



Mid-Columbia Unitarian
Universalist Fellowship
www.mcuuf.org

MCUUF Weekly eNews for May 27, 2020

Online Service at 10 a.m.
The theme for May: “Sabbath”



May 31: Flower Ceremony, Rev. Judy Zimmerman with Elaine C., celebrant. Flower Communion is a uniquely Unitarian Universalist tradition created by the Rev. Norbert Capek in 1923. For this year’s annual celebration, held online, ***please take a photo of yourself with a flower*** and email it to jzimmerman@uuma.org by May 27. We will collect them to show during the service. Also, please have a flower with you when you come to online worship that morning.

June 7: “Blinded by the Light,” Rev. Judy Zimmerman. In this song, Bruce Springsteen says, “Mama always told me not to look into the sights of the sun/Whoa, but mama that's where the fun is.” Unitarian Universalism has a distinct preference for turning towards the sun and avoiding discourse on evil. How does this approach affect our understanding of suffering and our ability to endure?

We will meet for worship in the fellowship’s “Zoom Room.”

Click on <https://zoom.us/j/767376780> to enter the online worship service.

To join by telephone, please contact mcuuf1@gmail.com, as you will need a special code.

Minister’s Message

Dear MCUUF Community,

As Washington and Oregon begin to loosen restrictions in the face of the global coronavirus outbreak, the Unitarian Universalist Association on May 14 released guidelines for gathering in our congregations. This guidance can be read by following this link: [Updated Gathering Guidance](#).

The recommendations underscore how the pandemic is real. We are in a marathon, not a sprint. This is not the news we hoped to hear. We are weary and grieving.

The UUA is demonstrating strong moral leadership. Our congregations must act in ways that do not endanger people’s health and safety or further marginalize those who are already vulnerable. How can we know relief or happiness at others’ expense? We are bearers of a Universalist heritage

that recognizes our sacred responsibility to promote the well-being of all our members, friends and neighbors.

The MCUUF Board of Trustees has chosen a wise and prudent course of action. As we meet virtually through the end of this year, we will sympathize with each other, dream about our future, and encourage and support one another. There is much we do not know about these next six months. There is no playbook for what we are facing. We do know that MCUUF is a resourceful and resolute congregation. It has weathered stormy passages before—abrupt changes in leadership, changes in meeting location--and we have shouldered on. We will continue walking together in this journey, nourished by warm fellowship, emboldened by faith, and gathered as one strong body.

With love,
Rev. Judy

Are you having difficulty getting connected to Sunday worship in Zoom? Please let me know and we'll problem solve: Call 503-970-0564 or email jzimmerman@uuma.org

News from Rev. Judy and your Board of Trustees

As many of you may have heard, UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick Gray has recently released a recommendation that our congregations continue to hold virtual-only worship services until May 2021. Some of her reasons were practical—the daunting tasks of infection control and social distancing in large gatherings; the technical difficulties involved in trying to combine in-person and virtual services; even liability concerns. But other reasons were spiritual. As a religious community, we are called to be inclusive of all of our members (including the large number who belong to vulnerable populations) and to be attentive to the health needs of our larger community. Since all Unitarian Universalist congregations are self-governing, we are under no obligation to accept Rev. Gray's recommendations. However, your board is persuaded by her arguments, although we are modifying her recommendations to meet our own situation.

Therefore, we have made the following decisions:

(1) We will continue to hold virtual-only worship services until at least the end of this calendar year, at which point we will re-evaluate. This gives the Worship Team the information they need to do long-range planning while still giving us flexibility to adapt to changed circumstances, should these occur.

(2) Gov. Brown's orders now allow us to have small-group in-person gatherings. However, these gatherings also present potential challenges. The board has begun a process of developing a protocol for in-person gatherings, including issues such as social distancing, infection control, restroom availability, and the like. Planning for any such small-group gatherings should await the completion of these protocols.

(3) The inability to gather in person is requiring significant changes in our Religious Exploration (RE) program. Rev. Judy, Liz, and Rheva are currently working with the Board to develop an RE program more appropriate to our current situation. As a part of this process, Liz is conducting a survey of all of the families in our congregation. We will share these plans once they are complete.

We know that these decisions are not easy to accept, and many of you will have questions or concerns. We will be hosting a Virtual Town Hall meeting after our June 14 service, and this will give you a chance to discuss these issues. In the meanwhile, please feel free to contact Rev. Judy or any member of your Board of Trustees—Ray K (president), Elaine C (secretary), Cindy A (treasurer), and Kathy J and Peggy N (at large trustees). We are all in this together.

Religious Exploration

(At home) Update

Greetings, families!

This month we are focusing on various themes related to the practice of **Sabbath**. For our final week of the month, we'll discuss **spiritual practice** and explore several different types of prayer and meditation used by some UUs. Come together for a family "sun salutation" yoga practice and learn how to make your own meditative labyrinth at home.

Here's the link to this week's RE:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K6hEXrUy_jvJvKtD5Nxdkivoyd7UkzWpJdr2b1CLhUI/edit?usp=sharing

We are still gathering responses in our family survey. If you haven't had a chance to fill out the survey yet, here's the link for you all: <https://forms.gle/ve795KXDDb8MBC3v7>

Wishing you all the best. Peace,
Liz

Announcements

Virtual GA delegate needed. This year's Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly will be held on June 24-28 and will be a **100% virtual event**. For many years the GA has offered virtual attendance as an option; this year, its scale and technology has been enhanced so it can accommodate a wider, even global, audience. MCUUF board president Ray K will be a delegate, and we have an opening for one more delegate. If you are interested in attending this virtual GA, please contact Rev. Judy or Ray K.

UU the Vote – UU the Vote is alive and moving forward! Thanks to our social action team for securing a grant from the UUA's Fund for UU Social Responsibility and with your generous donations, we are continuing our letter writing to underrepresented voters in swing states, encouraging them to vote. Instead of gathering to write letters like we did in March, we will bring the letters to you to prepare in the comfort of your home. If you're ready to write, have questions, or need more details, please contact Cindy A. Let's fight for our values, counter voter suppression, and expand democracy to shape a world in which all people are free and flourishing.



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The deadline for inclusion in the weekly eNews is midnight (11:59 p.m.) Monday. The MCUUF Newsletter comes out on the first Wednesday of each month (unless otherwise announced).

**The deadline for inclusion is midnight of the prior Monday.
Please send your announcements to Brad at mcuuf1@gmail.com**