

the chalice

Published by the
Unitarian Church of Sharon
**A Welcoming Congregation
of the Unitarian
Universalist Association**
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SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVICES

THEME: POSSIBILITY

10:00 Family Service
10:30am Adult Service

For Zoom information [click here](#)
For Order of Service [click here](#)

Worship services on September 12 and September 19 will be VIRTUAL via Zoom. On September 26, our first IN-PERSON worship for a limited number of masked congregants will take place. It will also be transmitted VIRTUALLY via Zoom. Information about how we will conduct In-person worship is found in this newsletter, and more will also be forthcoming.

| Date | Speakers | Topic | Worship Coordinator |
|--------|--------------------|---|---------------------|
| Sep 5 | Wilbur Edwards Jr. | A Step Down From the Judicial Bench Into the Covid Crisis | Peter Raskin |
| Sep 12 | Rev. Tricia | Our rituals hold us together, as they remind us of what we value, what is our common story, and the love we share. Always that is true, and in times of challenge and uncertainty, especially so. This Ingathering Sunday we will celebrate Water Communion, as we do every first Sunday of the church year. As <i>this will be a virtually transmitted service, please drop off a small container of water next week into the marked bowl in the church's entrance way. Please attach a note with your name and complete this sentence: Water feeds my soul by..... You can also bring your water to the BYOB- Bring Your Own Beans! Event on Sept. 11.</i> | Jean Fox |
| Sep 19 | Nolan Howard | TBD | Beth Hoke |
| Sep 26 | Rev. Tricia | TBD | Nolan Howard |

Friends, it's hard to imagine that we are now concluding yet another summer season of lay-led services. I would be amiss if I did not take this opportunity to "thank" the many speakers we have had volunteer, members of the Worship Committee, and to the ZTF for making it possible. It has been wonderful to stay-connected and to have so many share their journeys, and heart felt reflections with each of us. I look forward to seeing you all soon in what I hope will be "in-person" and a return to our beloved sanctuary. Happy Fall! - Jean Fox, Worship Chair

From the Parental Leave Minister



I don't have the best sense of direction. So when I started my drive to Sharon in early August I considered consulting my GPS in case I didn't remember the way. "No, come on, you'll remember!!" I quickly said to myself. And

once I got through the tricky part of figuring which way to go on 93 and got myself safely onto RT 95 South, I knew I was okay. Because I was **SURE** that it was **EXIT 10** for Sharon. I've driven on RT. 95 countless times in the past 11 years since finished my interim ministry at UCS, and whenever I'd see Exit 10, I'd think of this congregation, sometimes lifting a hand to wave hello

Imagine my consternation when I discovered Sharon is no longer Exit 10! No one asked me before changing it something not even close to 10!

Things change, don't they? We think we know what's up, we make plans with assurance, we are sure as shooting that we know something, and then....it's different than we thought, it changes without any notice, and we learn/relearn for the umpteenth time that we aren't in control of much of anything. Except how we will respond to what is.

The Delta variant has thrown a wrench into plans for the fall, complicating lots of things, including plans to return to in-person worship. The leadership of this congregation, like so many congregations, has had to grapple with many factors and continued uncertainties to form a plan for a safe opening. This plan is described in the Board President's column on page 3, and I join you in thanking the Safe Reopening Taskforce and Board of Trustees for their thoughtful deliberation. Though our coming together as a community is (wisely) somewhat restricted, it will still be a joy to be together more than has been possible in the past year.

You may be encountering other changes in your lives, from unexpected illnesses to new jobs, from worries about elderly parents to the birth of new babies, from relationship challenges to celebrating milestone wedding anniversaries. And you may also be holding in your heart the reality of Afghanistan and Haiti, the UN report on Climate Change and other pains, griefs and worries. Your faith community is a place where changes- unwelcome and welcome- and the world's struggles can be faced. Together. So often a wise response to what is can be found here-in the conversations with friends, in the work of committees, in worship, in strength of community and a shared faith.

I did find my way to the corner of North Main Street and Depot Road, you'll be glad to know. And I'm glad to be here with you these this fall, assisting as I can as your chart a way forward in these times of challenge and hope.

Beginning the week of September 5, I will serve the congregation roughly 20 hours per week. I can be reached at revtbrennan@gmail.com, (617) 645-9681, or by leaving a message on the minister's voicemail at church (781) 784-3652 x2.

