

the chalice

Published by the
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of the Unitarian
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deadlines: [Click here](#)**

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SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

THEME: RENEWAL

Services are held virtually on Zoom
Zoom information for services can be found here:
<https://www.uusharon.org/worship/services/>

September 6
10:30 AM adult

Last Summer Service: Liberation

This last summer service is lay led by Barbara Nelkin - Rose and will include a time of congregational sharing. Our Music Director Mel Springer will be providing the music. A time of fellowship will follow each service.

September 13

Coming Home Like Rivers to the Sea

10:15 AM Multigenerational Service

Though we remain physically separated, our church community can still be a place of renewal, and we can still join our waters for our annual water ceremony. Everyone is invited to bring a small bottle of water to be collected outside the church on Saturday, September 12 between 1 pm and 4 pm. (Details about water collection [on page 3.](#)) **If you contribute water, please be prepared to finish this sentence: "This water I bring represents _____."** Your responses will be shared in our virtual service.

September 20

Signing Up For This

10 am family / 10:30 AM adult

Let's talk about that big new Black Lives Matter sign we have on the front of our church building, and how the demand to honor Black life is consistent with Unitarian Universalist theology. Rosh Hashanah ends today at sunset, and just as the harsh sound of the shofar calls us to wake up to the new year, our sign calls us to renew our commitment to uproot racism from within ourselves and our society.

September 27

Thus Do We Covenant Together

10 am family / 10:30 AM adult

Each week we say these words, "to dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom..." We will reflect on the history of our UCS covenant and covenants more generally today, which is Yom Kippur, the Jewish holiday of atonement for broken promises. Making promises, breaking promises, and renewing our promises to one another is part of what ties us together as a church, and what makes us human.

Guidance on Use of Church Buildings & Grounds

The church Task Force on Re-opening has recommended that our Buildings remain closed through **December 31st**. Our Board has approved this recommendation.

Use of church grounds should comply with State guidance on outdoor gatherings. We will not permit large gatherings, but are receptive to small group gatherings. We encourage you to schedule your event on the church calendar if more than a few people will be involved. Wearing of masks is requested. Access to church buildings is not allowed.

From the Minister



Dear Friends,
What a summer. We are all still adapting, still faltering, and still hoping desperately for a way out of this global pandemic. We are still losing too many people, still staggering under the weight of such loss. We are still lonely, we are still grieving, we are still tired,

we are still unsure of what this ongoing crisis means for our jobs and our schools, our livelihoods. And we face an election season fraught with what feels like more vitriol and anxiety than ever. As I write this column, a terrible storm is bearing down on Louisiana, wildfires have been raging in California, and stories of grief and violence continue to unfold in the aftermath of the shooting of Jacob Blake by police in Kenosha, Wisconsin. What a time to be alive, what a time to keep hope alive. Our worship theme and small group ministry theme for September will be "Renewal." My prayer is that our church community can be a source of renewal in this difficult time. (Read further in the newsletter for more info on small group ministry and how to sign up.)

I read in the *Globe* that an estimated 20,000 COVID-19 infections in MA were traced to the Biogen conference that happened in late February. The same article made the simple but still mind-boggling point that the pandemic, with so many millions who have gotten sick and so many hundreds of thousands who have died, began with one single case. I keep reflecting on Rev. Lynn Ungar's poem "Pandemic" when I think about the unbelievable scope of this disease's spread. She writes,

*Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)*

Our lives are in one another's hands, and we have failed one another in too many ways. Poor communities and communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by coronavirus hospitalizations and deaths in a devastating interplay of risk factors like occupation, housing conditions, and access to health care. COVID is yet another revelator of the death-dealing power of structural racism in our nation. And so we must continue to proclaim, "Black Lives Matter." This month we are raising a new banner on the front of our church with this simple and crucial message. I hope you join us for worship on Sept 20 on this topic, as well as at least one virtual church event in the coming month to celebrate the sign and discuss next steps. May our sign be not just about optics but also about action. Our lives are indeed in one another's hands. We can tear each other down, but we can also lift each other up. Let us work together for peace and justice in our world.

In faith and love, *Rev. Jolie*

From the President



Recent thunderstorms brought new damage to our property. Swirling winds and lightning strikes are downing limbs and trees in numbers not seen before. Nature is complaining that these are not happy times.

