources:

<https://www.resources.soundstrue.com/podcast/rachel-ricketts-unplugging-from-the-matrix-of-white-supremacy/> <https://www.resources.soundstrue.com/podcast/valarie-kaur-activating-revolutionary-love/>

April Worship Schedule

ZOOM Meeting

Meeting ID: 92120756270

Passcode: 1955

April 4th-Easter Sunday



In keeping with our Judeo-Christian roots, on Sunday, April 4th we will celebrate the Easter holiday, for many Christians the holiest day on the Christian calendar. Donna Alcorn will share a reflection on the presence of women during and after the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. Rev. Terry's homily will describe ways in which Unitarian Universalists might find inspiration in the ways in which the first Christians interpreted the message of Christianity.

Weather-permitting, families and children will be invited to gather for a delightful Easter Egg hunt on the church grounds following our service. Please watch for further details to be announced.

April 11th- The 8th Principle



The Unitarians and Universalists who voted to combine two traditions into one in 1961 may not have realized they were laying the foundation for a denomination that today is seeking greater diversity, and deeply engaged in social justice advocacy and public witness. Sixty years later Unitarian Universalism is still in the process of becoming.

Please join us this Sunday as Rev. Terry shares a reflection on the 8th principle that has been proposed as an addition to our existing seven. The proposed 8th principle would require our membership to "affirm and promote journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

April 18th-Earth Day



Our 7th Unitarian Universalist principle calls upon us to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Please join us this Sunday as we celebrate Earth-Day.

Rev. Terry's sermon will reflect upon the beauty of the earth and its incredible resilience, as well as the challenges presented not only by climate change, but climate-change denial. She will ask how we can become more involved in raising awareness of climate-change issues, and being more engaged in climate justice efforts that recognize the intersectionality of environmental degradation, race, and social class.

April 25th-Orisa Spirit Mind Body Alignment: Manifesting Iwapele



There has been a lot of hype in the spiritual genre over the last couple of decades about spiritual vibration and manifestation. Ancient African people in Orisa indigenous religious philosophy were focused on manifesting but not on material wealth but Ire and Iwapele! We come from Spirit in Arun as children. We manifest physically on Aye to develop spiritually. The goal of life is to face the challenges- Ajogun and develop the characteristics of an "ancestor" in the spiritual realm. Who qualify as an Ancestor? What are the Ajogun? What is an Orisa? What is Ire? What is Iwapele?

As a seeker of enlightenment for over 30 years, Deborah L Bernal M.D., is a medical doctor specializing in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (Physiatry). She integrates her knowledge, vast experience and training in complementary and alternatives into her holistic medical practice. Author, yoga teacher, dancer, visual artist, meditation, reiki and colorpuncture practitioner, she uses her expertise to develop innovative programs to educate, demonstrate and motivate health, spiritual wellbeing and peak performance for herself and others. She has evolved from a holistic physician into a spiritual teacher and healer.

Staff & Board Reflections

As March comes to an end and April rounds the corner, I contemplate the upcoming holidays, especially Easter. My thoughts surrounding this holiday in particular are a bit mixed. Being raised Methodist, I come from people who wore their pretty spring dresses and nice suits to church on Easter Sunday (and Christmas Eve, but not too many other times during the year). As a child I learned the Easter story about Jesus and the resurrection, and when I got older I watched the Passion of the Christ. The story never really resonated with me, though. At home at this time of year, my brother and I dyed boiled eggs, hunted for plastic eggs filled with candy and sometimes coins, and thoroughly enjoyed the candy and trinkets in our baskets from the Easter Bunny. These are the moments that stuck with me and that I remember fondly. For many people Easter is more than a holiday; it is a Holy Day, a day of deep spirituality and rejoicing as well as reflection. For me I tend to stick to the secular and wider view of the day, as I often do with most holidays. I am not particularly fond of Easter. It is certainly not at the top of my favorite holidays list (those would be Halloween, Christmas, and Independence Day, for the record). Easter doesn't hold a significant meaning to me, but that doesn't mean that I don't enjoy celebrating it with my family in our way.

Most holidays in our home center around time together and food, lots of food. Each holiday we celebrate, my husband and I make some kind of food that is connected to the traditions we had growing up or the traditions we have learned about as adults. Take St. Patrick's Day for instance, it wasn't a big deal for either of us growing up but for the past 7 years or so we have made it a point to have a dinner of corned beef, cabbage, and colcannon on or near the day. It has become a tradition of ours to recognize the holiday in our own way for just us and the kids. Other holidays usually involve a much larger group of loved ones coming to our home for food and togetherness - like a Thanksgiving dinner of fried turkey with all the fixings; backyard cookouts for Memorial Day, Labor Day, and sometimes Independence Day; and of course brunch AND dinner on Christmas to make us both happy. The other traditions we follow for each holiday are varied depending on the holiday, yet very specific to us and our lived experiences.