In faith,

Rev. Tricia

BYOB

BRING YOUR OWN BEANS GATHERING!

Saturday, September 11 | 5PM to 8PM
On the church grounds!!

social distancing is required!
reconnect with church friends
while you enjoy your beans!

From the President



Starting Again...

September is the month for new beginnings. UCS Board of Trustees has accepted updated guidelines from our Task Force for Safe Re-opening to allow use of the church buildings. Rev Tricia Brennan, our minister while Rev Jolie is on parental leave, has started planning for worship service to take place in the sanctuary. Christine Bulman, Director of Religious Education, is doing likewise for family worship service. The date for start of in-person worship will hopefully take place sometime during September. If not by September 12th, the first Sunday after Labor Day, our Zoom Team under Jeff Rose will keep us connected online in virtual sanctuary for services. And we will continue the Zoom transmission of our services, even after we start meeting in person for worship.

Essential to Safe Re-opening is a set of procedures that keep everyone safe and healthy while worshipping together. You will use a new software application called Breeze to sign up for each in-person service. Ushers will greet you upon arrival at church and manage access into and out of the building. Masking will be required while in the building. Stay tuned for more information as we publish detailed guidelines for safe gathering.

Our church playground is undergoing a transformation. The swings, slides and jungle gym have been removed. Planning for purchase of nine play stations in the vacated space from Creative Playgrounds in Concord NH is well underway. Sean Bisson-Donahue, the project leader, has also recommended bench seating for parents and others to enjoy the ambiance of the new playground. Installation of the stations will take place gradually during the church year. DRE Christine Bulman also plans to use the vacated space for outdoor RE classes.

Buildings & Grounds Committee has purchased two Hathaspace air purifiers which are identical to the models used in Sharon schools. They have been tested in our church buildings since mid-July and confirm that air quality is very good throughout all rooms. Additional units will be purchased as needed to equip each room with its own air purifier when the church resumes full operation indoors.

I close this column with mention of several recent joys that you may already know. Rev Jolie give birth to baby daughter Margo on August 4th. Rev Tricia Brennan started with us officially on August 1st and

told me that our minister's office/study is the best-ever! She was the first minister to work in this space back in 2010 when the new building was completed. DRE Christine Bulman has agreed to work with us for an additional year in order to build up the RE program before starting our search for her replacement. And we welcome our new Administrator, De'En Tarkpor, and Youth Ministry Coordinator, Kate Oldshue. What a busy summer it's been!

Rory McGregor

Quilts for Rev Jolie's Girls

Individual quilts are being made for baby Margo and sister June. Birth information will be embroidered on each. This gift is from our church to Jolie's family. All About Quilts in Walpole Center is making the quilts per our direction. Donations toward the cost of the project are welcome if you would like to contribute. Any \$ amount between \$5 and \$20 is suggested. Email Rory McGregor at rmcgregor3@aol.com if you would like to donate. Images of the finished quilts will appear in a future issue of The Chalice newsletter.

Our Board of Trustees for 2021–2022:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| President | Rory McGregor |
| Vice President | Chris Raskin |
| Clerk | Sylvia Mignon |
| Treasurer | Karen Zelevinsky |



Old Playground Equipment Available (FCFS)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our learning community this fall will be outdoors, masked, multi-aged and choice-based. Workshop stations will generally fall within the categories of expressive arts, cooperative games, social justice, and mind/body/spirit. Some choices will be geared for middle schoolers and others will be geared for early and middle childhood, though ultimately kids will be free to choose.

RE Leaders will gather on September 12 to plan and families will gather on September 19 to orient to this year's dynamic RE program. We'll work with the calendar, discuss outdoor logistics, covid precautions and some family programming ideas as well. I'm looking forward to what we can create!

Welcome back to church! Though we are still in this pandemic and still having to make adjustments, we will be returning to Religious Education programming this fall. Experimentation and adaptation will be key! We've already pivoted slightly from the choices for Sunday morning programming that appear on the RE registration form, though the spirit of the program remains the same.

In Faith,

Christine,
Interim DRE

Announcing our new Youth Ministry Coordinator

We are excited to announce that our new Youth Ministry Coordinator has been hired! Welcome to Kate Oldshue who brings with her a background in youth leadership development and community organizing for racial justice. Her skill set includes trauma informed youth support, retreat organization, and program facilitation.



