

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

July 2020 Newsletter

Gather ~ Inspire ~ Transform



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Minister's Column: What Does it Mean to be a People of Joy?



It is hard work these days to reach deep down into the well to pull up a little joy. Indeed, the well may seem bone dry.

What with the pandemic claiming lives of some of our loved ones and keeping us away from others, grief is at the forefront of our minds.



And then there is the “unprecedented” political climate.

And the great righteous uprising that calls us to justice in the face of murderous racism.

That's a lot to bear. The well of joy may seem bone dry.

And so, this is exactly when we need to dig a deeper well. We may even need to dig a new well. We will not, cannot survive this pandemic, or get out of our current political pickle, or dismantle the structures of white supremacy if we don't find joy and get it on our side. We need to be the People of Joy.

Anger, guilt, defensiveness, blame, and hopelessness are only going to get us so far. We can yell, point fingers, and burn the whole thing down, but if we don't sing, dance, love and laugh then we will tear ourselves apart body and soul.

The revolution has songs that lift the spirit. Laughter will give you energy to carry on. Dancing shakes the shakes and the nasties away. And the transformative power of radical love can overcome all fear, hatred and oppression.

Give yourself permission to seek and find joy. It will save you, the ones you love and your community.

Yours in faith and affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Sunday Morning Worship Online

Join us for worship at 10:30am on Sundays; either by computer at <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/367428065> or phone +1 646 876 9923 and use the password 367428065

Pulpit Previews

July 5: Discovering Joy, Rev. Joan Montagnes

"Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" is a well-known phrase in the United States Declaration of Independence. As Dr. Phil would ask, "How's that working for you?"

July 12: Thriving on Joy, Julie Taylor

Donald Trump acquitted. Kobe died. Australia on fire and koalas burning. Coronavirus. Quarantine. Millions lose jobs. No toilet paper. 100,000+ dead. Tiger King. Kids learning at home. Face masks. Murder hornets. Armed gunmen at the Michigan capital. George Floyd. Protests.

Are you exhausted yet? We all are. There's one practice that can help us cultivate the resilience. Let's look at how we can practice joy every day, and how joy can be the difference between surviving and thriving.

July 19: Destroying the Towers to Create a New World, Rev. Lynn Acquafondata

A spiritual perspective on systemic change drawing from psychology, Buddhism and the play of children.

July 26: Being a Faithful Fool, Hy Carrel

How joy and justice meet on the street? The Faithful Fools ministry was founded in California out of unlikely pairing of Franciscan Catholicism and Unitarian Universalism.

Joys and Sorrows

Our hearts are with Bill and Liz Parke and their family. Bill's father, the Rev. David Parke, passed away on June 6. We are grateful for the many gifts he has given our community and our faith.

We send healing thoughts to Raife Kockrille. Raife has recently been seriously ill in hospital. May his recovery be speedy and uneventful.

Our compassion is with Tom, John, and Laura Petrocelli, Maria Testa and all their loved ones. Tom's mother, Doris, passed away on May 12. In addition to being a mom, she was a Catholic religious educator, theologian and editor at the Paulist Press.

Our thoughts are with Tom and Louise Yots. Tom's brother, John, died on June 16th.

Our thoughts are with Brigitte Bachmann and her family. Brigitte, a soloist in our choir for many years, passed away.

We send our sympathies to Laurissa Gereinder, whose grandfather died in June.

Congratulations go to the Rev.s Tim Ashton and John Rex who are celebrating their 50 and 25 year anniversary of ordination in the Unitarian Universalist ministry respectively. We are grateful for all they have given to our faith over the years and continue to give.

Joyfully we announce the birth of Zoé Elise Lavoie to Julia Gallagher and Paul Lavoie.

Brown Bag Lunch with the Minister

Every day, 7 days each week, at 12pm, Rev. Joan hosts a lunchtime get together on zoom. Bring a sandwich and a cup of coffee. Visit with old buddies and make new friends. See each other's smiling faces, share your worries, tell your stories, gain insights, and have some laughs. Everyone is very welcome.

To attend, click this link <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/138000249> follow the prompts and you'll be at lunch.

