



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

10:30am Family Service

10:30am Worship Service

For Zoom information [click here](#)

For Order of Service [click here](#)

September 10

Intergenerational - 10:30 AM Like Rivers to the Sea - Each September we celebrate our coming together once again after the summer with a water ceremony. Bring your water and share with us what it means to you as we pour it into a common bowl. If you forget your water, that's OK, we'll have some here for you!

September 17

Family Worship, 10:00 AM: "The Gift of Welcome" Our family worship service today will include a discussion about how being welcoming is a spiritual practice for people of all ages, and will include a hands-on activity to help us practice welcome as a community. *Please note, our "family worship" is always open (and meaningful!) for ALL, individuals and families alike, people of all ages. We call it family worship to emphasize that it is engaging for our kids.*

Worship 10:30 The Beginning is Near! If reading or watching the news these days makes you feel overwhelmed, you are not alone. Today's service will be a meditation on the relationship between human agency and hope, and the long history of our UU conviction that we do have the power to make a difference in our beautiful and difficult world.

September 24

Family Worship, 10:00 AM: "A Pillow Full of Feathers" Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, when Jews fast, pray, make amends for their mistakes and seek forgiveness. Today we'll explore a Jewish wisdom tale about a nice man with a nasty problem and what that has to do with a pillow full of feathers.

Worship 10:30 AM Perfectly Imperfect - Today Yom Kippur begins, the holiest days in the Jewish calendar, a time for atonement and reconciliation. Atonement and forgiveness are related but not the same thing, and one does not always follow the other. Today we will explore how practices of atonement and forgiveness can help us in our search for a connection to something greater than ourselves.

From the Minister



Dear Ones,

Happy September! I look forward to reconnecting with you all as we get going with our weekly services once again. Our first Sunday back will be September 10 at 10:30 AM. Everyone is invited to bring a little container of water to worship for our annual water ceremony that day. We will pour our waters from near and far into a common bowl and share with one another what they mean to us.

Many of our UU congregations hold a water ritual like ours each year. The ritual was first developed by participants of the 1980 Women and Religion Continental Convocation of Unitarian Universalists. These clergy women were serving the UU faith during a time when the vast majority of UU ministers were men, and when the language, theology, and liturgy across much of our Association were all still deeply patriarchal. And so, the UU clergy women of the 1970s and 1980s sought to create new rituals that would affirm and uplift women. As Rev. Lucile Shuck Longview and Rev. Carolyn McDade (the author of one of our most cherished hymns, “Spirit of Life”) explained in a description of how they came to develop the first water ceremony, “we were beginning to reach for new and inclusive symbols and rituals that speak to us of our connectedness to one another, to the totality of life, and to our place on this planet.” And so now, more than forty years later, this ceremony continues to offer us a sense of this connectedness to all of us, whatever our gender. Whether our water comes from our home tap, a favorite swimming hole, a special trip we may have taken, a puddle, a rain barrel, wherever - commingling our waters will symbolize our coming together once again as a community of spiritual growth, support, and care for the world.

Yours in faith,
Rev. Jolie

From the President



Coincidences and Connections.

My parents were atheists. When I was in elementary school, there was a form asking for “religious preference”, and in the 1950's it didn't feel safe to say “atheist”. (Atheistcommunist was one word, like damnYankee.) So I learned to spell “non-denominational”.

When I was filling out a college form, I wasn't satisfied with that answer; it made me sound like an unaffiliated Christian, which I wasn't. So I asked my mother, “What am I going to put in this form?” She said, “I've been seeing these ads in the paper: 'Are you a Unitarian without knowing it?'. It sounds to me like the Unitarians think like us. Why don't you put Unitarian?”

I did, and the upshot was, when I got to campus I was invited to the local UU college youth group. I went, and for the first time in my life found myself with people who thought like me but who weren't related to me. I have been a UU ever since. More than 60 years.