Several youth have already had a chance to meet Kate as they participated in the interview process which included sample youth group sessions with two of the candidates. Special thanks goes-out to the youth that made themselves available for meetings and interviews as part of the search team.

Kate began in mid-August and if you see her around be sure to say hello! Her work will involve not only the junior and senior youth groups but also the coordination of adolescent programs such as OWL and Coming of Age with an overall eye on the youth ministry of UCS.

To contact Kate, you can email her at: yc@uusharon.org

Religious Education Open House & Meeting for Families

Sunday September 19 @ 10:30am

Although we would normally begin Religious Education during the 10:30 service on this date, we feel it is important not to begin RE programming this year without a thorough orientation to the way we'll be coming together at least for the first part of the church year. We'd like to take this hour together to reconnect and to orient ourselves to the dynamic new outdoor model (due to Covid), the schedule, and to the support needs of the program. Anyone whose children in grade 8 and below who are registered for RE is strongly encouraged to attend. Orientation for high school parents will be on Thursday evening the 23rd.

Welcome to Breeze!

We are now using Breeze, a multi-faceted church management software that not only serves as an online church directory but also allows church staff to organize and communicate with groups of people including scheduling events and volunteers and checking children into classes. Because this is such a powerful tool for religious education programming, we are inviting families to create their profiles first! Click this link to start the process. If you have questions or run into difficulty, contact Christine Bulman. See you on Breeze! [https://](https://unitarianchurchofsharon.breezechms.com/login/create)

unitarianchurchofsharon.breezechms.com/login/create

Register for Religious Education 2021- 2022

The new online registration form is a part of our new suite of tools through Breeze. Check it out and register your family now!

<https://unitarianchurchofsharon.breezechms.com/form/ff527d>

RE NEWS, continued



September
2021

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Update

It looks like we will be adolescent OWL this year!! The current plan is to provide OWL classes for all of the 7th, 8th and 9th graders who want it this year. We will do this first by partnering with Franklin for a 7th/8th grade OWL consisting of Sharon 7th graders and Franklin 7th and 8th graders (about 14 total in the group). It looks like we have facilitators in place for this, though we are not quite ready to publish details. Second, we will run an additional OWL class for Sharon 8th and 9th graders. This is also potentially a group of fourteen. As of this writing we have two facilitators who have stepped up to run this as well as a couple of substitutes. Please stay tuned to weekly emails for more information as it becomes available and watch for parent orientation dates.

Elementary-aged OWL programs will be considered for the Spring of 2022

We have a need for trained OWL facilitators! While UUA sponsored trainings will not begin until January online, there are some DRE's in the greater Boston area working to host an adolescent OWL facilitator training this fall. Please consider getting trained for this life changing, life saving program and contact Christine if you'd like to be added to the list.

Youth Ministry Leadership Retreat - come join the team!

Volunteer Youth Advisors are vital to youth programming and we are looking for new folks to join this meaningful ministry. Youth are capable of powerful and exciting work and we take the responsibility of companioning that work seriously. As such, Kate and Christine are planning an overnight leadership retreat this fall at Ponkapoag for Youth Advisors in tandem with a day-long retreat for youth the same week-end. We'll explore the UU philosophy and approach to youth programming and in-depth the role of Youth Advisors. If you are interested in joining the team, contact Kate Oldshue: yc@uusharon.org or Christine dre@uusharon.org.

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |

101Planners.com

Religious Education Calendar

Sunday September 12:

10:30am Ingathering Service

12:30pm Father Bill's Lunch Making: Sign up [here!](#)

12:00pm Religious Education Leader Orientation and Planning Session

Sunday September 19:

10:00am Family Service

10:30am Religious Education Open House & Meeting for Families

1:00pm Junior Youth Group

5:00pm High School Youth Group

Thursday September 23:

7:00pm High School Youth Group Parent Orientation

Sunday September 26

10:00am Family Service

10:30am Religious Education

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee encourages you to visit the UCS website (uusharon.org) for all the latest news and updates on what's happening for social justice at church. The Social Justice pages are a great source for the most up to date information on

events, opportunities to engage, resources, and for links to partner organizations and groups that we collaborate with in our work. The next meeting of the SJC will follow the Ingathering Service on Sunday, September 12th (still a zoom event, for now...). All are welcome to attend.