I used to feel a little like a fraud "celebrating" holidays that I didn't really feel connected to in a more meaningful or religious way. The number of times I have felt mom-guilt over not going the extra mile to celebrate some holidays the way I see others do it on social media is astronomical. I have learned over time, however, that no one observes a holiday or Holy Day in exactly the same way as the next person and that is not only expected, it is wonderful. Each of us celebrating in our own way individually with those we love creates bonds and happy memories to share. Holidays for me mean spending time with those I love, breaking bread together and nourishing our bodies, and participating in the traditions Tyler and I carry with us from our youth with joy as the focus. That is enough and so are we.



—Jenn Potts
Vice Chair of the Board, UUCY

Staff & Board Reflections

I am writing this one day after the 42nd anniversary of the accident that took place at the nuclear power plant at Three Mile Island. The accident captured the attention of the world. I remember watching the nightly news in the U.K. where I was living at the time, seeing images of a giant concrete tower in a place I had never heard of, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

From my vantage point in London, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania might as well have been on the moon. I don't think it had ever made the news in the U.K. before, and may not have done ever since. Back then I was preparing for the arrival of my first child, anticipating my upcoming graduation, and waiting for my visa to be issued allowing me to move to the United States. I had a lot on my mind, but the possibility of a nuclear meltdown that could burn its way all the way to China (a fact the local news media seemed to repeat over and over again), captured my attention and the attention of millions of others around the world.

Yet, for me it was just another news story after a while. I was pre-occupied with my own life, figuring out how I would make a living as a lawyer in New York City. The thought of going into ministry was at least three decades away. And I never foresaw that one day I would be living in such relatively close proximity to the site of what was at the time the world's worst nuclear disaster.

It is humbling to know that many of the members and friends of our congregation lived through those days. I cannot imagine the challenges and uncertainties that you faced. No one who didn't live through the experience could ever know what it was like to be so close. To have to leave your home not knowing whether or when you it would be safe to return.

Our lives can turn on a dime, as the recent COVID 19 pandemic has so starkly reminded us. One minute we are living our lives with a sense of predictability, even boring monotony, and the next minute the world has been changed by something completely out of our control.

It is understandable to feel lost and afraid when unexpected disasters take place with such scope and rapidity. When the nightly news is not showing things in faraway that places we have never heard of, but instead showing things that are happening to ourselves. Tragic events that we are experiencing in our own lives. When it is personal, it gets real.

Tragedies continue to take place all around the world every day. What must it be like to live in a place like Syria or Afghanistan, where life is tenuous and violence is a fact of everyday life? I am grateful for the reminder from one of our members about the anniversary of TMI. It helped me to put things into perspective about the resilience of our species, including the resiliency of our congregation.



Rev. Terry Cummings

These days, as I have shared from the pulpit, gratitude has become an everyday spiritual practice for me.

The list of things I am grateful for is long, and includes the bluebird that greeted me from a fencepost in Nixon Park this afternoon; a sign of promise and hope coming soon in a world challenged by so many things.

I believe there will be better days ahead. Generation C (for COVID), will face challenges that my baby boomer generation could scarcely have imagined. The world, their world especially, has been changed forever by a virus. When it has passed, it will be time to look forward with optimism, and build the world back in a better way.

Staff & Board Reflections

“Spring cleaning the house is easy. Spring cleaning life is tough.” - Anonymous

“Clutter is not just the stuff on your floor - it’s anything that stands between you and the life you want to be living.” - Peter Walsh

Developments in Faith

The weather begins to warm, the sun seems to shine just a little brighter, and we begin opening the windows and airing everything out. Spring. There are many things that come to mind when thinking about spring - April showers bring May flowers; trees and flowers “coming back to life”; and, of course, spring cleaning.

Every spring, we find the motivation to dig through the junk drawer, to go through old magazines, and to declutter our houses from things we no longer need. We even take the time to give the outside of our houses some TLC as well. But as we clean our physical houses, what about our spiritual houses - our spirit, soul, heart, and mind? We all have internal soul clutter. Every single one of us. It’s not fun confronting that clutter but it is necessary work in our spiritual growth. Renewing and refreshing our hearts and minds is a part of our journey. It is an aspect of the BECOMING part of the Belong, Believe, Become philosophy. It is transformational work.

