



The BEACON

News from the Unitarian Church of Lincoln • July 2020

Summer Sunday Services

When our congregations pivoted suddenly to online worship back in March in response to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, we all had to invent new formats and adapt to new technologies instantly. Many of our ministers, tech staff, and volunteers rose to the occasion with great creativity and skill. Now, during our traditional summer break and study time, we take this opportunity to share our discoveries and learn from each other through a series of virtual visits to Sunday services with a cluster of our neighbor congregations. Through the gift of online worship, you will hear from some of our newest up-and-coming young preachers, and some of our wisest senior colleagues. You will experience how a variety of congregations have embraced the challenges of these new formats. And our sound, video, and streaming tech folks will enjoy a little well-deserved time off. Look for our separate congregational online gatherings to resume in September.

(See page 2 for the remainder of the dates)

July 5 - "What Happens Next" Kendyl Gibbons, All Souls Kansas City, MO

We are all responsible for what happens next, as we reflect on the American experiment in democracy and the historical brutality and denial that has been woven into it. Are we willing to redeem the promises of our founding vision, even at the cost of comfort, in this moment of critical opportunity? Rev. Kendyl Gibbons considers some classic texts from black writers reflecting on being American, assisted by Worship Arts and Music Director Anthony Edwards.

July 12 - "Tragedy + Time" Matthew Johnson, Rockford IL

Scholars of healing have given us a road-map of how both individuals and communities heal from trauma and tragedy. What are the stops on the way, and what paths should we avoid? Where do we go from here? The Rev. Dr. Matthew Johnson is the Senior Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockford. He's joined in leading this service by Tim Anderson, Music Director at the Rockford church.

July 19 - "The Journey for a Better World Continues" Marian Stewart, Columbus OH

Forty years ago, James Baldwin said, "The world is scarcely habitable for the conscious young." He followed with "What shall we do? How shall we begin it? How can it be accomplished? How can one invest others with some hope?" This morning, we will walk with Baldwin and others as we find inspiration to continue the journey for a better world. Rev. Dr. Marian Stewart serves as Sr. Minister of the First UU Church in Columbus, OH. She has also served congregations in Kirkland, WA and on Vancouver Island, B.C. This morning, she will be joined by First UU ministerial, Religious Exploration, and music staff.

*We hope that these messages
from multiple voices
will rouse your spirit and
resonate with your soul!*

(SUMMER SUNDAY SERVICES cont. from page 1)

July 26 - "The Poetics of the World"

Aaron Stockwell, Lawrence, KS

2020 has been quite a year, and there is still more to go. It has shifted how and perhaps why we do congregational life. How can we reflect on the events of the last seven months with a theological angle? What would it mean to think theologically or spiritually as Unitarian Universalists in this time in our society? How can we make sense of it all? Rev. Aaron Stockwell served from 2018 – 2020 as the Interim Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lawrence, KS. By the time of this service, he will have just begun as the Senior Minister of the First Parish in Framingham, MA. Aaron will be joined by staff and lay members of UUCL for this service.

August 2 - "The Wisdom to Know the Difference" Rose Schwab, Shawnee Mission, KS

As religious people, we are not only called to the free and responsible search for truth and meaning, but also to the deep and searching moral inventory. As people the world over struggle to look internally at the ways systemic racism has affected communities of color, we can look to the wisdom of other self-help programs for insights into the difficult work of unworking. Please join us for a service about healing from and coming out of addiction, self-hatred, and self-harm, originally aired during the month of April, 2020. May the wisdoms of addiction ministries shed light on the issues that we as a globe face today, breaking us open to more honest, and open dialogue.

August 9 - "Protest and Prayer: Transformed by Courageous Love" Sarah Ogelsby-Dunnegan, Topeka, KS

The tools we need to transform our communities are the tools of courageous love. Although we think of protest and prayer as different tools, what if we could see protest as a form of prayer and prayer as a form of protest? Rev. Sarah Ogelsby-Dunnegan shares her experiences of the

intersections between prayer and protest and the power of courageous love to transform each of us and all of us as people and communities working for justice and peace.