In the early 90's my late brother suggested I subscribe to a periodical for polyamorous people, and I did, and then I answered a personal ad in it. The advertiser was my partner of almost 30 years, Ken Olum.

When Ken taught a course in astronomy, he borrowed from NASA a collection of moon rocks to show his students. NASA wanted the rocks to reach a wide audience, and so Ken arranged to bring them to UCS for RE and coffee hour.

Jean and Ken Zaniewski visited UCS that day to see the moon rocks. They've never left. Jean introduced Marcia T. and Rumni and others to UCS.

Research suggests that the most common reason people came to a church for the first time was because a friend invited them! And then there is the jocular often-accurate definition of a UU: An atheist with kids. Some of our Lesbian families were attracted to our congregation by our rainbow flags.

Why am I telling you all this? Because I want you to keep in mind that reaching out matters! Demonstrating values matters. Connections matter. If my brother hadn't mentioned the periodical, if Second Church in Chicago hadn't put ads in the Tribune, I wouldn't be here. If Ken hadn't borrowed the moonrocks, Jean and Ken wouldn't be here. Marcia wouldn't be here. Rumni wouldn't be a chaplain at Dana Farber. So, when we reopen in September, bring your friends.

Valerie White

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



A Note From the Director of Faith Development

Did that title catch your eye? More on that in a moment but first, welcome back!

I hope everyone has enjoyed the warm breezes and sunshine of summer! Though the season is not over yet, we begin to make our way back into "school year" routines. May we do so with gratitude in our hearts and joyful anticipation of the year ahead.

Now, about that title. With the support of the board, personnel and religious education committees, and Rev. Jolie, I'm proposing that we try out some different words this year when referring to what this church has long called "RE" or religious education. Why? I believe faith development is a more apt term for what we do in the programs we co-create. Religious education is but one aspect of what we do together.

The Unitarian Universalist Association adopted the term some years ago. On their website, they proclaim the activities of faith development as inclusive of religious education, worship, and social action that nurture Unitarian Universalist identity and spiritual growth. Among other things, I would add community-building to that list.

Many other UU churches have adopted the term faith development in reference to their religious education programs. Many of my colleagues have switched to "Director of Faith Development" but it's not just about staff titles. This would mean that we have Faith Development programs, and a Faith Development Committee as well. Using the term "RE" will be a hard habit to break, yet it might be worth trying. It is also more welcoming to newcomers when our language is free of acronyms that only "insiders" know.

So I propose we try this out for a couple of months, and then the board can take it up for a vote. We're not shooting for perfection here, just a shift, and that can happen gradually. Let me know what you think!

In faith,
Christine

What's Happening in Religious Education?

Our Religious Education programs are so busy that they need their own separate newsletter! And it's not just for youth and families! We're building a multi-generational community of all ages, so no matter your age or family status, there are opportunities to get involved: Click the link to see [What's Happening in Religious Education](#).

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS



The Social Justice Committee encourages you to visit the UCS website (uusharon.org) for news and connections about what's happening for social justice at church. The Social Justice pages are a

great source for information on events, opportunities to engage, resources, and links to partner organizations and groups that we collaborate with in our work.



Brown Envelope Collections

The May Brown Envelope donations supported the **Louise D. Brown Peace Institute**

(<https://ldbpeaceinstitute.org>) and their 27th annual **Mother's Day Walk for Peace**. Donations both via the Brown E collections and direct to the Peace Institute for our team of walkers, *Sharon Walks for Peace*, totaled \$3,074. Your donations for this important organization are greatly appreciated.



Our donation, combined with others from across the state, totaled \$601,256 for the important work of the Peace Institute.