Brown Envelope Collections

The June Brown E recipient was the Massachusetts chapter of **GLSEN** (Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network, [https://www.glsen.org/chapter/](https://www.glsen.org/chapter/massachusetts)

[massachusetts](https://www.glsen.org/chapter/massachusetts)). Our donations totaling \$728, are greatly appreciated.

Throughout the summer break, our Brown Envelope collection during our Lay Led services will go to support the Summer Youth Programs of the **UU Urban Ministry** (uum.org). You can send in a check to the UCS church with a memo BE Summer 2021, or donate via [our website](#), or pay directly to the Urban Ministry at their [website](#).

Our Brown Envelope collection in September (starting the Sunday after Labor Day) will be directed to our **Partner Church in Gyulakuta**, Transylvania. 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!

Donations to local food pantries over the past 18 months during the Covid crisis have now totaled \$42,475, a remarkable effort that has benefited countless families in need throughout our neighborhoods. Sadly, the need continues, and your ongoing support is greatly appreciated..



BLM Banner and Progress Rainbow Flag remind our community about the work that remains to be done.

A CONGREGATIONAL INQUIRY

Dismantling racism and other forms of oppression and creating justice and equity for all

The Anti-Racism Working Group is committed to the ongoing work of creating racial justice and practicing Beloved Community here at the Unitarian Church of Sharon and beyond. To help us plan for future conversations, events and action regarding the dismantling of racism and other forms of oppression, in recent months we have shared an [Inquiry Form](#) to find out how the UCS congregation feels about the new Black Lives Banner which was installed in September of 2020, and the proposed 8th Principle circulating in among UUs nationwide, and also about types of future activities you would be most interested in participating in as we make plans for the coming months. The online form remains open to anyone who has not yet shared their views, but here is a summary of what 64 members and friends have already shared.

When asked about their overall reaction to the new BLM banner, 87% welcomed it, 10% had mixed feelings, and 3% would have preferred not to have it installed.

When it came to the banner's impact on one's thoughts and feelings on racism and equality, 81% were greatly or somewhat engaged, while 19% indicated that they were not impacted.

Interest in learning more about the 8th Principle and ways to take "actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions", 94% supported taking action (50% very interested, 44% somewhat).

Responses to proposed specific types of events the ARWG is considering for the coming year will help us to shape the type and duration of programs and activities being considered.

While necessarily anecdotal, individual comments left in response to 'open' questions showed significant patterns: there is widespread interest in examining this topic, with the expected range of opinions across the spectrum. On the impact of the banner, 'proud' was most often used (part of 16 of 54 responses), along with 'inspired', 'reminder of our principles', 'assumed that we would have a BLM banner'; as well as 'waste of money' and that it 'sends a divisive message'.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

Questioned about one's feelings towards race and equality in our culture, responses ranged from 'frustrated', 'overwhelmed', 'sad', 'weary' and 'much to learn'.

As for the best means to focus our collective activities, ideas such as a close examination of specific local issues, engaging the youth of the church in the programs, engaging in 'difficult' conversations with facilitators, having white folks stop talking and focus on listening, and exploring linkage to other, related social justice topics ('intersectionality') were all suggested.

Additional comments expressed concern over the limits that Covid restrictions will still have on our collective action, frustration over 'zoom fatigue', and a perceived lack of balance for often overlooked Native American issues.

We greatly appreciate the insights gained from the thoughtful sharing by the UCS community found in this inquiry. There is much work that lies ahead and we look forward to collaborating with the congregation on these important issues. See below for a reflection on the importance of this work as seen by Barbara Nelkin-Rose.

The **8th Principle**: Here is the current version as discussed at GA 2021, with well over 100 UU congregations across the country already endorsing some version of this commitment within their own church communities:

"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant 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."

Beloved Conversations:

Article by Barbara Nelkin-Rose

During this past year, I, along with a few other members from our congregation, as well as Rev. Jolie, have been engaged in a program called Beloved Conversations, designed for Unitarian Universalists seeking to embody racial justice as a spiritual practice.

The curriculum consisted of 6 main sessions, which slowly and methodically offered space for a deep inner dive and focused on the aspect of SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS.