The same can be said about our nation. Police brutality incidents continue to trigger widespread public protests proclaiming, "Black Lives Matter". The unrest is intense and inescapable.

Our Social Justice Committee has been giving serious thought and attention to our country's racial equity issue. UUA national headquarters in Boston has urged its congregations to have discussion and consider actions that we can take in our local communities. So where do we begin and what kind of programs can we initiate.

In July the SJC proposed to the parish Board that we raise a large "Black Lives Matter" banner between the columns on the front steps of the church. This bold statement would tell our community that we stand in solidarity with the movement and recognize the need for UCS action.

The Board heard individual testimonials on racism from several SJC members at our August meeting. Examples of prejudicial treatment, even in our own community, helped us understand that our education on racism should begin here in Sharon and surrounding communities. The Board wanted to support the banner proposal but had concern for the length of time to keep it up. SJC's recommendation to display for a year and then reconsider resulted in approval.

The banner will be an important reminder that there is work to do by each and everyone of us. Until we all understand how we contribute to perpetuating racial inequity, we cannot have a society that has true equality.

Rory McGregor

UCS Parish President

Zoom Chats with Rev. Jolie on Thursdays

Discussion prompts:

Sept 10 – Share a story about your name (some may have done this one before, but worth doing it again!)

Sept 17 – Share a story about a time when something went much better than you thought it would.

Sept 24 – Share a story about a time you learned a lesson "the hard way."

Same Zoom info each time: Meeting ID: 980 9376 9487
Passcode: 3652

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/98093769487?pwd=T3ZqM2NwQnVDd3RPUiGLZVZSWZiUT09>

Save the Date
Special Congregational Meeting

September 13

Following Sunday Worship Service

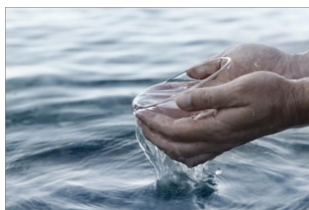
The Parish Board has voted to approve the Buildings & Grounds project for keyless entry of four designated doors in the church buildings: entrance doors to church (interior set of doors only), minister's office, DRE office, administrative office. Individual security codes will be provided for access to each of these doors. All other doors with locks will be furnished with new locks that can be opened using a common key. The intended contractor is Ace Lock in Norwood. The proposed price is \$8,300. The Board recommends that the parish vote to approve use of up to \$9,000 from the Capital Reserve account to fund the project; the excess amount can be used for related contingencies if needed. Church Bylaws require that projects exceeding \$5,000 in cost must be approved at a formal parish meeting.

WATER COLLECTION DAY!

VOLUNTEERS and MUSICIANS NEEDED!

Saturday Sept 12, 1 pm - 4 pm

It's Bring Your Water to Church Day! Make a pilgrimage to the UCS grounds, by foot or by car, and bring a small bottle of water from anywhere you like for our traditional Ingathering Water Ceremony the next day. For those who prefer or need to remain in your vehicles, the first hour will be the drive-through hour. The next two hours will be for pedestrians who walk from home or park nearby. Be prepared to finish this sentence: "This water I bring represents _____" so we can hear what your water means to you when we gather for virtual worship on Sep 13.



Schedule

1:00 - 1:30 PM	last name A-M in cars
1:30 - 2:00 PM	last name N-Z in cars
2:00 - 4:00 PM	pedestrians. Masked, 6-ft social distance by household please!

We need volunteers of all ages! If you want to help direct traffic or collect water for any portion of the afternoon, let Rev. Jolie know. Volunteers will be outside, masked, with no church building access.

Calling all musicians of all ages! If you play a non-wind instrument and would like to accompany our water collection, we'd love to have you. Reach out to Rev. Jolie - minister@uusharon.org or (617) 851-9356.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

Sept 13 3 pm to 4:30 pm
Sept 27 3 pm to 4:30 pm

We're trying something new this month! We will hold two sessions of Small Group Ministry on two Sunday afternoons. "Small Group Ministry" means a group discussion on a topic that invites us into reflection and connection. We will reflect on our September theme, which is "Renewal." Participants will receive some materials to reflect on in advance and come prepared to share. This discussion is geared towards adults. You do not need to attend both sessions but you are welcome to. To sign up or ask questions, contact Rev. Jolie minister@uusharon.org; (617) 851-9356.