In June, the Brown Envelope donations were split between two funds to support trans people; each program received \$750. The first fund is housed at First Parish Malden, our neighbor UU congregation which is serving as fiscal sponsor to partner organizations of **Side With Love** (our UUA's justice campaign). These partners are working behind the scenes at this time for security concerns. First Parish Malden is accepting donations on their behalf, which go directly to building support, mutual aid, and travel networks for

trans people and their families who are either traveling to seek care that is no longer available where they live, or relocating entirely. The second fund is the **Transgender Emergency Fund – MA** (transemergencyfund.org), the only organization dedicated to supporting low income and homeless Transgender individuals in Massachusetts. The Transgender Emergency Fund assists with homelessness prevention, shelter assistance, nutrition assistance, prescription co-pay assistance, transportation and escort to medical appointments, etc. Your generous support of these organizations is greatly appreciated.

In addition, in June the SJC voted to send **GLSEN-MA** (the Massachusetts chapter of the Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network) a donation of \$200 from our Fair Trade discretionary funds. This donation is in keeping with our longstanding commitment to this important organization. (See below ** for how these funds are raised.)

Over the summer break there were no regular services, and thus no announced formal Brown E collections. There are however several donors who make standing monthly BE contributions, and the SJC will explore appropriate recipients for those funds at our September meeting. Sadly, the list of critical needs appears to be never-ending....

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 fellow UUs in Romania. 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!

Our amazing effort to help **local food pantries** (6 in total, with an emphasis on the Sharon/Stoughton Pantry) which began to expand 3 ½ years ago when Covid was an anomaly that might last a few weeks, or maybe a month or so

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

at most (!), has to date raised over \$62,000 in funds to help our neighbors get through difficult times. This is an amazing accomplishment, and while the ebb and flow of Covid remains a concern, we will continue to offer this extra effort to address food insecurity in our neighborhoods. The reports back from the staff at the pantries are that demand remains high, and that our donations are making a real difference. Thank you for your ongoing support (checks, and of course staple foods via the donation bin in the lobby of the church, are always appreciated).

MainSpring House lunch making: be on the lookout for a new approach to our monthly commitment of brown bag lunches for the guest of MainSpring House in Brockton. In conjunction with the RE program, several youth of the church are taking responsibility for this vital social justice program, and will be assembling the lunches in the Vestry during the second service upstairs. Depending on how smoothly the WOW Butter spreads, they may or may not need a hand to finish up as Coffee Hour commences, so be on the lookout for ways to support this **RE/social justice experiment**. And take a minute to **thank those hard working youth** for taking the lead on behalf of all of us at UCS as we work to help our neighbors in need. It happens on second Sundays every month (unless scheduling conflicts arise...).



Even when we break from formal services in the summertime, the Lunch Making goes on! Many folks gathered in July and August to complete

this task, to share in a mini-circle service, and then to break bread together. A special thanks to Barbara Nelkin-Rose and Rev. Jolie for leading the reflections with songs, readings and a chance to share on both days.

Do you and your household eat food? If so, you can help make the MSH lunch program a success when you shop for your own groceries. We fundraise to purchase supplies for this effort with our **Shopping for Justice** program (S4J), where we ask you to purchase grocery cards from local chain stores for your personal shopping needs. We buy the cards in bulk, and get a 5% discount, which funds the lunch program (your grocery purchases are one-to-one, dollar for dollar, since the 5% donation comes from the stores). Stop by the Social Justice Table in the Vestry during Coffee Hour to learn more about this user-friendly program. The more of us who make this commitment to 'Shopping for Justice', the more hunger and homelessness programs we can engage with during these troubled times.

Local support for a **Haitian family in transition**: in recent weeks Janet Limke and Rob Scott have taken in a family working to restart their lives here in New England. As Janet reports:

I was picking up Caribbean Food in Norwood in mid July, when I heard about this family from the restaurant owner. Within a couple weeks, the Limke/ Scott household grew to include an additional family of 5 including 2 children ages 3 and 9, a 21 year old male, and a mother and father from Port au Prince, Haiti. The family is appreciative, kind, resourceful and connected with people in the Haitian community. Several from the church have already offered expertise, language translation, and logistical advice. It is expected that the Depre/ Jerome family will appreciate donations of household items in a couple months, when the time comes to move into a place of their own. Stay tuned for other ways that we as a congregation can support this family.

