



The Chalice and the Flame

Diverse people. Diverse beliefs. One community.

A Monthly Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem, OR

September 2020

Live Streamed Services Begin Sunday September 6 and Fellowship Zooms In September 13!

A new way to see the Sunday service and means of connecting are coming in September: Starting September 6, fingers crossed, we will be live streaming the service on Sunday mornings at 10:30. To watch the service, you'll click on a link on the website, just like watching the recording, but now it will be live!!" A recording that can be viewed on YouTube at a later date will also be available.

And..... Have you been missing the Fellowship Time after the services? Well, fear not, we will be Zooming to your living room soon for a virtual Zoom Fellowship Time after services, starting with our Water Communion Service on September 13.

Be on the lookout for more information on both the live stream and how to Zoom in and see old and new friends!

~The Worship Team and Connections Team

No LRE September 6

LRE is taking the week of September 6 off to prepare for the new program year, which will begin the week of September 13. If you've been attending the LRE Family services on Sunday mornings, you'll be notified of the new program plans. Watch our website and This Week emails for updates. If you have questions, you can contact DLRE Lily Walker at dlre@uusalem.org.

Re-imagining Water Communion

Every year, the UUCS Congregation gathers together to participate in a Water Communion Ritual that inaugurates a new year of worship, programming, and learning together as a sacred community. It is a tradition dear to the hearts and minds of UUCS, and it is part of our identity and history as a faith community. However, it is also one of those things that is difficult to accomplish over Zoom and at a safe social distance!

This year, the Worship and Production Team plans to put together a video ritual for this September 13 service, by scrapbooking together a collage of images and dedications submitted via email. But, in order to do this, **we need your help!**

Consider a water source special to you and your family where you have participated in reflection, refreshment, and/or had your spiritual cup replenished this summer. Email a photograph of some angle of this water along with your dedication words to **Lily Walker at dlre@uusalem.org by Friday, September 4 at 5 pm.**

The dedication words are, "This water represents, or comes from..."

Thank you for adding your offerings to UUCS Water Communion Ritual this year!

Sign Up Now for World Religions Class

For this church year, Rev Rick and Don Wolfe will be co-leading an adult RE class using Huston Smith's *The World's Religions*. This class will meet via Zoom on the last Tuesday of each month beginning September 29 from 6:30 - 8 pm. The required text for this class is available at Powell's Booksellers for \$11.95 + shipping, and in Kindle format from Amazon at \$6.99. Financial aid is available for those in need. [Click here to register for the class.](#)

A Friendly Reminder to Wear Masks In the Building

A friendly reminder to all that, if you are inside the building, you need to wear a mask at all times! If you have a personal workspace (desk or private office) you can remove your mask at your workspace as long as social distancing can be observed. This is not only for the well-being of our staff, but also an important measure to keep the children and their families safe when we move around the shared spaces.

Women's Retreat Scholarship Fundraising

The BottleDrop returnable beverage container fundraiser is now benefiting the Women's Retreat Scholarship Program. Email Janet Stevens at stevens.janet.kay@gmail.com to request bags for your recyclable containers.



Reverential Ramblings

~ Rev. Richard Davis, UUCS's minister

We enter this new congregational year under dark clouds hovering above our nation and world. There is the pandemic which socially separates us, economically devastates many and claims precious lives. In the looming presidential election, our very democracy seems at stake and widespread social unrest continues across the nation. I'm logging in extra time on my meditation cushion just to stay spiritually grounded during this turbulent, divisive time.

Yet we are resilient, creative and adaptive. Indeed, being forced by circumstances to meet online has led us to discover new opportunities to connect.

First, I'm thrilled to announce that two speakers with national/ international profiles have accepted my invitation to speak online at two of our Sunday Services this fall – something that wouldn't have been feasible for them in person. What led me to invite our two speakers is not their renown, but their character, courage and graciousness. You're in for a real treat!

The Rev. Kate Braestrup, probably the most widely known UU minister in the nation – thanks to her beautifully written, well received books, including *Here If You Need Me: A True Story* – will be sharing a message on **September 20**. I am especially heartened that Kate shares the same concerns as many of us regarding the illiberal, dogmatic, authoritarian trends in the Unitarian Universalist Association. Her voice is authentic, heartfelt and powerful.