As you begin the work of spiritual cleansing, ask yourself these three questions:

What needs to go? Anything that is not needed or doesn’t serve you and is not worth holding onto, let it go. Grudges; unreasonable expectations; fears; etc. Discard them.

What can you give away? What do you have spiritually that has served you well, and is still useful, but not for you anymore? Wisdom, support, etc. Offer them to the world.

What do you want to keep but needs some TLC? Think of these as dirty windows, clouding your perspective. What dust has settled that needs to be wiped clean?

These tasks can seem overwhelming, I know. That’s why it is always best to start with that one small thing to get you going. In your house, it’s usually the junk drawer. So, what is your metaphorical junk drawer? Start there and ask yourself the above three questions. The beautiful thing that happens when you declutter, whether it be your house or your spirit, is that there is a weight that is lifted.

Energy begins to flow anew. I’m wondering... what would happen if we treated this cleansing (both physically and spiritually) as a regular practice rather than a once-a-year project?

So, as the dirt, dust, and clutter gather inside our houses and around our yards, let us be reminded to search our spirits, souls, heart, and mind and clear the dirt, dust, and clutter from them as well.



**Grace and Blessings,
Matthew Shineman
Director of Lifespan Faith Development**

Staff & Board Reflections

“For something always, always sings. This is the message Easter brings: from deep despair and perished things a green shoot always, always springs, and something always, always sings.”

Alicia S. Carpenter (1983)

Singing takes a lot of energy, not to mention personal courage. The human voice can make beautiful sounds but as any singer will tell you, there are sometimes rehearsals (or these days, at-home recording sessions) that result in less-than-lovely croaking. When you are tired or unfocused, when you don't engage your core support, or if you just accidentally skip a line of music with your eyes, the whole thing can go from inspiring to despairing in one short breath.

And yet always – *always* – something sings.

Our choir at UUCY stopped gathering in January of 2020 and, after an abbreviated attempt at an outdoor, early fall rehearsal schedule, we were back to Zoom-only by November. For those who love to sing, it has been a year of disappointments. From the beginning of the lockdowns, singing was flagged as the riskiest of group musical activities and quickly discouraged. All those forcefully expelled consonant-sharpened breaths, all that aerosolized saliva...plus it's simply uncomfortable to sing while wearing a mask. Deep breathing is essential for singing, and as we all now know, *any* kind of breathing with a mask on is a challenge.

And yet always – ***always*** – something sings.

Zoom is not ideal for group music-making: there's "lag" between the conductor and what she does and the musicians at home and what they are hearing. Singers cannot hear each other, and the conductor can't hear the singers – she can only see them, in their Brady Bunch squares, projected up on a screen. The accompaniments must be pre-recorded because it is difficult to capture the rich sound of the piano through a microphone without distortion. Singers have a hard time flagging the conductor to ask for help. Zoom choir is intense yet strangely unsatisfying: after an hour you are musically exhausted yet left without the warm feelings that an in-person gathering would offer. Sadly, Zoom usually leaves me with a kind of emotional hangover. We can only (sort of) see – but not hear, or touch – each other.

And yet always – ***always!*** – something sings.

As we start to see the hopeful green shoots of more readily available vaccines, declining infection rates and decreasing hospitalizations that herald the beginning of the end of this pandemic winter, I hope that singing will, once again, be something that we can do safely both in choir and in worship. To the UUCY singers who have stayed the course through this most difficult of choral years, applause! To those of you who had to bow out, I hope you will consider returning to the choir again soon. To those who sing in the shower, whistle while you work, or “used to” sing, remember: something ***always*** sings, and if it sings, it can be a part of a choir. Could that something – that someone – be you?



Music Director,
Gretchen Dekker

Communications Committee



Rachel Schmidt



Leann Diehl



Connie Molitor



Pat Dunlap

We are excited to announce the new Communications Committee. We've already rolled up our sleeves and have begun working. Patricia Dunlap, Connie Molitor and Leann Diehl have generously offered to serve. Their main role is to assist Rachel Schmidt, our part-time Communications Coordinator in updating, refining and building anew the whole gamut of our UUCY communications. This includes marketing UUCY to the public via the website, Facebook and Instagram and keeping our congregation up-to-date on activities and events via newsletter and eBeacon. We ask for your patience as Rachel and the Committee move ahead. For now, please know our communication 'system' is a work in progress and will take time to improve - and most importantly, it is in great hands!



Looking to have something included in our next monthly e-Newsletter? Please contact Rachel Schmidt, Communications Coordinator (communications@uucy.org)

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