PPP Loan

In March and April, Congress authorized the Small Business Administration via a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to loan as much as \$659 billion to small businesses (<500 employees) including non-profits and religious organizations. The purpose of these loans was to keep workers on company payrolls to avoid unemployment and help the economy. These loans were to be distributed by banks large and small to their business customers at a 1% APY interest rate. If at least 60% of the loan is used for employee compensation and the rest primarily used for qualified expenses such as rent and utility bills, the loan is eligible for up to 100% forgiveness. Initially, the forgiveness period was limited to 8 weeks from the time of receipt of the loan, but this was later extended to 24 weeks.

The church, as represented by Paul Tuck, first applied for a loan in early April through the Sharon Credit Union (SCU) where the church keeps its Operating Fund checking account. The maximum loan amount was to be 2.5 times our average 2019 monthly payroll. Upon a request from SCU to file a second application, it was entered in early May and after a subsequent waiting period of more than 5 weeks, the \$34,507 loan came through on the evening of our annual meeting on June 12th. The only immediate indication that the loan application was approved was the appearance of the loan money in our SCU account on the 13th. Subsequently, the loan's paperwork was emailed to the church and Paul electronically signed for its receipt. Our forgiveness period started on the 1st day of our next bi-weekly pay period, June 21st. We will have spent the loan money by the end of the August 16th-29th pay period, with more than 90% going to employee compensation, and the rest to utilities. Soon thereafter, we will apply for forgiveness of the loan.

We are very appreciative that we received this loan, as it helped allay fears of a potential deficit due to COVID-19 and has created a financial buffer for us during these continued uncertain times.

Paul Tuck and Karen Zelevinsky, UCS Treasurer

Managing risks during COVID

A UU Sharon public service announcement.

Have you been confused by all the information out there about mask wearing and social distancing? You are not alone. The messages have changed over time partly due to the availability of protective gear. Staying fearful, confused and isolated is emotionally taxing. It is important to arm ourselves with the best information possible and understand the risks and benefits of leaving our dwellings, engaging safely with our loved ones and connecting with our community. The following is some basic information from the CDC. This does not cover all the various scenarios that we encounter day to day. As health professionals and members of the Safe opening task force we are also grappling with this information and will make ourselves available for a Zoom Q&A on Monday, September 14 from 7-8. We won't claim to know all the answers but will share perspectives based on the available scientific evidence to date. Feel free to send some questions in advance so that we can delve into the research.

We are looking forward to an enlightening discussion.

Dr. Janet Limke, accompanied by Dr. Elizabeth Maranzano. Send questions to janet@norwoodlight.com.

Directly from the CDC website: (abbreviated) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

Wear your Mask Correctly

- Wash your hands before putting on your mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent

Know how it spreads

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.**
- The virus is thought to [spread mainly from person-to-person](#).
- Between people who are in close contact with

one another (within about 6 feet).

- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks *or sings*.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Check out this discussion on New York Times Well program, an interview with professor Erin Bromage <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p1iSWJlmfk&t=16s>

Also enjoy the simple cartoon video from Unicef https://drive.google.com/file/d/1stbK3mTd2_SAqfXyBuahrN8tlr3_JUpV/view?usp=sharing.

Here are additional information on droplets and transmission:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/droplet-transmission-1.5549547>

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/droplet-transmission-1.5549547>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJpt6Bse0j8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P27HRCIMf2U>

Submitted by Janet Limke and Elizabeth Maranzano



Work together, wear together: Congregational Admin Linda Cveckova and UCS President Rory McGreggor sporting masks graciously made by Colleen Tuck

In Memoriam of Tom Kinraide

Our hearts are with the Kinraide/Drewry family as we grieve the loss of and cherish our memories of Tom Kinraide, long-time UCS member.



He died peacefully at his residence with his family at his bedside on Sunday, July 12, 2020.

His family held a virtual celebration of his life on August 1, 2020.