Interested in learning more about how you might be able to help this family assimilate to their new world? Contact Gare Reid (agreid@rcn.com) to do some brainstorming together.

SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS, continued

SJC retreat this September: Saturday, 23rd, morning, lunch, then into the afternoon – details to be shared soon. Thanks to the expansive work of the Committee on Ministry and their offer to help each of the committees of the church undergo an evaluation and church-wide reflection on our work, the SJC has valuable material to explore at our retreat later in September. After a time of reflection, discussion and visioning, with the help of Heather Vickery of the UUSC (who shared a service and workshop for us all last winter), we can expect a renewed and reinvigorated SJC to move forward into the new year. With your help, there is so much that we can accomplish – Stay tuned!

SJC Meeting for September: the monthly SJC meeting will be on Sunday, September 10th at 12:00pm. Note that this is earlier than our meeting times last year. We will continue to offer hybrid-zoom participation, while some gathering in the physical Library for face-to-face conversation and others are on the small screen. Look for the zoom link in the UCS Calendar. All are welcome; please join us as we look for opportunities and challenges to work together as we make a difference in the world.

Fair Warning: **Fair Trade** Table prices are heading north. We are sad to report that the costs of coffees, chocolates and other fair trade items are rising, and that we will need to raise our prices at the F.T. Table at Coffee Hour accordingly. While we are still offering our inventory from this summer at lower prices from last year, by October we will need to bump up our price structure. But remember, **all profits support the various programs and efforts of the SJC doing the work that needs doing in the world, so that cup of coffee ought to taste a bit better knowing that it was harvested with fair compensation for the farmers, and that the modest profits gathered here will be put to good uses. Thank you for your continued support.



Worker Bees gather at All Souls Church of Braintree to push for voter registration in a critical part of the country this fall and beyond. Hosted by the newest church to join the 5 Point Cluster, teams of post card writers tackled a list of 500 names in Virginia where key elections will happen later this year. Thanks to all of those from cluster churches who were able pitch in.

ANTI-RACISM WORKING GROUP (ARWG) formerly 8th Principle**Anti-Racism Working Group (ARWG) REPORT**

The ARWG is committed to continue planning and facilitating events this year that will support UCS in becoming an intentionally and proactively anti-racist and anti-oppressive faith community, doing the work necessary both within and beyond our own walls. We see our role as a dual one: 1) providing the space and opportunities for the congregation to engage in hard and uncomfortable conversations AND 2) offering specific action steps we can take to eradicate the current systems, structure and policies which marginalize and harm certain oppressed communities, such as the BI-POC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and transgender communities.

While we have no specific events yet scheduled, we hope to continue with

- our yearly Black Lives Matter Banner Recommitment Ceremony in October (specific date yet to be determined)
- at least one book group, and
- our Alco Conversations held after Sunday Worship

We hope you will join us at these events and in this important work we are called to do as UUs. As always, we seek and welcome your input, and invite you to join us at our next meeting on Saturday, September 9th at 12:00pm. Please reach out to Barbara Nelkin-Rose if you would like to attend our September 9th meeting and/or with any thoughts or suggestions about future events you would like to see offered. Together, we can work towards living the goals within the 8th Principle and our core values as UUs.

CHURCH NEWS

Our fellow **UCS member Louise Chereski is moving (locally)!** She extends the BIGGEST thank you to all who have helped with packing so far. If you have some time to spare and want to help with sorting, packing, and taking things to donate (no heavy lifting required), contact Louise at (617) 697-9142.