On **October 25**, **Irshad Manji** will be engaging with us in a full hour-long Q & A in lieu of delivering a sermon. Irshad burst onto the scene and gained international recognition (and notoriety) with two books—*The Trouble with Islam Today* and *Allah, Liberty and Love*—that promote the ongoing reformation of her religion, Islam. Recognizing the dire need for honest, respectful dialogue, she founded “The Moral Courage Project,” which equips people “to do the right thing in the face of fear.” Her latest book, *Don't Label Me: An Incredible Conversation for Difficult Times*, is a wise and moving antidote for society during these rancorous times. When I spoke with Irshad she asked that her honorarium be used to buy 50 copies of her book to give away to UUCS members so we can read what she has to say and be prepared with our questions. (Look for details soon on how to obtain your copy.)

Also, on the **last Tuesday of each month from September through June from 6:30 to 8:00 pm** UUCS Member **Don Wolf** and I will co-facilitate a year-long exploration of the world's religions using Huston Smith's classic text *The World's Religions* (one of my favorite books!) as our guide. You can order your own copy or, if cost is a factor, contact me and we'll provide one.

One common criticism of our free faith tradition is that, since we lack a creed or dogma and encourage our members to discover or discern their own understandings of life, we UU's simply pick and choose the teachings and beliefs that go down easy. This critique implicitly depicts human nature as inherently selfish and indolent. My experience tells me otherwise: that we all have profound yearnings for deeper understanding and personal growth, and that we choose wisely. Don and I hope that this year-long exploration of humankind's treasure chest of ancient wisdom will expand our awareness of our options and our potential for growth.

Even as we enter this year under dark clouds know that here at UUCS we will keep our chalice lit so we can continue to shine the light of love, truth and compassion on one and all.

Love,
Rick

News of the Community

In a normal year, now is when we are returning from trips, welcoming our friends back from trips, chatting happily with our friends about our summers, and going back to school. This is not a normal year, but we still want to know what our friends have been up to; so, this column tries to fill in some of what we are missing.

Jo Bateman was recently on TV channel CCTV 22. She was one of a few American Association of University Women (AAUW) members whom Gloria Holland interviewed for a documentary, part of an AAUW Oral History Project. They had all been members of AAUW for over fifty years. AAUW in Salem began on the Willamette University campus in Lausanne Hall in 1922, the same year Jo was born.

Besides Jo, there are seven other UUs living at Capital Manor. Sylvia Kline has joined the Garden Committee. Kay Cogswell has made some masks, and Phil Cogswell is chair of the Resident Emergency Committee. The last I heard, there have been *no* cases of the virus at Capitol Manor.

In the "Joys and Concerns" posted on our website Sharon Pierson wrote: "For the last year, our son and daughter-in-law have been living in Beirut. When I first saw the news story about the explosion, I texted them in case they were unaware, as they are currently in France visiting friends and family. I had no idea that it would turn out that their apartment building was well in the blast zone! That news left me with profound gratitude that the coincidences that change our lives worked in our favor this time. Our hearts go out to the people in Beirut whose lives were completely disrupted by this accident. So, I call this a joy for me personally, but it's a terrible tragedy for thousands."

Janet Neuburg is home, recovering well from her head injury. Janet and her daughter, Christianna are grateful for the outpouring of support received and the delicious meals provided by so many. Thank you all.

Alan and Gloria Holland's summer has provided an abundance of garden veggies and lots of pleasant time reading on the back porch. Alan takes his kayak out about once a week and is teaching grandson Arlo (8) to play golf. Gloria enjoys taking granddaughter Fiona (10) to a little farm to feed, walk, and play with the animals. The Hollands are excited to host a little school for Fiona and Arlo's distance learning this fall.

Ed Kramer found that he has raccoons living under his house. They have severely compromised the air conditioning ducts. He says that, because his back problems, he was living a COVID regimen before the virus hit!

This is the time of year when students are returning to, or starting, college. Lilla Seitz was accepted at Southern Oregon University, but because all classes are to be virtual there this semester, Lilla is attending Chemeketa Community College instead, postponing her matriculation in Ashland. Meanwhile, Noah Seitz is returning to his teaching at Pacific University in Forest Grove.

Please send me your news, or news that you may know of others, to gstruble@willamette.edu.

Thanks, George Struble

Help Needed and Appreciated!

Behind the Chalice - The People and the Process

Since March, members of the Worship Team, Music Team, Communications Team, Office Staff and Lifetime Religious Exploration among others have worked together to continue to deliver weekly spiritual services. The experience has strengthened each of our personal spiritual journeys as well as taught us some new technology and the importance of collaboration.

Thanks to Those Who Helped with Recorded Services!