You can find his obituary here: <http://farleyfh.tributes.com/obituary/read/Thomas-Bassett-Kinraide-108490642>

Dealing with Abuse in the Streets and Online

Rumni Saha's son Shayak was unfortunately the target of racist and xenophobic verbal abuse on the street corner by our church during the week of August 16. The abuse then migrated online, where Rumni received many threats and messages of hate after posting about this incident on social media. As a church, we are called to be a community who take care of each other whenever we can, to let our voices be heard for love and justice whenever possible. I plan to attend a free online bystander training on September 8 at 1 PM. (The specific context for this training is the current uptick in racist abuse directed at many East Asian people given the rampant racist messaging about East Asians and coronavirus. However, I think it will have some general information about how to intervene effectively against any kind of racist xenophobia.) If you are curious, please join me! I have never been to a training with this group before, so we'll check it out together. Register soon, as they will cap the number of attendees at 1,000. Bystander Intervention To Stop Anti-Asian/American Harassment And Xenophobia Workshop: <https://www.ihollaback.org/bystanderintervention/>. Attending a training like this one can help us feel empowered to intervene against hate, but attending a training is not required! Any of us can speak out when our community is under attack, whether or not we feel "qualified."

Rev. Jolie Olivetti

A new look

The Membership Committee is preparing to update the congregation's photo directory once again, this time both in content and in format. Rather than print out and distribute color copies as in past years, we instead will be posting the directory on the church's website, password-protected to be accessible only by members and friends. Having the directory online will make it easy to use (and revise), and difficult to misplace. Plus we'll be saving money in a lean year.

The committee will be reaching out to make sure we have the correct contact details and recent photos showing your good side.

Thanks in advance for your help with this community-building effort.

Submitted by Terry Fitzgerald

A New Fellowship Committee

Last spring the Board approved the formation of a new Fellowship Committee, and we are happy to welcome Chelsea Gould and Sadie Dussault as Co-Chairs. The focus of the committee will be to provide oversight, line of communication and support to existing programs and event coordinators, and to determine what additional programming may be needed to enhance fellowship within the congregation.

Let's Laugh Today

is EVERY Wednesday at 7:30pm on ZOOM!

Let's Laugh Today Laughter Club is on ZOOM! In these challenging times, there is nothing like a good belly laugh to help release stress and anxiety. These laughter exercises and deep breathing help to bring more fresh oxygen into the body and brain helping you feel more energetic and healthy. It's a great way to connect with other people through eye contact while remaining socially distant and it is thoroughly up-lifting and immunity-boosting! See www.lets-laugh-today.com for link to the free ZOOM Meeting EVERY Wednesday at 7:30pm. This is the perfect time to try something new! Please check their website for updates.



Buildings & Grounds

What's Up?

Our steeple is undergoing much needed restoration. Historical Renovations has erected scaffolding and begun repairs. Fortunately, the repairs are cosmetic, not structural; but a great deal of rotting wood must be replaced. Some of the replaced siding will be low-maintenance vinyl and new wood will be painted. The clock faces will be restored as part of the project, with new LED illumination. A new motor to drive the clock will include a feature that allows the clock to self-adjust to the correct time after a power failure. Many thanks to Gary Webber for his work interviewing and negotiating with expert steeple repair companies, and to Rory McGregor and Paul Tuck for researching and installing the new clock mechanism. This change means saying goodbye to a time-honored traditions of adjusting the clock manually and no longer leaving Sharon residents confused about the time because none of our clocks agree!

Playing it Safe

Our children's play area is very popular and it shows. The equipment have aged and some need replacement; others need repairs. A committee has formed to evaluate our current equipment and determine what replacements would best serve the needs of our children. B&G is looking for 2 or 3 individuals who would be willing to help plan this very necessary upgrade. Please let Lindsay Drisko know if this is something you could do.

Welcome!

When we can at last gather in person, we will have a new sign to greet us. The old welcome sign was donated by Wilbur Edwards in memory of his father. He and Evelyn have generously donated its replacement in memory of Nettie Sue & Dennis Swagerty and Mary C. & Wilbur P. Edwards, Sr. Constructed of materials that will withstand NE weather, it will welcome all for a long time.

Get Your Hands Dirty!

Ellen Schoenfeld is looking for folks who like to garden, even if on a small scale. Our church grounds are admired by everyone who passes by, but they need maintenance. You can have your very own small patch to keep beautiful, complete with name plaque to give you credit. Maintain social distancing with other gardeners while communing with nature.