While this approach can certainly be challenging at times, especially in light of the many inequities and injustices that currently exist in our world begging for IMMEDIATE ACTION, I have come to more deeply understand that the work of creating social justice and dismantling the many forms of oppression that exist both personally and systemically in our world is very complex work and demands BOTH immediate action AND an ongoing commitment to engage in deep conversation and build meaningful relationships, especially with those who we deem different from us. It requires that we become better skilled at

- listening deeply to others' stories with open-mindedness and compassion rather than judgment

and dismissal,

- willingness in making ourselves vulnerable in sharing our own stories and recognizing the possible biases we currently hold, and
- developing deep and meaningful connections based on shared power.

One of the primary focuses of the Anti-Racism Working Group this year is to provide space for small discussion groups where we can practice the skills listed above and understand how we can integrate spirituality into social justice work as we truly practice Beloved Community. More information about these groups will be provided in the coming weeks and we encourage you to join us, to share your stories and to let us know what the heart of social justice is for you.

Two such discussion groups are currently being planned around the following topics:

1. Is there a need for an 8th Principle as endorsed by Black Lives of UU Organizing Collective, which reads: "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant 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"?
2. How and when should we celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day, a holiday celebrating and honoring Native American peoples and commemorating their histories and cultures? This will be a lead up to the October 10th Worship service honoring Indigenous Peoples Day and will provide space for folks to share their perspectives and understanding around the controversy regarding the October 11th holiday, long known as Columbus Day, but now being called Indigenous Peoples' Day in many parts of the country.

Additionally, based on the numerous responses to our Congregational Inquiry, we are hoping to offer a number of other types of events as well, including an ongoing book discussion group on *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. Last year, a number of congregants read the book and we had a wonderful discussion at the February meeting of the Not So Boring Book Group, however it is a comprehensive and educational book which lends itself to continued discussion and exploration. The plan is that each meeting will focus on a particular chapter or chapters of the book which will allow folks to read the book slowly and attend those meetings they are available for. If you have any interest in joining such a book group, please contact Barbara Nelkin-Rose.

SJ NEWS, continued

Stackable Garden Project Update

The Stackable Garden experiment has been a rich learning experience during this growing season. Mother Nature has provided plenty of rain and sunshine, and we look forward to ongoing harvests of our various crops this fall. Thank you to all who are participating in this collaborative project. Stop by the church grounds to see what's growing!

Hold the date: Social Justice Fair Trade Marketplace

Wednesday, 14 September 2021, 4-6pm.

Plan on picking up your pre-ordered Fair Trade chocolates and coffees, Shopping for Justice grocery cards, and dropping off Food Pantry donations, and Brown Envelope contributions at our monthly Fair Trade Marketplace in front of the church. Until we can resume Coffee Hour after Sunday services again, we will continue to offer this option on a monthly basis, to keep everyone in coffee and chocolates as needed. _

CommUnity Closet update:

An abundance of caution continues to keep the doors of our free clothing pantry in Brockton closed. Our 5 Point Cluster of UU churches is examining possible plans for reopening in the fall, but for now we remain unable to collect your gently used clothing for distribution. Hopefully, this will not remain the case for too much longer. Stay tuned.

Main Spring House Lunch Making:

We continue to assemble lunches for the guests of Mainspring House in Brockton, and some additional sites supported by their programs. Until we can resume this monthly project in the Vestry after Sunday services, we encourage households to take home kits of supplies and assemble lunches; we need shoppers and delivery teams as well. Sign ups at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/>

Green Energy at UCS and Climate Justice

Time for a Green Celebration! At our annual meeting in June, the congregation voted for UCS to purchase 100% renewable electricity for the coming year. Now that this program is in effect, we can celebrate that our UCS carbon footprint has been substantially reduced. The Green Team will be back in action this fall, helping us all continue on our eco-responsible path. In the meantime, please review your own household's commitment to achieving a sustainable planet, and together we can work to move the needle on climate change.



Admin Office

Hello UCS Community,

First I would like to thank you all for your time and willingness to help during my transition. Those that I have met it has truly been a pleasure. I have been welcomed with opened hearts and hands and for that I am grateful. I look forward to meeting others once we resume in house gatherings! As I continue to transition into my full role, I ask that you continue to lean on the following people for assistance:

Finance - Karen Zelevinsky

Rentals - Colleen Tuck

Calendar - Julie Armstrong

All other admin inquiries –can be directed to me by the UCS website.

Our weekly news will resume on September 10. All submissions are due on Thursday's by 5pm.

If you have a specific question, you can also consult our very capable Committee Chairs. See the list of [Committees here](#).

De'En