Or if your computer doesn't have a camera or mic, you can just dial in on your phone, +1 646 876 9923, the meeting ID is 138 000 249

It will be great to be with you!

Rev. Joan's Identity Used and Abused!

Many emails that look like they are from Rev. Joan have gone out to church members asking for emergency assistance in the form of gift cards. They are not from Rev. Joan. Rev. Joan will never:

- Ask you for gift cards via an email
- Send you an email on an account ending with gmail.com – **trust only her buffalouu.org account**

If you receive one of these emails, block the sender so they will be unable to send you any more requests. Sadly, there is nothing the church can do to stop the emails because they do not come from the church.

Religious Education & Adult Faith Development News



Sarah Martin, Director of Religious Education

Are you ready to find out what we've got coming up in Religious Education this summer and fall? We've been working hard to come up with a plan and we are thrilled to share with you what we have so far!

SUMMER RE

Our religious education plans for this summer are underway, but the best part is that you are welcome to join us at any time!

Family Religious Education

Each Sunday at 1 pm, meet us on Zoom. We'll explore our Unitarian Universalist roots, the values that bring us together as a faith, and create community together. Children are welcome to come by themselves, but we encourage families to attend together!

Join Zoom Meeting, Sundays at 1pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85457907859?pwd=ZDlhQ1dpS3ZwNnJUzB6dW1VRXVwdz09>

Meeting ID: 854 5790 7859

Password: 038746

Coming of Age

Our rising 8th and 9th graders have begun their journey of personal spiritual exploration. This summer, they'll be meeting at 6 pm on Sundays, twice a month, to discover what Unitarian Universalism means to them, create personal faith credos, and beginning planning the fundraising they'll do to support their heritage trip to Boston in June, 2021. If you know an upcoming 8th or 9th grader who would like to participate in this program, please email lifespan@buffalouu.org.

RE PROGRAMMING FOR 2020-2021

Though we won't be meeting in person at the church on Sunday mornings, we will provide a wide range of programming to fit our families' needs. Most classes will have monthly packets that can be picked up at the church or mailed to you if time/distance is an issue. These packets will include stories, materials that can be used alongside online classes or on their own, and activities for families to engage in religious education together. Because we will offer many of these classes at different times, students will be able to participate in more than one age-appropriate class if they choose.

PLEASE REGISTER NOW FOR 2020-2021 RE! Early registration will make sure we can connect with families and prepare enough monthly packets. It will also help us tailor our programming to best fit the needs of your children and youth. You can register at the following link: <https://forms.gle/4MjbNRKERWRdD2Hr5>

Though we may adjust some of these offerings based on enrollment and interest, here is what we hope to offer for our children and youth programming:

PreK - Online storytime and craft a couple of times a month and packets for families to use offline.

Spirit Play (K-2) - Online class a couple of times a month and packets of stories/manipulatives that can be used during sessions or at home.

Workshops (K-5) - Online classes that engage with monthly themes and rotate through Music, Art, Science, and Social Action sessions, activity packets that can be used alongside classes or on their own.

Graphic Novels (4th-8th Grade) - Online class meetings and take-home packets that will encourage spiritual exploration, deepen knowledge of Unitarian Universalist History, and call us to action based on our UU values, all while creating original graphic novels and stories.

To Be Determined Class for 6th-7th Graders - Based on need, desire, and class size, we are considering alternate programming to fit the needs of our rising 6th and 7th graders.

Coming of Age (8th-9th Grade) - (Already in progress but open to new members) Class meets twice a month online, exploring their journeys as Unitarian Universalists and developing their personal faith credos. This class involves fundraising for an end of the year heritage trip to Boston (June 2021, hopefully!)

High School Youth Group (9th-12th Grade) - Our high school youth meet weekly to check in with one another, have fun together, engage in social justice actions, and plan or participate in local and regional youth conferences with other UU youth. All high school youth are welcome to join. Email lifespan@buffalouu.org to get connected with our high school youth group.

Volunteer Now!

We are actively looking for volunteers to help facilitate several of these classes!

Volunteer requirements are as follows:

- * Consent to a background check
- * Roughly 2-4 hours on Zoom per month leading classes
- * A small amount of planning/prep time, usually carried out over email, during the month

If connecting with our fabulous children and youth over Zoom a couple of times a month sounds like a great way for YOU to serve our congregation, or if you'd like more information about volunteering for RE, please email lifespan@buffalouu.org today!