The Essential Man

Don Fail (aka Star Painting) is our go-to person for painting. He repaired and re-painted the entry earlier this year. His latest contribution has been to weather-proof our recently purchased shed, with two coats of stain. Thanks to Don, it should look spiffy for years.

Join the Fun

B&G's next Zoom meeting will be on Monday, September 28.

Lindsay Drisko, Chair



New ball which is positioned under weather vane atop steeple. Paul is holding new ball made from copper. Old ball fell apart when contractor removed it. Gold leaf paint will coat copper ball.



Religious Education News

From the Interim Director of Religious Education



As I sat down to prepare for this first newsletter of the year, I took a look at The Chalice from last September. It's a bit of an understatement to say that we sure are in a different place this year. I hope that this summer you and your family have been held by bonds of love and by routines that

tend to your spirits and support your well-being. Recognizing that this is an incredibly complex time for families, and given the changing face of school, we are not asking families to register for a traditional RE program that has simply been moved on-line. At a time when we are normally coordinating classes, readying curricula and launching teacher training, we are moving slowly and deliberately. We want to give families a chance to adapt to new routines and time to assess what types of engagement with church will be most meaningful to them. What we want more than anything now is to offer UCS families support, sustenance, renewal and connection.

Our regular Sunday worship continues to be held online. This includes the 10am family worship which for now, we are considering the core religious education content each week (except when our services are intergenerational such as Ingathering!). These services are based on monthly themes generated by Soul Matters who connect UU congregations using the same monthly theme and sharing materials for worship, music, small groups and religious education. Be on the lookout for stand-alone religious education offerings that spin off of these themes in a variety of easily accessible formats, including within this newsletter!

Instead of recruiting teachers this fall, we are encouraging families and individual members to help facilitate small segments of family worship or other online pieces as a way for members to stay connected, for children to see their friends' families, high school youth, beloved RE teachers and elders - and even themselves - leading and sharing on the screen. Stay tuned for such opportunities!

Although there are options for online programming, we are looking at other ways of facilitating connection such as in-person, outdoor, socially distant, masked and limited-number gatherings for groups of 2-3 families at a time.

In short, the RE Committee and I are considering a

number of potential offerings that range from "separate but together" in-person activities, to small group ministries for parents, to bite-sized online offerings for children. We also want to hear from you! If you have not yet received a call from me or a member of the RE Committee, expect to over the coming weeks. We aim to begin rolling out some offerings by late September or early October. We hope you will register and not only stay connected but nourished by the religious education program at UCS.

Please feel free to reach out to me at any time. I look forward to meeting you and getting to know your children this year!

In Faith,

Christine

dre@uusharon.org

If you'd like to schedule a time to talk with Christine, use this link:

<https://ucsreligiouseducation.setmore.com>

A farewell...

We are extending best wishes to Leslie Cox, our tireless Administrative Assistant over the past year, who has made the difficult decision to resign due to complicated times in which we are all living. Leslie has been instrumental in keeping the congregation informed of the happenings in religious education and beyond through her work on the order of service and regular emails to families. In addition, her administrative support of the religious education program has helped it run smoothly and safely this past year and we are grateful for her time. Please join me in extending gratitude and fond farewell wishes to Leslie.



In the interim...

Staff and committees are supporting this work as we take a brief pause to evaluate the efficacy of this position and prepare to advertise for a new hire. Stay tuned!

Religious Education News, continued

Chalice Home:

Carving out sacred space in your home



Chalice Home

A program of Soul Matters, themed ministry shared by UU's across the country.

We're inviting all the families in our church to go on a unique adventure this year. It's called Chalice Home and we're using it to help all of us stay connected to our faith in this unique time of Covid-19.

It's hard to be away from our church building. Online worship and RE helps us stay connected to our church friends, but not getting to meet *in the building is a real loss. Covid has made us all realize how meaningful tangible objects are to spiritual lives. Physical objects and sacred physical space hold our spiritual journeys and values in a unique and irreplaceable way.*

Chalice Home is designed to address this loss brought on by Covid-19. While we may not be able to visit our treasured sacred spaces, we can carve out sacred space in our homes. This program supports you in building your very own home "altar" over this coming year. Each month, we will send you a Chalice Home packet that invites you to add a new sacred object to your altar/sacred space. It also includes a family worship script for you to use during that month as well as ideas for other family rituals that center around and grow your chalice home.