August 16 - "Anchored Over the Horizon"

Oscar Sinclair, Lincoln, NE

Vaclav Havel wrote that hope ... "transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizons." How do we hold fast to hope, even when it is distant? The Rev. Oscar Sinclair serves the Unitarian Church of Lincoln, Nebraska, and will be joined in leading worship by staff and lay leaders of the Unitarian Church of Lincoln.

August 23 - "Persons or a People?: Tensions Between Individuality & Community in our Churches & Culture" Jonalu Johnstone, Manhattan, KS

The tension between individuality and community crops up everywhere — in our response to the pandemic, in our reactions to racism, in running our congregations. Unitarian Universalists steeped in individualism sometimes struggle with how to make ourselves into a community. How do we equip ourselves to create balance between being persons and being a people? The Rev. Jonalu Johnstone serves as Developmental Minister of the UU Fellowship of Manhattan, KS, and is joined by Music Director Renea Brown and lay members of UUFM.

August 30 - "Making Real Community"

Kevin Jagoe, BuxMont PA

What does it mean to be part of a community and how do we know when we are in fact part of such a thing? Our Great Pause as a society has called into question many of our prior assumptions about religious congregations and all sorts of other ways we are, or are not, part of communities. The Rev. Kevin W. Jagoe serves BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Warrington, PA as their minister and is joined by Music Director John Hook, Accompanist Margaret Lea, and lay members of the BuxMont community.

MEMBER & ADMIN MINISTRY

Spiritual Practice

Spiritual Practice is a 12-session series that helps participants develop regular disciplines of the spirit – practices that help us connect with the sacred. Spiritual Practice affirms religious diversity while seeking unity in our communal quest for meaning and wholeness. Each session lasts about 45 minutes and offers a forum for learning, sharing, and growth that can enrich our personal faith journeys. This course lasts six weeks and meets on Mondays and Wednesdays at 7:00PM on Zoom. To register, email Kelly at memberadmin@unitarianlincoln.org.

The Spiritual Practice schedule is as follows:

- MON 07/06** - Defining Spiritual Practice
- WED 07/08** - Finding Your Spiritual Practice
- MON 07/13** - Keeping Sabbath
- WED 07/15** - Prayer
- MON 07/20** - No class
- WED 07/22** - Meditation
- MON 07/27** - Mindful Walking & Eating
- WED 07/29** - Worship & Ritual
- MON 08/03** - Discernment & Devotional Reading
- WED 08/05** - Hospitality & Belonging
- MON 08/10** - Work & Service
- WED 08/12** - Retreat
- MON 08/17** - Life as Spiritual Practice

Member Info Update

Have you moved in the past year? Have you recently updated your phone number? Since we are now more reliant on technology instead of face-to-face interaction, we want to clean up our member records. You can change your information in Realm. If you don't have access to Realm, email Kelly memberadmin@unitarianlincoln.org. She can verify the information we have on file for you or, better yet, she can help you get into Realm!

Yard Sign Campaign

Sunday, July 12 • NOON - 5:00PM • 6300 A St.

*Thank you for helping us
draw the circle wide!*

If you missed out last month you have another chance to come by church and pick some up! Stop by the church between Noon and 5:00PM on Sunday, July 12.

There are five different yard signs with these phrases on the front and "BE AT PEACE, BELOVEDS" on the back:

- WHERE THERE IS FAITH THERE IS LOVE
- WHERE THERE IS LOVE THERE IS PEACE
- WHERE THERE IS PEACE THERE IS BLESSING
- A BETTER WORLD IS POSSIBLE
- OPEN MINDS, LOVING HEARTS, HELPING HANDS

We did a small re-order for people who missed out in June. Jean has a list of those who requested specific signs and she will make arrangements with them directly. Supplies are limited; and we do not plan to re-order again. If you have any questions, let Jean know - admin@unitarianlincoln.org

Fair Trade Coffee for YOU!?