Adult Faith Development

IMPORTANT UPDATE! Michael Harris's Shakespeare class –

NEW DATES for the Stratford films (bolded):

Session Eight (July 1): “Mad world! mad kings! Mad composition!”:

King John (1594-6) Film shown **June 18-July 9.**

Session Nine (July 8): “Few love to hear the sins they love to act.”:

The Adventures of Pericles (1607-8) Film shown **June 25-July 16.**

Session Ten (July 15): “Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety.”:Antony and Cleopatra (1606) Film shown **July 2-July 23.**

Session Eleven (July 22): “A plague o’ both your houses!”:

Romeo and Juliet (1595-6) Film shown **July 9-30.**

Session Twelve (July 29): “I come to wive it wealthily in Padua.”: The Taming of the Shrew (1593-4) Film shown **July 16-August 6.**

UU and You

Are you brand new to Unitarian Universalism, or to the UU Church of Buffalo? Have you been around for a long time but would like to deepen your connection to your UU roots, past and present? We had to cancel our May class due to facilitator emergencies, but we’re planning to reschedule soon. If you’d like to learn more about where your spiritual journey fits in to Unitarian Universalism, and you want to be notified as soon as we reschedule the class, please email lifespan@buffalouu.org. (If you were already registered for the May class, you will be automatically notified when we reschedule.)

Tuesday Night Memoir Group

Our Tuesday Night Memoir Group is getting the band back together and there’s only one thing missing. YOUR stories! If you’re interested in joining this group for Zoom meetings, please email lifespan@buffalouu.org.

Facilitators and Tech Assistants Wanted for Online Fall Adult Faith Development Classes



We've gathered some great information about what you're looking for in adult programming at the UU Church of Buffalo, and now we need to facilitators and tech assistants to help make it happen. Do you have an area of expertise in Spiritual Development, UU History, UU Theology, or a skill to share? If you're interested but fear you don't have the experience to make it happen, don't worry, we can provide premade curriculum or Zoom training! If you have an idea for a great class you'd like to offer, we'd love to work with you on that, too! Email lifespan@buffalouu.org for details.

**When Is An Auction Not Just An Auction?
When it's the
UUCB FUN & FELLOWSHIP CELEBRATION !**



**The Summer Edition of The UUCB Fun and Fellowship "ROLLING" AUCTION Catalogue
will soon be here!**

With a focus on sharing the great outdoors with our UUCB friends and family, *SUMMER 2020* offerings will include hikes, tours, and picnics. Events are being planned with consideration of small gatherings, with safe distancing, mask-wearing and maintenance of personal health and safety. Check the weekly e-blast newsletter for details about when the catalogue will be available and the nuts & bolts of the bidding process.

If you already have a Bidder Number from previous auctions (you keep the same number from year to year), you will use that number to place your bids. A listing of previous bidders and their bidder numbers will be attached to the next e-blast, and will be available on the website. **If you do not already have a number**, e-mail JVW61@aol.com to register for your exclusive UUCB Auction Bidder Number.

It's not too late to Be a Donor! Donors play an essential role in our success. We wouldn't have an Auction without you! We are looking for ideas for our FALL & WINTER catalogues and would love to include something from you – a new twist to an item you have offered in the past, or something brand new! If you have not donated an item or event to the Auction before, this is the year to jump in! Our Auction team will enthusiastically help you crystallize your ideas!

Prepare to Be a Bidder! Check the weekly e-blast for articles reminiscing about shared times in past auctions, and for details of our 2020 Auction and Fundraising Delights!

Be a "Creative Force"! Share your ideas for how to make the 2020 Auction a success! Contact the Auction Team through Juli Van Woert JVW61@aol.com, Maria Testa marialtesta@gmail.com or Andrea Burke-Harris aburkeharris@gmail.com.

Don't miss out on the fun! Thank you for your generosity and support

UAIM – Accessibility and Inclusion Ministry News

The Americans with Disabilities Act is 30 years old this month. Before the ADA was signed, the disabled community fought for many years to be heard. When President Bush signed the ADA, the disabled community was very hopeful. When President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act, the disabled community was again hopeful that more people would be eligible for health care. Judy Heumann in her book, Being Heumann, talks and describes the long process disabled groups took before the ADA was signed.