One of the most powerful pieces of this adventure is the way these ever-growing symbolic objects will capture your family's collective spiritual journey this year. Just imagine next June when you can step back and see your spiritual lives represented all in the same space!

On Sunday September 13 at 5pm, Christine will hold an informational session on this program and offer a way to sign up to be a part of it.

Our Whole Lives

Lifespan Sexuality Education

While the Unitarian Universalist Association is discouraging churches from running this sexuality education program online, they have curated some resources that may be of use this year in lieu of classes. This would have been an OWL year for grades 5 and 6 as well as grades 7 and 8. [Contact Christine](#) if you are interested in resources for youth independent learning or support for parents and caregivers as their youth's primary sexuality educators. One such program is a small group ministry program:

Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators

10 sessions for small groups, by Robin Slaw. These sessions from the UUA are designed for lay-led, adult, "chalice circle" or small group ministry groups. This is not an Our Whole Lives program, yet it aligns with the topical content of the OWL curriculum for grades 7-9. The sessions offer parents and caregivers a space for reflection, learning, and peer support in their role as their children's sexuality educators, whether or not their children are enrolled in an OWL program.

Interested? [Contact Christine](#) or a member of the Religious Education Committee.

YOUTH GROUPS

Youth Programs Meet-and-Greet

Katie will be holding a zoom session for parents of youth after the ingathering service on September 13th. The zoom room will be open from 11:30am until 1pm. Drop in to say hi and bring any questions you may have about Senior Youth Group or Junior Youth Fellowship Group.

Please register to receive the zoom link: <https://bostonu.zoom.us/j/6481234567890>



Senior Youth Group

SYG starts on September 13th and meets on Sundays from 5-6:30pm over Zoom. We'll be creating our covenant and brainstorming how we might want to use our online space this year. Senior Youth Group is open to any and all individuals in grades 9 - 12 and folks are encouraged to invite friends! Past SYG Zoom meetings have involved watching videos, celebrating quarantine birthdays, and playing a lot of games together!

Junior Youth Fellowship Group

JYFG meets once a month and is open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders in our congregation. Our September meeting will be on September 20th from 1-2:30pm on zoom. We'll be creating our covenant and brainstorming how we might want to use our online space this year!

Have questions about our Senior and Junior youth programs? Interested in volunteering to help with the groups or have a student who might be interested in joining? Email our Youth Coordinator Katie Byron at yc@uusharon.org

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



New Black Lives Matter Banner for UCS

The next time you visit the church or pass through the center of Sharon, you will see the new BLM banner between the pillars of the church. Over the summer, the SJC, in collaboration with Reverend Jolie Olivetti and the Board of

Trustees, determined that the widespread and growing focus on racial injustice in our culture justified additional signage in support of this work. Until you can arrange for a visit, the photo on this page, with the banner photoshopped in place, can act as a proxy for the real thing. Please read the [columns in the Chalice](#) this month by Rev Jolie and President Rory McGregor for more details. And save these dates: Sunday, 20 September for a service on this topic, and then on Sunday, 27 September at 1pm for an online forum for celebrating our banner and discussing next steps as we engage in the work of racial justice.

Want to dig into resources related to this topic? Visit the Social Justice page of the UCS website (<https://www.uusharon.org/social-justice>) for a new and growing list of recommended books, podcasts, webinars, films and actions relating to racial justice. (And please send your suggestions for additional materials to agreid@rcn.com and we will review and add them to our resource list.)

Below are a few of the voices from the SJC that were a part of our deliberations this summer:

Why are we focusing on the need for a Black Lives Matter Banner?

Because it is one way we can make visible the invisible AND create a specific issue for open and honest dialogue within the congregation.

"I believe that many sincerely believe the following:

- ALL LIVES MATTER is an INCLUSIVE statement and includes Black lives.
- BLACK LIVES MATTER is an EXCLUSION-

ARY statement, which de-emphasizes the worth of other lives."

I was one of those believers at one time until I realized that actually, to be sincerely inclusive, we must be willing to support and openly say BLACK LIVES MATTER because it is by doing so, that we are TRULY ACKNOWLEDGING INCLUSIVITY and MAKING VISIBLE THE INVISIBLE.