In case you didn't realize who has been helping these past few months, please give a round of applause in your home to:

Rev. Rick and for all the guest speakers he found,

John Prohodsky for helping that first recording day,

Paul Parmley for helping with sound recording of music,

Janet Stevens for weekly recording the music, serving as Celebrant and being guest speaker,

Laura Christian and **Kit Abrahamson** for performing our hymns every week,

Jon Chinburg, **Barbara Stebbins-Boaz** and others for sending in their special music selections,

Doc Hadley for creating slides every week,

Ben Cavaletto and **Cherie Ulmer** for ASL interpretation and editing of closed captioning,

Ben Cavaletto and Lily Walker, DLRE for creating the Children & Family Service
Sharon Pierson and Gil Nicholson-Nelson for doing the Zoom recordings,
Emma and Jo in the office for taking on the final editing and production of the recordings,
Gloria Holland and Lennie Martin for being celebrants, and
Brenna Norval and Barbara Stebbins-Boaz for jumping into the celebrant role while being recorded.

I apologize if I have missed anyone, however I just wanted you to know who was involved. It truly takes a community to create and present the Sunday services.

~ Sara Pickett, Worship Team Chair

Help the Hearing-Impaired Enjoy our Services

Cherie Ulmer is spending considerable time every week making the closed captioning for our Sunday services readable. It would be wonderful if this burden could be shared amongst multiple people (rotating weeks). All you need is an ability to type what you hear. If you're willing to just give this a try, let Rev. Rick or Cherie Ulmer know.

Help Save Our Plants!

A plea from the UUCS indoor plants: *"We are in desperate need of quality care. Since the closing of the building, our care has been neglected. We lack the human interactions, water and nutrients and regular care that we need to thrive. Sadly, some of our fellow indoor friends have died."* If you have any skill at caring for indoor plants, contact Janet Stevens at stevens.janet.kay@gmail.com. Thank you from your green friends!

Microfinance Update

Our UUCS Congregation has transformed the lives of the poorest of the poor and connected our congregation with people in countries around the world through our Microfinance projects since 2008. Please join us for our October 11th service when we will hear from Dr. Francisco Barquero of the NEO Fund. Dr. Francisco is a Fulbright Scholar who received his doctorate in Developmental Economics. He will speak from his home in Nicaragua about the profound impacts of our Microfinance projects.

During the past year, we raised \$5,840 and funded microfinance projects through two non-profit organizations, The NEO Fund in Nicaragua and India, and Chijnaya in Peru. We have helped small – really small! -- businesses obtain low cost loans in Nicaragua, established a pilot microfinance lending program in India, and provided funds for construction of animal sheds in Peru to shield cattle and increase milk production. Our projects have been especially critical during the pandemic, when livelihoods in these countries have been hit hard. When the loans are repaid, the payments go into a revolving fund to provide capital to keep lending to others, thus multiplying the impact of our donation.

Check out our [UUCS Microfinance page](#) (under Connection / Affiliated Ministries) to learn more about the UUCS Microfinance projects.

Here's just one story that illustrates the power of our microfinance project:



Rebecca started cooking traditional Nicaraguan dishes and selling them out of her home 4 years ago. She has taken 3 micro-loans, totaling \$370, to grow her business and now she is applying for a fourth. We asked, "Did the loans help you and your family?" She smiled and said, "Of course! They helped me increase my income and allowed me to buy a refrigerator and to convert from a wood fire to propane. Now my children and I can eat better. We even get to have meat, like chicken and fish. And I can pay for my children's education. A thousand, thousand thanks to God and to you for believing in us."

October is our fundraising month for the year. Share the Plate will be dedicated to the UUCS Microfinance projects, and we will also be accepting direct donations. If you'd like to make a direct donation, click on the Donate menu at the top of the UUCS website and then select "[Make a One-Time Donation](#)". Read the options on this page for how you can make this donation. If you have a PayPal account, consider using the PayPal Giving Fund to avoid the 2.2% usage fee and have 100% of your donation go to UUCS.

You can also donate by check. *Be sure to note on the check that your donation is for the UUCS Microfinance project.* The check should be sent to the UUCS address.

In October, we will be selling exquisite hand-woven silk scarves made by Lao women who received help from our first microfinance project. These scarves, brought back from Carol Doolittle's trip in January 2020, are similar to the very popular scarves we sold several years ago. See the October newsletter for more information about how to buy a scarf.

~ Ann Hanus, UUCS Microfinance Committee Chair

Social Justice News

At its August meeting, the Social Justice Team decided to focus on getting out the vote, early mailing of ballots and removal of School Resource Officers from schools. Removing SROs from schools reduces traumatizing children and goes a long way towards shutting down the school to prison pipeline. Future social justice initiatives being considered include systemic racism and homelessness.

