



Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

AUGUST 2021 NEWSLETTER

Gather - Inspire - Transform



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



I don't know about you, but when I think of August, I think of Abundance – of plump peaches, tender green beans, early apples, a rainbow of peppers, bursting blueberries, plums, grapes, eggplant, squishy-sweet figs, and zucchini. Just give me a saltshaker and a basket of garden ripe tomatoes and I enter a state of incomparable bliss. One might easily ask, "How could I possibly deserve such delight?"

And this summer is especially lovely. After a long lonely fifteen months of solitude, to finally feast in the company of friends and families. To feed your body, mind and spirit with all the gifts of community. What good, great fortune! "How could I possibly deserve to be so lucky?"



Well, Abundance isn't something you deserve or not. It isn't something you earn. Abundance just is. As long as we don't mess the environment up too much (which we do), as long as we don't get too greedy (which we do), as long as we care about our neighbors (which we don't), Abundance is, well... Abundant.

Sadly, as poet Amanda Gorman reminds us, our "the norms and notions of what just is isn't always just-ice." Climate change, forest fires, substance abuse, building collapse, poverty, hunger, lack of health care, lack of compassion: these are all forms of scarcity in our community and every one of these social ills brings systematized racial inequity into clearer, more agonizing focus.

Abundance isn't something you deserve or earn. It just is, if... if we become the people we need to be to bring about the world we want to see. If we become a People of Abundance, then we will treat the earth as if our lives and the lives of future generations depended on its health. If we become a People of Abundance and share our blessings gratefully, there will be more than enough for all. If we become a People of Abundance, we will not be afraid to enter into honest conversation about our differences and the possibility of deeper relationships. If we become a People of Abundance and care for our neighbors (no matter their political leanings, mental health, dress code, smelliness, or prickliness) then Abundance will fall upon each and all and we will live at last in the beloved community.

We are deep into summer. From every direction, the humid voice of Nature is bellowing Abundance like a million fog horns of plenty. Just open your mouth and take a bite, let the juice drip down your chin. Dare to go full-face into a watermelon and spit the seeds where you will. Let the sun dry sticky sweet and glory in the bliss that you don't deserve and didn't earn but is all yours anyway.

Then in then in the golden light of the fading day, rise baptized by the season's lavishness, transformed, ready to be a Person of Abundance to serve the world.

Yours in Faith and Affection, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Joys and Sorrows

Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are with Gigi Helliwell and all the family and friends of Georgia Pooley. Georgia, a member of our congregation, and woman full of strength and grace passed away in July.

We also hold in our hearts all the loved ones of George Block. George passed away last month. He was a devoted member of the choir and of the church.

We will celebrate the life of John Segman, husband of Arlene Miles, beloved friend and active member of our congregation, on Sunday, August 1, 2pm.

We will celebrate the life of Dr. Carl Granger, beloved member of our congregation, on Saturday, August 28, 10am.



Pulpit Previews

Aug 1: Many Doors and Many Stories, Tracey Kassman

"A boy at the beginning of the story has no way of knowing that the story has begun." When we look at the story of our lives, are there doors we left unopened? If we had opened them and began a different adventure would the story we told ourselves about ourselves and our world have been changed? Is it too late to go back and open that door? Are there other doors waiting ahead? Are there other stories we can tell?

Aug 8: The Hilarious World of Depression, Shaun Doyle

Many people who live with anxiety and depression every day are found saying "hey listen, if you can't laugh about it..." and Shaun has found this to be true. Come to hear Shaun's personal story from childhood anxiety to Brylin Hospital and beyond.

Aug 15: After So Much, Athena McCrory

Post 2020 so many things have changed; our world, our society, and ourselves. As we emerge from our individual worlds of isolation into the larger world, we will be encountering others that, while they may have lived through similar times, will have had very different experiences. Let us take the time to reflect on how we can heal from our own traumas while respecting the healing processes of others.

Aug 22: Buried Treasure, Charlene Montgomery

Who of us can resist a good pirate story seeking a buried treasure?! Our yearning for spiritual riches in abundance may lead us to the buried treasure in our hearts, in our homes, and in the world. We already possess these treasures – we may just need a map to find them.