What are we making visible? The often invisible truth that our country is based on structural racism. Slavery, the criminal justice system, history of laws created specifically to create a system of inequity against Blacks.

If a house in your neighborhood was on fire, would you say we can't put it out because other houses may also burn and we need to save our resources? That's ALM. OR would you support the fire department immediately putting out the fire engulfing that particular house? That's BLM.

ALM – when a house, any house, is on fire, we should put it out.

BLM – This is the house BURNING RIGHT NOW, and it is the house that needs immediate attention. No time to argue that resources have to be made available if and when other houses catch fire.

It is my understanding that the BLM sign is most often associated with police brutality

against Black folx, especially Black men. However, after hearing the stories of Black Sharon residents this past Sunday [the **Black in Sharon** 3 part program in August] I understood the phrase Black Lives Matter through a much wider lens – one which encompasses Black CHILDREN! Black children, who even here in Sharon, suffer racist comments and taunts by fellow classmates. Black parents who, in the light of their childrens' painful experiences, have to deal with their own pain in seeing their children suffer. This is something that also needs to be brought into the light and we believe that we here at UCS can be among those who do so.

Barbara Nelkin-Rose, August 2020

(New BLM Banner, Continues on page 10)



The new Black Lives Matter message, photoshopped here, fits right in with our diversity and inclusion work for racial justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

Continued from page 9, **New BLM Banner fro UCS**

What I learned about Princess

I woke up this morning to a new understanding of why a United Airlines stewardess would repeatedly call my granddaughter, Cora, Princess. It seemed a little over-indulgent to me, a little over the top. It was the way "Princess" was said. It conveyed Power and Beauty. And Love. There was force behind it; conviction. The night before I had listened to Black Sharon residents tell their stories in the program, Black in Sharon. This profoundly selfless sharing helped me understand the meaning conveyed behind the airline Princess. Although I don't want to believe it, I know that Black children are taunted, yes, even in Sharon; I just didn't really comprehend - and probably still don't - the depth and breath of scarring, and the rage and anguish and attention it demands of the parents. All parents of Black children must consistently convey that their black bodies hold as much dignity and beauty as anyone else. In other words, if you are Black and your 5 year old White "friend" tells you your skin looks like garbage or you can't sit next to them cuz, hey, you're Black, your parents by necessity must fly into damage control. Life long damage control. Cora is six now, loving, funny, beautiful, bright, fierce. And bi-racial. The stewardess was Black. And a teacher who, when I was finally poised to learn, taught me the importance of making sure every black body feels good about themselves. And now I understand why there is never enough Princess talk.

There can be no argument that we are in a unique moment. Black people have been telling us for decades that they live in fear, too often in poverty, with lack of human-rights' protection and without fair and equal opportunities. But, not enough White people have been paying attention, not enough White people have been outraged. This seems to be changing. Hopefully, many more White people are poised to be learners and participants in this journey to a new society, because People of color have had enough. Hanging a Black Lives Matter banner is not the end point, it's the beginning. It's the beginning of learning how to be anti-racist individuals, an anti-racist congregation, and an anti-racist society. We should see it as a symbol for Learning, Love and Action.

Ellen Schoenfeld-Beeks, August 2020

Social Justice News and Activities - September 2020

The new church year is off and running, Covid-19 notwithstanding. The Social Justice Committee has been busy over the summer, and here are a few updates on some of our projects. See the weekly Order of Service and the church website for more details.

Brown Envelope donations

Our June Brown E collection raised \$259.12 for **Black & Pink (Boston)**, dedicated to prison reform and



basic human rights for all, especially oppressed communities. (While we have seen a significant reduction in our monthly totals for the B.E. program during this period of online services, individuals are also making donations direct-

ly to our chosen organizations each month.)

For summer services in July and August, including Labor Day weekend, our B.E. collection goes to the Summer Youth Programs of the **UU Urban Ministry in Roxbury**.

Our Brown Envelope collection in September will be directed to our **Partner Church in Gyulakuta**, Transylvania. During the Reformation/Inquisition, Unitarianism was ruthlessly extinguished throughout Europe. But in Transylvania, on the edge of the Ottoman Empire, it was able to survive under the protection of the sultans, who wanted trouble-free borders. As the centuries passed, Unitarianism gradually spread westward, reaching England, and then moved on to North America. For many years, our congregation has supported our Partner Church in Gyulakuta. The money we raise via our Brown Envelope Collection in September pays for a musician during their worship service and for a copy of the monthly Romanian Unitarian magazine for each family, as well as other urgent projects. They are enormously grateful for this support. Caution: we only have 3 services in September to support this effort - please give soon!

