



Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

APRIL NEWSLETTER

Gather - Inspire - Transform



Minister's Column: What does it mean to be a People of Becoming?



We've been working on a Relational Covenant for our congregation for months. We have wondered about what promises we can make to one another. We've asked questions about accountability and restorative practice. We've thought about who we are today and who we wish to become.

The first Draft Relational Covenant was built by a bunch of ministry teams and committees. I explored the draft through Sunday services. You further discussed the draft in Covenant Groups, other small groups, and Restorative Practice Circles. Some of you read the draft at home on your own. I received lots of wonderful, helpful feedback. Thank you. I've learned a lot.

This business of creating a meaningful covenant is not just a journey of discovery, it is also transformative. As we've wondered, questioned, and thought about who we are as a congregation, we have blossomed into a different kind of congregation.

We are becoming a community that wants to care for each other in ever-deeper, ever more meaningful ways. We have discovered that we also want to be accountable to ourselves, to each other and to our highest values. We are getting real about our expectations about our relationships.



The feedback on our first draft of the Relational Covenant will continue to flow in during the month of April. By late May, we will have a second draft available for your perusal. The plan is to have a Saturday morning, whole church, y'all-come zoomie extravaganza to collect feedback on this second draft. And hopefully we will have a final draft for your acceptance at the Fall Congregational Meeting.

We are becoming. That is a truism; and through open, authentic conversations about who we are and who we want to be in relationship, we are much more aware of just how becoming we are.

Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Pulpit Previews, Zoom Webinar Worship

(click <https://www.buffalouu.org/zoom-info.html> for Zoom Webinar instructions).

April 4: Spring's Spiritual Rebirth, Rev. Joan Montagnes

When it comes to Easter, Unitarian Universalists are all over the board. Is it bunnies, tulips and chocolate? Or is it all about the risen Christ? And there is a lot of ground in between and nothing is mutually exclusive. Who says you can't hunt for candy eggs and believe in resurrection at the same time? This year we have a special treat: a basket of reflections on the holiday from Valerie Anderson, Donna Robinson, and Don Behr (with a few jellybeans from Rev. Joan tossed in too).

April 11: Becoming, Rev. Joan Montagnes

A reflective service. Meditations on becoming whole from within. Self-realization and the inner life.

April 18: Growing into the Larger Whole, Rev. Joan Montagnes

No matter how self-realized you may be, you do not exist in isolation. Inner peace comes from connecting and actually becoming part of something larger than yourself.

April 25: A Small Dark Light: Hope and Endurance in the Face of Tragedy, Youth Group

Over the past year the world has seen great tragedy. The death and destruction of a global pandemic sweeping away the complex interactions of modern society, forcing us to imitate them as best we can through computer screens. While some have the privilege to lock down and be safe, others are forced into the wind thick with disease in order to earn what they need to survive. This tragedy is not to be understated, and in the face of it the only reasonable seeming thing left to do is sit and cry. That endurance, to hope in the face of hopelessness and rejoice in the face of despair, is what our service today is about, and we hope these words, songs, and payers can inspire you as they have inspired us.

Joys and Sorrows

We send healing thoughts to both Mary Richert and Lucy Sloan who are both recovering from hip surgery.

We send our best to Karen Peterson who is also healing from surgery. May her recovery be speedy and uneventful.

Much happiness to three of our church families! Kathleen McGriff Powers is a new grandmother to baby Kenza, Hope and Dick Krause are grandparents to baby Claire, and Sandra Dunbar is grandmother to baby Onyx. What joy!



Religious Education News Sarah Martin, Director of Religious Education

Here are the important upcoming dates and events for RE in April:

Thursday, April 8, 3-6 pm Packet Pick Up for PreK and Workshop Classes (at church)

Saturday, April 17, 1:30-2:30 pm Chalk the Walk event, all ages (at church)

Sunday, April 25, 10:30 am Youth Service! (on Zoom)

April 25, 6-8 pm Tentative Coming of Age outdoor movie night at UUCB (at church)

Check out your weekly RE email or the Eblast for details on these events and more!



Adult Faith Development

EAST MEETS WEST: A SURVEY OF ORIENTALISM

Michael Harris, instructor

Sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo



Online Zoom Meetings; Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

\$10 per Session , Four classes left!

We look at the Orient through Western eyes: the China of Marco Polo and Pearl Buck, the Japan of Puccini and Gilbert & Sullivan, the India of Rudyard Kipling, and the Middle East of 1001 Arabian Nights and The Rubaiyat of Omar Kayaam.

To register, send your check, made out to UUCB, to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo, 695 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222. The church office will send the Zoom meeting number and instructions for logging-in to your email address. For information, call 885-2136, or email at office@buffalouu.org.

Course Syllabus:

Session Eleven (April 7): “A Source of Innocent Merriment”: Orientalist Operetta [Ba-Ta-Clan, The Mikado, The King and I, Kismet]

Session Twelve (April 14): White Man’s Burden – Rudyard Kipling’s India

Session Thirteen (April 21): Pearl Buck’s East Asia [The Good Earth, et al.]

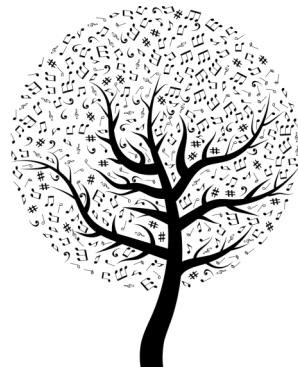
Session Fourteen (April 28): The ‘Asian Saga’ Novels of James Clavell [King Rat, Tai-Pan, Shōgun, Noble House]

Music Notes – April 2021

Daniel Bassin, Music Director



During the month of April, we join hundreds of congregations near and far in contemplating the *Soul Matters* thematic question, “What Does it Mean to Be a People of Becoming?” With your Music Ministry’s virtual Spring Music Sunday service behind us, program Staff and Choir volunteers alike can take a moment to breathe and to reflect upon a full year of virtual music-making.