We have made forward progress with the status of the fair trade coffee! Thanks to an anonymous donor, we were able to deliver 30 bags of coffee to members and friends who needed it last month. Also a handful of people have ordered some to be delivered. However, since an order was placed on March 4 before we knew about the shut down, we still have a lot of coffee. Please let Jean know if you can help! admin@unitarianlincoln.org. We have Fellowship Blend (Regular and Decaf) plus French Roast (Ground and Whole Bean.)

RELIGIOUS GROWTH & LEARNING MINISTRY

Everyday Mindfulness

I have been sending weekly emails to parents and guardians which include a video for children with a story and guided meditation, a reflection, and family discussion questions. This last month has been tough. This was one of the messages which I sent to families. Sometimes we just need a reminder to take some deep breaths.

Reflection:

This week, a family member had an emergency appendectomy. My computer crashed after an icky automatic Windows upgrade. I was in the middle of doing my taxes. My taxes kept saving in places prior to where I had already entered information (I think I entered my driver's license number ten times...) My baby spilled a whole container of blueberries all over the kitchen floor. My 3 year-old was digging in the garden and knocked the baby with a shovel upside the head. (He's fine). My 3 year-old may have broken her collarbone AGAIN for the 2nd time this year...there's nothing that can be done, so we aren't even going in for x-rays. My 5 year-old asks for snacks every 20 minutes even when other food is available to him. It was a week that certainly tested my patience.

Yet...what could I really do about any of this? I breathed. I breathed again. I took MANY long, deep, bottom-of-the-belly breaths. Over and over and over. Taking a moment to step back and just breathe really does take PRACTICE. Being mindful can sometimes just be in that MOMENT. Yet, we need to remind our brains that instead of

getting worked up, breathing or stepping back for a moment is what we should do. I got through this week, clearly.

Here I sit on a lovely rainy day with my cup of tea...and all will be well. When we feel so helpless, breathing really does help. It centers us. It reminds us: I am here. Now. It reminds us of that which we CAN control. So, dear fellow parents, when your child refuses to go to nap, or asks for that Frozen song for the tenth time today...breathe. This too shall pass.

Discussion questions to consider this week:

1. Is there something that happens regularly in your day where you find yourself stressed out and needing to breathe more? Is there something which you can do to adjust that recurring event to make it better?
2. What else in your life has taken practice for you to master? An instrument? A sport? A dance routine? Learning how to play chess? Do you find it challenging to take a step back and breathe? Why is this?
3. What are some simple gifts of ordinary things in your life that you could pause to focus on for a brief meditation? A seashell collected on a vacation to reflect upon your time there? A photo of a loved one? Time spent petting your dog or cat? How about for your children?

Peace, Faith, and Love,

Chelsea

Just Mercy Book Discussion

Every Tuesday, starting July 7 • 7:00PM - 8:30PM

Join us for a weekly Zoom book discussion of Just Mercy, Bryan Stevenson's memoir. The book discussion will begin Tuesday, July 7 from 7:00-8:30 and continue for eight weeks. Contact Jackie Kehl jekehl@hotmail.com or Mary K Stillwell marykstillwell@gmail.com for discussion questions or Zoom links.

Women's Book Club Selections

From Diane Richards

July 11 - Bad Blood; Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup by John Carreyrou

August 1 - The Dutch House by Ann Patchett

August 22 - Dear Edward by Ann Napolitano

Sept 12 - All the Gallant Men by Donald Stratton

October 3 - Olive, Again by Elizabeth Strout

October 24 - In Search of Disobedient Women by Dionne Searcey

Prison Ministry

From Arden Hill

I've been pen pals with an incarcerated person for the past year through the UU's Worthy Now prison ministry. It has been a rewarding and educational experience and I'd like to encourage people to sign up as the program is always in need of more UUs on "the outside." You can send letters via the office in Boston to avoid disclosing your address and can select for and against criteria when being matched. I've greatly enjoyed getting to know my pen pal and we exchange letters about once a month. Now is a great time to reach out to an incarcerated person as the rates of Covid-19 in facilities are horrific. Here is the website: <https://worthynow.org>. I'd be happy to discuss my experiences with folks. Arden Eli Hill on Facebook or ardentmarsupial@gmail.com