Projects & Opportunities

The **Green Team** continues to look for ways to improve the environmental footprint of our community. Plans are afoot to install experimental vertical garden pods on the church grounds for crops to donate next spring, perhaps in collaboration with the RE program. We are also exploring connections with the regional network of gleaning volunteers who work to harvest crops for donation to folk in need - strong backs, a willingness to be outdoors in the sun, and a flexible schedule are all pluses for this work. Contact Tawnya Smith for project details and to get involved.

The **CommUnity Closet**, a Five Point Cluster project in Brockton that has offered free clothing each month, remains closed and in limbo. Please contact Jim Mullin for more information about if and when the CC may resume operation, and when we can again accept clothing donations.

(Projects & Opportunities, Continued on page 11)

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

(Projects & Opportunities, continued from page 10) drive-by pickup in the circle out front. (See Photo 1)

Elizabeth Siftar is the coordinator of the **Brockton mask-making effort** with Foxborough, Sharon, Mansfield and the Five Points Cluster. Our group has been making Covid masks for residents of Brockton throughout the summer. The connection with Brockton is through Sharon Interfaith Action (SIA) which partners with Brockton Interfaith Community (BIC) and Brockton Mutual Aid. Our wonderful sewing volunteers have been working through the summer to provide masks for residents of Brockton as part of our Social Justice outreach. The masks are given to residents in COVID Community Education packets by BIC. The packets include the masks, information resources, and personal care items. The emphasis is for COVID safety and to get as many people as possible to wear masks to bring down the COVID curve. Our group has made over 1000 masks, which have all been delivered to Brockton.

We are now shifting to making masks for children and young adults. We need volunteers for this effort. We are hoping to have 1000 children and young adult masks ready for delivery by the end of September, or earlier. Please join us in this UU-led effort. Information on making masks, patterns, etc. will be provided. You will be working from home, and there is an extra sewing machine available. If materials are needed, please let me know and those resources will be delivered to you. When your masks are completed, they will be picked up by our courier.

Face shields for children are also needed. If you know of anyone who can make face shields, please let me know! Thank you all and I look forward to hearing from you.

Elizabeth Siftar (esiftar@gmail.com) (302)354-1809

For the latest news about **legislative projects, other social justice events** and opportunities in our area, we recommend signing up for news and alerts from our fellow travelers in the work of social justice: visit UU Mass Action (uumassaction.org), the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry (uuum.org), the Unitarian Universalist Association (uua.org), the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (uuscs.org) and the Five Points Cluster, our local UU church group (fivepointscluster.org) to stay current on what other UU's are involved in that need your participation.

Chocolate in the Time of Covid

While we have not been able to gather together in the Vestry after services since last spring, the SJC has continued to offer Fair Trade items, Shopping for Justice grocery cards, and an option for donations to the 5 local food pantries in our communities. Once each month we have processed orders and made them available for



Photo 1: Dedicated SJC Car Hops serve customers desperate for caffeine and chocolates....

Since April we have sold over 29 cases of chocolate bars, more than 32 cases of coffee, some \$21,000 in Shopping for Justice cards (5% of which is donated by the stores to support our monthly MainSpring House lunch making program, which we have continued to maintain with SJC volunteers each month), and some \$5,481 in donations to local food pantries. That is on top of \$14,270 in additional donations to the Food Pantry project, for a running total of over \$19,750 to date. (See Photo 2)



Photo 2: What it takes to keep your fellow congregants functioning for a month during this endless stay-at-home season.

(FYI, with the building remaining closed, we had stopped collecting canned goods for the local food pantry, but we have established a new outdoor drop box for donations to the left of the main entrance to the church in the Patio area for those who wish to resume making donations of staples and canned goods.) Look for an email announcement soon for the September Drive-Thru SJ Fair Trade Sale Event, coming to a church near you!



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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OF SHARON
4 NORTH MAIN STREET
SHARON, MA 02067



*A Welcoming
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