While the challenges of delivering the music and worship experiences our community has come to expect in this now no-longer wholly unfamiliar form have limited some of what we can do, as your Music Director, I find myself frequently wondering about how the COVID-19 shutdowns, disruptions, and will shape how we return back to ‘normal’ – in other words, I’ve been keeping track of what we’re *Becoming*...and it’s encouraging!

Sunday services in April begin with Rev. Montagnes’s April 4th Easter service, *Spring’s Spiritual Rebirth*. Soloists Helen Lowry, Matthew Spaulding and Michael Harris will treat us to a selection of tunes from the musicals *Godspell* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Rev. Montagnes is again at our virtual pulpit for the April 11th reflective service of music and readings, *Becoming*. With echoes of Easter’s musical sensibility still fresh in our ears, Matthew Spaulding will offer up the hauntingly beautiful “Simple Song” from Leonard Bernstein’s *MASS: A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers*, which was written for the opening of the Kennedy Center, and also had some lyrical assistance from *Godspell* composer, Stephen Schwartz. This service is bookended by extended improvisations on the hymns *Loving Kindness* and *Bright Morning Stars*, and will also feature a Brahms Intermezzo alongside the service hymns, *Find a Stillness* and *Spirit of Life*.

Our April Choir Recording Project is one many of our members have been anxiously awaiting. Since the beginning of ‘virtual church’ and ‘broadcast music ministry’ we started thinking of every way we could feature our beloved Choir while recognizing the technical challenges on the recording and mixing sides of the equation. At first, we started with simple unison hymns, then four part, and eventually simple-yet-lovely anthems. As you all know, this quickly gave way to our virtual performance of the complete *Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest* by Conrad Sousa on our Christmas Eve service, and last month we were able to realize a project delayed since last spring, recording choral masterworks by Amy Beach. However, the lush harmonies and singular choral sound of American composer, Morten Lauridsen (b. 1943) – a staple composer from the UUCB Choir’s core repertoire – was something I had once considered to be a bridge too far from a technical standpoint on our Zoom services...until now.

April 18th’s service, *Growing into the Larger Whole* will feature your UUCB Choir, Soloists, and Keyboardist extraordinaire, Jonathan Vogtle in Lauridsen’s Rilke setting, *Dirait-on*, from the collection “Les Chansons des Roses.” This service will also feature a Cornette-and-Piano rendition of Kurt Weill’s *My Ship*, a Strauss song (transcribed for piano), and Ysaye Barnwell’s *We Are...* The month concludes with our YOUTH-led worship service on April 25th.

Police Accountability Ballot Initiative Help us sign and collect signatures!

Our partner VOICE Buffalo is leading a petition for Buffalo's Common Council to create a Buffalo Police Advisory Board and a Commission on Community Police Oversight. **UUCB's Justice Ministry team invites our congregation to participate in signing and collecting signatures.**

Please email/call Hy (hcarrel@gmail.com / 617-721-0243) to sign up to collect signatures with us throughout April. <https://www.voicebuffalo.org/ballot-initiative>

April Share-the-Plate: [Re-Tree WNY](#)



Re-Tree WNY was begun after the “surprise” snowstorm that blanketed the Greater Buffalo on October 12, 2006. The heavy snow burdened the still-leafy trees and pulled down many power lines. The biggest damage was to the heritage trees that lined the byways and graced the parks within the 18 municipalities of our area. The towns and public entities determined that 57,000 trees were permanently damaged. Re-Tree was formed and included a volunteer army of planters to replace what was lost. 30,000 trees (matched by the same number by the municipalities) that were funded and planted manually by volunteers was the goal. The effort actually took thirteen years and was celebrated in 2019. The City of Buffalo still needs many trees planted along the byways and in our iconic parks. We now only concentrate our efforts within the city. We are a program of the 501 (c) 3 Buffalo Green Fund.



Widow and Widowers Circle

At this point we are not meeting at all but I am available by email (collinsb@buffalo.edu) or by phone (648 4455) or text (867 9628). Rev. Joan has offered the church zoom for a meeting if there is enough interest. Let me know by email, phone, or text if you want such a meeting. Stay safe! Namaste, Bonnie



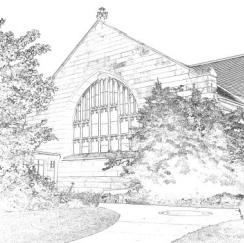


**We gather in loving community, inspiring one another,
to transform ourselves, to create a more just and
compassionate world**

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

695 Elmwood Ave. Buffalo New York 14222

716-885-2136 www.buffalouu.org

Minister: Rev. Joan Montagnes minister@buffalouu.org	Administrator of Facilities and Communication: Ashley Mountcastle office@buffalouu.org	Director of Religious Education: Sarah Martin lifespan@buffalouu.org	Music Director: Daniel Bassin music@buffalouu.org
Care Network: Ginny Vaughan 716-768-1077 wixsonsg@gmail.com	Gatekeeper: Sara Kirkland office@buffalouu.org	Administrator for Finance: Donna Sentz donnasentz@buffalouu.org	Organist/ Accompanist: Jonathan Vogtle
Nursery Care Coordinator: Morgan Silver		Newsletter (submissions due by the 15th) newsletter@buffalouu.org Weekly Announcements (submissions due by NOON Wednesday) announcements@buffalouu.org	



**A chalice alit since 1831
A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places**