Reminder about Board Meetings

Members are welcome to join the Board meeting Wednesday, July 8 at 6:30PM. Contact Jean or Kelly in the church office if you would like the zoom link.

Dear Friends (from Pat Stephen)

Thanks to all of you for the notes, cards and reminiscences that I received on the occasion of my move to Maine. They were greatly appreciated. I plan to visit Lincoln frequently to see family that are here and you will surely see me at church on those visits. With thanks for a great 60+ years in Lincoln with all of you.

Pat Stephen

P.S. My information is in Realm or you can jot it down now if you like.

Patricia H. Stephen

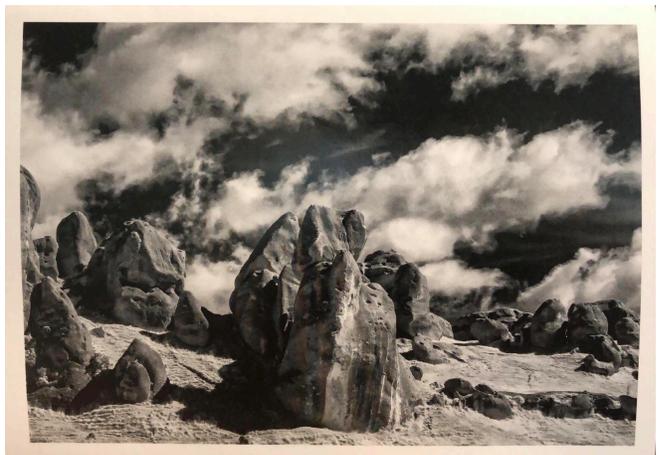
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The card that Pat sent: "Limestone Boulders, Castle Hills, New Zealand, 2014" @Robert Egan

Green Corner

From Marj Willeke

Like so many others, I think about CRISES and my emotional reactions as a white woman of privilege. They range from rage (at police brutality), fear (for the world we will leave future generations), guilt (for not understanding well enough, for not contributing more) and sometimes despair (the challenges are so huge, so embedded in our history and culture). We need to fix our democracy; we need to ensure voting rights. The 'worry' list goes on.

The killing of George Floyd sparked millions of people to take to the streets to protest his violent death at the hands of police and society's ongoing failure to reform the criminal justice system. Systemic racism continues. We have a health crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We have an economic crisis. We have a climate crisis. Mother Nature does not care that we are faced with other emergencies right now! These crises intersect.

"The pandemic, like our civil unrest, has laid bare so much about what is inextricably broken - and interconnected - in our world. In our work to create environmental, climate, and ecological justice, it is clearer than ever that working for racial justice and equity is an integral part. And that following the leadership of front-line communities is key if we are to take down entrenched patterns of power and oppression." - Rev. Cindy Davidson, Board Chair, UU Ministry for Earth

What gives me hope?

Change is possible.

I can do better.

We can do better!

Showing Up for Social Justice

From Jackie Kehl

This month we:

- Showed up at the Black Lives Matter March. Thanks to the 11 people who volunteered to hold and carry our UCL banner.
- Launched virtual letter writing for Write Here! Write Now!

Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, July 15 • 7:00PM • Zoom

All are welcome. If you would like to join us, please contact Jackie Kehl jekehl@hotmail.com so she can send you the Zoom link.

More Information

Write Here! Write Now!

A briefing to discuss the UU Denominational Social Justice Committee (SJC) virtual letter writing project was held on June 5 and covered the **Secure Our Vote!** topic.