The social justice model that the acting co-chairs want to implement is having the congregation select social justice initiatives to pursue, which the social justice team then implements. This is also the model recommended in UUA's Social Justice Handbook. We want to hear your ideas and we encourage your participation. If you have ideas or are interested in participating the UUCS's social justice activities, email John Prohodsky at jrouu@gmail.com.

UUCS can't solve major social justice issues on its own. We need to work with others to reduce and, hopefully, eliminate injustice. Successful social justice initiatives will form a solid foundation for our social justice program and build credibility that enables us to be respected allies.

We can do more than react to injustices, we can understand why they occur and act to eliminate their causes. A good resource is a free booklet, [Dismantling Democracy](#), written by Donald Cohen, Executive Director of In the Public Interest. It discusses how the conservative movement's actions exacerbated injustice and inequality and it presents ten strategic actions to reduce the conservative movement's influence in order to create a more equal and just society.

Update from Habitat and Hope Village

Many of us are aware of the growing homeless problem in the city. We may even have been moved to contribute money or donate clothing to charities dedicated to helping our neighbors living on the streets. It's in that spirit a few of us have come together, formed a 501(c)(3) corporation, and have drawn up plans that will actually help our displaced neighbors to transition from living on the streets.

This is the first in a series of articles that will explain who we are, what we're doing and how you can help.

Habitat and Hope Village would like to build and operate a transitional housing facility for five single homeless women on an unused portion of the UUCS north parking lot. We call it the Farmhouse Project to reflect its rural location outside Salem's urban growth boundary.

The reasons people become homeless are as varied as the individuals involved, so a proven, one-size-fits-all method of overcoming barriers to permanent housing doesn't exist. One thing we do know: with no safe place to sleep, bathe, cook, do laundry, receive mail or store belongings, and with limited access to health care, our homeless neighbors have a tough time surviving, let alone succeeding economically. We also know that if the unsheltered are returned to housing quickly, they are less likely to become chronically homeless.

HHV uses the term "transitional housing" to mean a clean, safe, secure place for clients to stay while working to overcome their individual barriers to stable and permanent housing. We help them get ready for permanent housing. We will be a program-based facility, not a rental facility. The residents must want to resolve their barriers.

We encourage your comments, further questions and especially your energy and expertise in the areas of community relations and fund raising. With your help, HHV will achieve its vision: To see individuals and families set free from homelessness, become physically and spiritually healthy, and educationally equipped to participate in society and sustain permanent housing.

We know you have many questions about this project. During the year we will post answers to your emailed questions in these Chalice and Flame Newsletters. Please email your questions to Patty Davenport at davenport1790@gmail.com or Paul Wilson at sunspot461@outlook.com.

We have been asked: *What ongoing responsibilities will UUCS have to manage the farmhouse facility and those who live there?*

UUCS has no responsibility to manage the farmhouse facility or the people who live there. Arches will do the case management, and HHV's facility manager will deal with the building upkeep and any problems within the facility between clients and the neighbors. UUCS may want to invite residents over to events at the church, or provide a room for an AA meeting, financial training class, collect clothing/food items or maybe sponsor a crock pot cooking class. The possibilities for mentoring are many.

~Paul Wilson

Splinters from the Board

The August Board meeting was fairly quiet as not much was going on this past month. Here are the few pieces of business that we tended to:

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** was discussed, and the planning committee reported on work to date and anticipated a good turn-out and smooth webinar experience.

Zoom Accounts were established for 2 congregants who participate in multiple team meetings and requested the ability to host their own meetings. All Team Leaders had been approached to determine the need for additional Zoom accounts, and these were the only Team Leaders who responded. Account funds will be drawn from the Contingency Funds of the budget.

Building use funds were discussed as part of the Treasurer's Report. John Prohodsky volunteered to explore ways to promote the use of our building, once it is re-opened. He is interested in exploring this for revenue generation.

The **Cinta contract** was explored with a recommendation by staff to look into different ways to buy janitorial supplies. Staff were asked to determine how to terminate this contract and how to manage janitorial needs.

~ Christine Ertl, Board Chair

Legacy Campaign: What Will be Your Legacy?

On September 27, we begin a Legacy Campaign to help secure our Congregation's financial future. We will be soliciting current gifts and end-of-life provisions to benefit our Endowment Fund and Reserve Funds.

A quarter of a century ago, the previous generation, then a much smaller fellowship, built our beautiful church, and soon after it was built, a bequest from Laura Wells finished paying its mortgage. We added the Barbara Hanneman Fellowship Hall in 2003, and in 2013 finished paying its mortgage. Those were handsome legacies from that generation to us!