The Worship Committee is looking forward to seeing you all back in the sanctuary in September. We welcome our new committee members: Ashley Tsongas and Hema Sarang-Sieminski. We also have a returning member: Gary Webber. Meg Dussault will be a WC Associate member this coming year. Continuing members: Ellen Bordman (Chair), Beth Hoke, Peter Raskin, Tom D'Avanzo, and Valerie Vigoda. If you have suggestions or questions about Sunday services, feel free to reach out to any of us.

If you are interested in joining us on the Worship Committee, please contact Ellen Bordman eesbordman@gmail.com

You're Invited! Discussion Group: "What Do We Mean When We Say God?"

Every other Tuesday, 7-8:30 PM, UCS Library (hybrid if needed), Six sessions. September 26, October 10, October 24, November 7, November 21, December 5. Rev. Jolie will lead this six-session adult discussion and journaling group. We'll meet every other Tuesday evening at church, beginning September 26. We will read and discuss short excerpts from theists of all stripes as well as humanists, agnostics, and all those in between. This group is for people who want to learn from others' beliefs while digging deep into our own beliefs and non-beliefs about God.

The name of this group comes from the title of a little book published more than 30 years ago. Compiled by a woman named Deidre Sullivan, it's a collection of quotes about God from everyday people all over the country, as well as some well-known thinkers and writers from throughout history. We'll read some of this book, as well as other selections. Readings will be made available to participants.

Registration required. Minimum of 5 registrants for the class to take place. Maximum 12. First-come, first-served. Email Rev. Jolie to sign up: minister@uusharon.org. In person, but if there are those who need to participate remotely we can try a low-tech hybrid approach. Deadline to sign up is September 19.

Tai Chi

Class on **first** and **third** Saturdays, 8:00 to 9:00 am is continuing at the UCS. A contribution of \$5 to \$7 is requested. The teacher, Vince Jorales, of the Easton Martial Arts Center, is knowledgeable, welcoming, helpful and clear. Tai Chi is a life enhancing exercise, good for breath, balance, and general well-being.

CHURCH NEWS

Art Wall

General Assembly in June was attended by three UCS delegates in person, and two remotely. One of our attendees, Tom D'Avanzo, has shared some photographs he took there; they are displayed on the art wall this month, and give us a good sense of the event.

Perhaps October's art wall can display UU artists' depictions of something summertime which provided artistic inspiration. Youth artists, please consider contributing. Any UU artists' work would be welcome; let Dinah know if you have an idea for a theme, or if you just have something to hang.

For November I'm thinking of art inspired by animals.



Stewardship Corner

This is the inaugural monthly Stewardship Corner of the Chalice. In an effort to communicate the meaning of Stewardship to our UCS community and then inspire individuals to be generous with their talents, time and treasure, we'll have leaders of our community share their vision and help you understand what they are doing and why they are doing it.

In essence, we are a stronger community when more individuals pitch-in and hold up our collective visions. Our community is richer when we all invest in our infrastructure. To me, our infrastructure means our children, our spirituality, our education, our music and songs, our church building, gardens and playground, and our education. Outreach to our greater community is vital because without justice for all, our infrastructure can crumble. We invest by volunteering, participating, socializing, praying, singing, learning and making financial contributions. As individuals, we choose how and when we'll engage. Some of us will do more, others will do less.

The Stewardship Committee's goal is to inspire you throughout the year in writing, in person and virtually. Please join us on this journey.

Peter Raskin,

Stewardship Committee Chairperson

CHURCH NEWS



Sept 23rd the Coffeehouse reboots to the terrific sounds of Crowes Pasture. Doors open at 6:30 concert starts at 7:00. Suggested donation \$20 [crowespastureduo](https://www.crowespastureduo.com)

Are you the parent or guardian of a teenager?

Are you looking for a place to talk with your peers from our congregation about the experience of raising a teen?

**Support Group
for
Parents of Adolescents**

To express interest or ask questions,
contact Rev. Jolie:
minister@uusharon.org

PIC•COLLAGE