Presenters covered the challenges that we face this election year, and the process of writing advocacy letters. In this case, the letters were written to U.S. Senators, encouraging them to support the essential language and funding contained in the U.S. House Heroes Act. Letters are formatted on a submission form and sent to the UUSJ office, where they are compiled and sent on to the designated political offices.

We will inform you of the next opportunity and outline the process. We appreciate your interest!

Keep Informed

To become a friend of the SJC and receive emails about social justice activities/events, sign up for our Google group listserve. Any member or friend of the church may join our group. To find the group, log into Google groups here: <https://groups.google.com>, then search for "Lincoln Unitarian Social Justice". Or contact Jackie Kehl jekehl@hotmail.com to add your name.

Unitarian Church of Lincoln (UCL) Task Force for Dismantling White Supremacy

From Lori Straatmann

The UCL Task Force for Dismantling White Supremacy is a group that was formed in response to the Board of Trustees' discussions around the proposed adoption of the 8th Principle (as shown below and also found at: www.8thprincipleuu.org.)

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

In order to live up to such a powerful statement, the Board felt that we, as a congregation, need to understand all the components that are packed into this principle. It is critical to understand that this Principle goes beyond inviting people of color into our primarily white church or holding a Black Lives Matter sign at a protest is critical. This impactful Principle goes much deeper than simple actions and we, as a church, need to be ready to dive deeply. The task force's directive is to determine what that looks like and subsequently guide our congregation through this journey.

The task force was formed in early March, not knowing that we would be only a step ahead of the calls to action due to racially charged events. The task force is now working with the Social Justice Committee to keep up with protest and march events while working diligently on understanding where each of our personal racial biases present themselves and where we are, as individuals, on our paths to dismantling our own white supremacy. The goals of our group are to identify biases within ourselves and each other to dismantle those

thoughts and behaviors; hence, dismantling white supremacy. We've only begun our work and understand that this will be an ongoing journey.

Since a task force works best with a small, core group, we are asking those interested in taking action to consider doing a couple of things.

One of the things you can do is check out the [12-Day Racial Equity Challenge](#) which is hosted by America & Moore LLC. By using a variety of resources and reflection journaling, this site guides people to create a habit of being more racially aware and to dismantle their white supremacy thinking patterns. I hope you will consider taking the challenge and using it as a means for impactful change. If you do, I'll be right there with you working through the challenge myself.

The second way we're suggesting for you to actively participate is by identifying all the ways that individuals and the church have worked towards being an ally or accomplice in racial understanding and dismantling white supremacy. Have you participated in the White Fragility Reading Group? Did your spouse attend a workshop on Racial Justice? What sermons or events held at the church pertained specifically to the dismantlement of white supremacy? We want to know what you've been doing and what the church has been doing over the course of our history as a church. To submit your contributions to this project, please send these to Christine Davis christinehopedavis@gmail.com.

This exercise will be the precursor into more reflective exercise that will come later this summer. I hope you'll actively participate in these exercises and find them meaningful. Together we can do this. As Oscar likes to say, "All of us need all of us."

If you have other questions about the task force's work, please feel free to email me at lestraatmann@gmail.com.

Milestones, Millstones and Stepping Stones



Linda Hellerich moved into Lancaster Manor on June 30, 2020. She will remain in quarantine in a temporary room for two weeks. Henry Schuman reports that some of the nurses there remember her from her last stay. She will not be able to have visitors, as with other facilities. Please reach out to Henry with care if you feel moved to do so.

Amy Birky has been staying connected as she is able. She misses her church community. She would enjoy cards from members and friends. Visits are limited; phone calls are welcome.

Check the REALM online directory for phone numbers and addresses if you would like to make contact with these members.

The Beacon is published monthly. Newsletter deadline for submissions is the 18th of each month to news@unitarianlincoln.org. The Beacon is available online at www.unitarianlincoln.org/newsletter.

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