Since then, some gifts and bequests have provided a modest financial cushion. Our Endowment is around \$100,000; we have a small Maintenance Reserve and a small Emergency Reserve. You have read in my columns over the last few months about legacies we have received. Those have brought us to this point, but it's time to do more! It's our turn!

We saw in the budget adopted August 23 the need for an Emergency Reserve to carry us through the pandemic emergency. We were very glad to have that reserve. There will be other emergencies; we don't know when. So, we must replenish that Emergency Reserve as well as build the Maintenance Reserve and the Endowment. Those needs will continue far into the future, so end-of-life provisions for them as well as current gifts are effective steps toward our long-range health.

We have the opportunity to build these funds so they can protect us from possible very rough spots. Some of our members have made end-of-life commitments that in time will add about \$735,000 to our Endowment and Reserve Funds. Since we quietly began this campaign, more members have made end-of-life commitments of \$30,000 and current gifts to the Maintenance Reserve of \$10,000. That's a start.

The goal of this campaign is to add \$1,000,000 in current gifts and end-of-life commitments by the end of the campaign on November 22. That's in addition to the \$735,000 committed before this campaign. One couple has made a challenge to us: when the total of the commitments in this campaign reaches \$450,000, they will add another \$50,000. Furthermore, when the commitments reach \$950,000, they will add yet another \$50,000 to bring us to the \$1,000,000 goal.

In about two weeks you will receive a packet in the mail that includes a small booklet showing ways you can make a commitment to this campaign.

We look for very broad participation in this campaign; it is not just for the older or well-to-do among us. Many of us, struggling with family commitments now, could commit a percentage of their estate, or a part of it, like a retirement fund, as an end-of life gift.

Please consider this not only as an opportunity to provide for our Congregation's future. Rising to meet this challenge together can reinforce our feeling of community. The renewed sense of togetherness in these strange, socially distant times – especially in these strange and socially distant times – can help sustain us until we can again have the closer congregational togetherness that we so miss now.

~ George Struble

Worship Services

September Share the Plate Recipient: [Causa](#)

LIVE Service Time: 10:30 am

Sunday, September 6

The Rev. Richard R. Davis

"Only You Can Do It"

Celebrant: Gloria Holland

Music: Kit Abrahamson and Laura Christian

We can't have our annual "Sparkle and Clean" Service on this first Sunday in September, as is our tradition. So, instead of cleaning our facility, I wonder what other job a person could do?

Sunday, September 13

The Rev. Richard R. Davis

"Water Communion"

Celebrant: Janet Stevens

Music: Kit Abrahamson and Laura Christian

In our religious tradition, two unique rituals that bookend our congregational year remind us of our place in the greater scheme of life. Our Flower Communion in June reminds us to feel honest pride in our unique selves and how this enriches the whole. Our Annual Water Communion reminds us to recognize our unique call to serve and participate in something greater than the individual self. (Have a small container of water on hand for participation in our first virtual Water Communion ritual.)

Sunday, September 20

The Rev. Kate Braestrup

"Special Message"

Celebrant: Brenna Norval

Music: Kit Abrahamson and Laura Christian

Rev. Kate Braestrup, author of *Here If You Need Me: A True Story*, *Anchor and Flares: A Memoir of Motherhood, Hope and Service*, *Beginner Grace: Bringing Prayer to Life* and other well received books will be sharing a special message during this time of turmoil. (Also see Rev. Rick's column.)

Sunday, September 27

The Rev. Richard R. Davis

"You Pass This Way But Once"

Celebrant: Barbara Stebbins-Boaz

Music: Kit Abrahamson and Laura Christian

So often the moments of our lives can flow by without our realizing that each one offers us opportunities to bless the whole of life in many ways great and small. Too often, these opportunities are only recognized in retrospect when they are gone. We, too, shall all be gone one day. Yet our beloved congregation, bequeathed to us by those who came before us, will still be here. What opportunities do we have today to endow our future members?

*Services will be streaming **LIVE** starting September 6*

Find the link to watch on our website!

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This issue was edited by Bob Muir with help from Sharon Pierson, Vicki Cunningham, and Elsa Struble. Final formatting completed by S. Pierson.

EVENT SCHEDULING: use the [Event Scheduling Request](#) form on the UUCS website to add your event to the UUCS calendar and/or reserve a UUCS space.

PUBLICITY and ANNOUNCEMENTS: Fill out the [Publication Request](#) form on the UUCS website for any announcement, event or news item. This form is a one-stop place to put a notice in the monthly newsletter, the UUCS website, the *This Week* email and/or Facebook.

DEADLINES:

Newsletter: The deadline for the next newsletter is 8:00 pm on Friday, **October 2, 2020**. **This Week** submissions are due by **Wed.** noon.