Aug 29: Abundant Summer, Rev. Joan Montagnes

Reflect upon how our gardens grow – washed by the rain, supported by the earth, fed by the sun, inspired by the air. It's alchemy! And it's delicious fuel for our body, minds and souls. Magic!

DRE Search Committee Update August 2021

Acting Director of Religious Education



Wonderful News! Lisa Peterangelo is joining our staff team as Acting Religious Education Director. Her first day will be August 1. Lisa is a Unitarian Universalist from the East Aurora congregation, she holds a master's in early childhood education, she has a passion for justice, and is studying to be a minister! Lisa will lead our faith development program for all ages. If you are interested in meeting Lisa, please give her a call at 716-885-2136. If you are interested in supporting the Children and Youth ministry or leading a class in Adult faith development, or if you are interested in serving on the Religious Education ministry team. Please contact Lisa. She will be delighted to hear from you.

Office Administrator

We regret to inform you that Ashley Mountcastle, our Administrator for Facilities and Communication, resigned from her position effective August 1. We apologize for any lack of service you may experience while we work to fill the position. The eblast may not come out on schedule.

Ashley served our congregation with care and deep concern for more than a year, during some of the most difficult months our community has experienced. She worked with countless volunteers to keep the building healthy and information flowing. We are fortunate and grateful for the time she was on our staff team.

If you know someone who might be interested in a half-time, clerical position. Please let Rev. Joan know minister@buffalouu.org

Adult Education



“GO WEST, YOUNG MAN!”

The History, Mythology & Art of The American West

Michael Harris, instructor

Sponsored by Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo
11 Online Zoom Meetings; Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

June 2 to August 18, 2021 (no class on June 23)

Cost: \$75 for full course, or \$10 per session

We examine the westward expansion of 19th century America, and how it shaped our nation's character and imagination – the folks who settled there, the legendary figures of the West, and the artists who captured the spirit of this new-found land!

To register, send your check, made out to UUCB, to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo, 695 Elmwood Avenue, 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.

Music Notes – August 2021

Daniel Bassin, Music Director



In this final month of our summer services, we consider the question, What Does it Mean to Be a People of *Abundance*? Our UUCB community is, indeed, *abounding* in spiritual depth and social commitment. And, when we **gather** together for worship, we know we can count on **inspiration** from our *abundant* Music Ministry and **transformative** experiences from being together.

We begin this month of *Abundance* on Sunday, August 1st, when Worship Associate, Tracey Kassman takes the pulpit for her service, *The Starless Sea: Many Doors and Many Stories*. Service music centers jazz classics by Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus, Miles Davis, and Bill Evans, and features Helen Lowry and Paul Zanolli's rendition of Joan Baez's *Diamonds and Rust*. Keyboardist, Jonathan Vogtle, will join forces with Alto Soloist, Helen Lowry, and guest multi-instrumentalist, Paul Zanolli in a service *abundant* with story, depth, and connection.

Service music in Shaun Doyle's service on August 8th, *The Hilarious World of Depression*, uplifts the musical voices of Thelonious Monk and Robert Schumann, two brilliant pianist-composers separated by genre, geography, and about a century, but whose experience with mental health struggles influenced both in terms of the scope of their careers as well as the range and depth of expression in their creative output. Soloist, Helen Lowry will offer up the tune *What a Difference a Day Made*, and we'll conclude the service with our in-house brass-and-keys duo performing *When You're Smiling*.

Athena McCrory's service on August 15th, *After So Much* will feature music that centers bluesy expressions from the depth of the soul – in her words, "An old school...revival feel - more of a church basement than a choir loft." Keyboardist, Jonathan Vogtle, and your Cornette and Trumpet playing Music Director will be providing the music for this service, but you all better sing and stomp and clap along!

On August 22nd, Charlene Montgomery offers us...*Buried Treasure*! This Sunday, Keyboardist, Jonathan Vogtle, is also taking a much-deserved vacation, so keep a lookout for updates about special guest musicians and music for this service.

Finally, we conclude the month with Rev. Montagnes's return to our pulpit for her service, *Abundant Summer*. Several of our Soloists and Choir members will be contributing music to this service, and we look forward to sharing our gifts and celebrating the end of summer with each of you!