Since Donald Trump has become President, he has defunded parts of Obama Care which are vital for people with disabilities. He has also created administrative barriers regarding the ADA and Social Security Disability to reduce their effectiveness. This has left millions of disabled people struggling to keep living independently. A majority of disabled people use Medicaid to pay for Care Aides. Medicaid pays for more than half of in-home service which keeps disabled people living independently, which was an important goal of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In-Home Aides assist disabled people with Activities of Daily Living (bathing, feeding), preparing meals and driving to work or outside activities

Joe Biden who is running for President has put out a plan that would expand access to home and community-based services including hiring additional caregivers. His plan also would build on Obama Care. Senator Tammy Duckworth (who is disabled) recently said, "I'm proud to see Joe Biden advance his disability rights agenda that will help break down the barriers that remain in our country for many Americans with disabilities."

Hopefully in the future, the Americans With Disabilities will be respected and expanded. Disabilities Rights are Human Rights. People with Disabilities only want to be inclusive and accessible to all. They want to be value for their abilities and not be seen as disabled.

Issues related to individuals with disabilities are above all human rights. People with disabilities have a right to live their lives with dignity and with as much independence as they are capable of. Hopefully in the near future Federal policies will be aligned for this to occur.

Social Justice Ministry

During this time of pandemic, many of us are squeezed to the limit juggling the responsibilities of work and managing children all day. But some of us have had our "down" time expand and are looking for meaningful ways to contribute to the community while maintaining physical distancing recommendations and staying healthy.

The Justice Ministry Team invites you to join our newly formed Advocacy Team. As a member of the team, you will contact legislators, policymakers, friends, family, and neighbors in order to advance a justice cause. This may take the form of phone calls, emails and/or postcards and you will be expected to contribute in only those ways you feel comfortable and have the time to devote.

Please contact Kathy Taylor (ktay0409@gmail.com or 203 605-1544) to join the **Advocacy Team**.

Share-the-Plate July - [RAPP](#)

Our Justice Ministry team is excited to dedicate our July Share-the-Plate to **Release Aging People in Prison (RAPP)**. Formerly incarcerated persons and advocates for those with long sentences founded RAPP based on the firm belief that no human being is disposable. WNY regional organizer Donna Robinson tirelessly supports her daughter and other women incarcerated at Bedford Hills, while working toward fair and timely parole, elder parole, and to transform the criminal justice system together.

Family Promise – Great News!

Family Promise to reopen week of August 3 with doubled capacity!

If you'd thought of volunteering for Family Promise, but hadn't signed up, or you are one of our treasured, magnificent volunteers who have cooked, or helped in other ways, we have great news. The week of August 3, the Center at 75 Hickory Street will reopen with three more new bedrooms and baths. Our church has volunteered to be the first returning group of cooks, and to be "on call", as needed. FP Executive Director loves UU volunteers because our nonjudgmental, welcoming approach shows "we get it". Your role would be making a simple meal with a co-chef I will provide for you. It a most rewarding volunteer experience!

Although the center will now have a capacity of six families, the Executive Director will start with one family. If you prefer to just drop off the makings of a supper meal, that's OK, too. Our church will offer suppers Monday- Thursday, with different volunteers each night, August 3-6. Interested? Email Nancy Wilkins at <mailto:nlaurienwilkins@yahoo.com>.

Family Promise provides temporary lodging and connections to community agencies for families who are seeking permanent homes, in partnership with a network of a handful of host/support churches. It is one of only two shelters which keeps families together, not separating fathers and mothers. Our church 's magnificent volunteers provide meals and friendship to the families, and meet some courageous and loving parents in the process. In March, new arrivals were suspended after all the current families had found homes, due to concern over Covid-19 . The week of August 3, the center will welcome families again to the newly expanded site, which will provide private bedrooms and baths for up to six families.

Nancy Wilkins, Coordinator, UUCB Family Promise

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

BLACK LIVES MATTER

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

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A chalice alit since 1831

A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places