August Share-the-Plate: [Journey's End](#)



Journey's End was founded in 1985 and has served well over 100,000 refugees and their families in our vibrant immigrant community. Journey's End provides refugees with the resources and support they need to become successful, active, and productive members of our community by providing them with case management assistance when they first arrive. These services include finding affordable housing, scheduling necessary medical and social service appointments, introducing them to resources in the community, employment services, and setting up bank accounts. Journey's End also provides education programs and immigration legal services. They are working on translating Buffalo walking tour maps into other languages to better serve our international tourists. Journey's End also has an urban farm run by refugees on Brewster Street. Journey's End also founded and hosts the Western New York Refugee Film Festival. It is all virtual and free. Check out the schedule at wnyrff.org.

Every Sunday during the month of August, we will be collecting school supplies for Journey's End. The most needed items are new **backpacks**, preferably in neutral colors. Other school supplies needed are pencils, pens, notebooks, loose leaf paper, crayons, and markers. **New and unopened, please.** This is a great time of year to find these items on sale or at discount stores.

Our Generous Congregational Gifts!

Thank you to our generous congregation! In May we raised \$291 for Literacy Buffalo Niagara to help with their good work of helping adults reach functional literacy so they can reach their goals and break the inter-generational cycle of low literacy and poverty.



Emergency Mental Health Hotlines

If you or someone you know needs help, Crisis Services' Emergency Mental Health Hotline can assist with individuals who are currently experiencing or have recently experienced, a mental health crisis. For their 24 hour hotline call 716-834-3131. For assistance with addiction and substance use issues call their 24 hour-addiction hotline at 716-831-7007.



BOARD REPORT

Greetings from the Board! Here we are at last! Coming back to in-person worship feels like coming home. Looking around our beautiful sanctuary and seeing our pews full of people eager for connection and community, our hearts are grateful. Rev. Joan was verklempt as she led our congregation into our first day back together. The sermons and songs luxuriated along at an unhurried pace as we all savored the simple pleasure of being together. It feels good! Getting UU's into church in the summer is no small feat! For folks who choose to attend via Zoom, the service is still online, thanks to our tireless tech team. Milling around afterwards for an al fresco coffee hour in our garden, we met plenty of others who were so glad to join in this community in person. I highly recommend it!

In other news, the board is currently reviewing our policy book and making sure that our language, priorities and procedures are appropriate and up to date. Unfortunately, we did not receive the capitol campaign grant we applied for. There is always next year! We thought you **might** be interested in some of the ways our historic church building helps further our UU values in our larger community: ***“UUCB annually hosts meetings of 24+ organizations (many, multiple times) in our Parish Hall. For the past 12 years, UUCB has participated in Family Promise, housing and feeding up to 12 homeless families/year. Our families often find permanent housing within 7 weeks. We are one of 66 local faith-based congregations and other organizations comprising VOICE, whose current focus is to overcome a history of abuses in Buffalo’s criminal justice process. Among its goals: stemming the delinquency to prison pipeline. The most active voting location in Buffalo, UUCB has been a polling place for decades. As part of our Certified Universal Accessibility and Inclusive Ministry, we conduct assessments of other polling sites to increase voter access.”***

Martha Malkiewicz, Tracey Kassman, Kathleen Powers, Michael Hill, Bridget Evans, John Petrocelli, Lynn Mancuso



Widow and Widowers Circle - Gathering of Grievers, Sept 12 at noon!



Because it is important that grief be shared to help integrate it into our lives, we are having a gathering of grievers. This is an enlargement of the Widows Group that we had before the pandemic. Now lets gather all grievers, no matter the source of our grief, on Sunday Sept 12th at noon in the Alliance Room to share our sorrow and offer support to each other. (Bring your lunch if you would like). For more info contact me via email (collinsb@buffalo.edu) or phone or text (716 867 9628). Namaste, Bonnie Collins

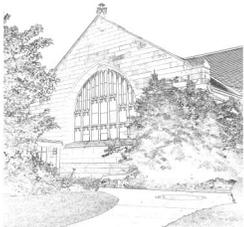




**We gather in loving community, inspiring one another,
to transform ourselves, to create a more just and
compassionate world**

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo

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<p>Nursery Care Coordinator: Morgan Silver</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter (submissions due by the 15th) newsletter@buffalouu.org</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Weekly Announcements (submissions due by NOON Wednesday) announcements@buffalouu.org</p>	



A chalice alit since 1831

A sanctuary on the National Registry of Historic Places

