



# The BEACON

News from the Unitarian Church of Lincoln • May 2020

## Thresholds

Our theme for the month of May is Thresholds. The marker between one place and another, one way of being and the next, thresholds are by nature liminal, unsettled places. They are 'thin places,' where the presence of something greater than ourselves feels near at hand, and where transformation is possible—and so is danger.

This time is a thin place. Since leaving our building in mid-March, everyone involved in the Unitarian Church of Lincoln has made tremendous, rapid changes.

We have had to adjust everything from how we worship, to how we collect donations, to how we meet with and care for each other. We have done that work well and faithfully, and as I sit down this week to write my annual report for our congregational meeting May 17, I am overwhelmed and a little touched at the range of challenges we have taken on as a community.

At the same time, this is not simply a case of 'this thing happened, we responded to it, and now everything is fine.' No, we are in the midst of a threshold right now, suspended between who we were on March 10, and who we are becoming. It feels true that this pandemic will fundamentally change parts of who we are as a religious community, but none of us really knows what that change will be yet.

What is our obligation, as people of faith in the midst of a threshold moment?

*It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to.*

- J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

It is to pay attention:

- To pay attention to ourselves: how are we reacting? How are we coping? What are our hopes, and what are our fears?

- To pay attention to the world: what is happening around us? As best we can discern, what are the circumstances that are compelling us to change, and how do we recognize them?

- To pay attention to what is changing: where are the places that have shifted and are beginning to pivot?

- To pay attention to what is constant. What are the

fundamentals of who we are? The expressions may change, but the underlying truth remains: all have inherent worth; all are interconnected. How do we, as Howard Thurman writes "keep fresh before [us] the moments of [our] high resolve?"

The Board of Trustees voted last month to extend our building's closure through June 15. At some point in the future we will resume normal operations together in the building. But we are going to spend significant time in the threshold between, and 'normal operations' may look different in 2021 than they did in 2019. The tension between change and continuity is always a part of congregational life, but it has rarely been this close to the surface. Pay attention, stay committed, and keep fresh the moments of your high resolve.

*Be well, beloveds,  
Rev. Oscar Sinclair*

religious  
growth &  
learning

## Religious Education MINISTRY

### *Staying Connected While Not In Church:*

If you have not signed up for my parent and guardian email list then please contact me at [religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org) to let me know and I can add you in.

### *What is currently being offered:*

- 11:00AM Zoom online Sunday School for children K-5 with assistance from trained UU teachers and assistants
- 6:00PM Zoom online Sunday School for Middle School and High School students on Monday evenings
- NOON Parent Zoom meeting every other Wednesday
- 6:00PM Parent Zoom meeting every other Thursday

Weekly email with resources for parents including links, discussion questions, and a weekly message from me that correlates with a YouTube video for children (current theme: mindfulness).

Weekly email also includes links to preschool/elementary youtube videos:

- Music with Miss Molly
- Story with Ms. Alexa
- Lesson/Story with Miss Heather

Additionally, I am collecting sentences from members of the church to thank our volunteers who were teachers and assistants this last year. Email [religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org) with the subject line, "Thank you" and include a sentence or two from yourself as well as from each of your children who are thanking our teachers and assistants in one way or another.

A terrific thing to ask children is, "What is one of your favorite memories from class at church this last year?"

We need input from BOTH children AND adults. I will compile the comments and include them in a worship service and newsletter article.

I am always available by email and would love to hear from you. Stay safe and healthy.

Peace, Faith, and Love,  
Chelsea



## Drag Queen Story Hour Nebraska

Sunday, May 24 • 11:00-12:00 • Zoom

Adding a little pizzazz and sparkle to afternoon's favorite pastime...STORY HOUR!

Join a VERY SPECIAL story hour presented by your favorite local drag queens. This event is a way to bring children, families and Drag Queens together for a playful hour of celebration, imagination, learning and fun.

The event is brought to you in partnership with the Unitarian Church of Lincoln. This event IS NOT taking the place of the Sunday service, but will be taking the place of the Sunday School portion of the service.

Your reader will be the amazing fairy-like creature, Madam Nymphadora.

## MEMBER & ADMIN MINISTRY

### CREATING CONNECTIONS

Things are changing rapidly. We are communicating through a daily video and eblast Monday through Friday. We have a Current News page on the website accessible from the homepage. We have a presence on Instagram and Facebook.

Current offerings for youth and young adult connections are on page 2 of this newsletter.

Current offerings for adult connections with and through the Unitarian Church of Lincoln and (*where to access them*):

- UU Connects (*email Kelly; see below*)
- Open Circles (*email Kelly; see below*)
- Starting Point (*email Kelly; see below*)
- Sunday Coffee "Hour" (*eblast*)
- Sunday Service 10AM YouTube (*eblast/YouTube*)
- Thursday Night Vespers 7PM ZOOM (*eblast*)
- Coffeehouse Adult Game Night 2nd/4th Friday of May (*eblast/facebook*)
- Adult Education classes/workshops (*eblast*)
- Open Office Hour Wed. 12 - 1 (*eblast*)
- Oscar's Weekly Interviews (*eblast/YouTube*)
- UU Women Gathering (*eblast*)

If you have any questions about these opportunities, email Kelly Ross [memberadmin@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:memberadmin@unitarianlincoln.org) or Jean Helms [admin@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:admin@unitarianlincoln.org)



KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
STAY  
CONNECTED

### BUILDING PROTOCOL

We continue to track who is inside the building. If you have something that you need to retrieve, drop off, or fix in the building, you must contact the church office in advance to let us know of your plans. If you would like to see the whole Building

#### OPT-IN FOR SNAIL MAIL BEACON

As of last month we are no longer bulk mailing The Beacon, our monthly newsletter, to our members and friends. We will, however, snail mail a dozen or so to those who do not have reliable access to a computer. We will continue to send an electronic newsletter once a month for the foreseeable future.

## MUSIC MINISTRY

We in the music area have been hard at work planning, singing, playing, recording, and editing all kinds of stuff to bring to you during these strange times. I want to give a special shoutout to Julie Enersen, Bill Carpenter, Michele Dobszewicz, and the choir folks who took time to provide their talents for us.

### And now a list of renamed hymns for quarantine:

- Shelter, Bake Bread, and Stay In
- We're Gonna Disinfect the Welcome Table
- (Ten or Less) Gathered Here
- Here in the Past We Have Gathered
- Fire of Disinfectant
- Come, Sew a Mask With Me
- Meditation on Cleaning
- Bake, Bake, Wherever You Are
- Blue Boat Homeschool



Stay safe! Bob Fuson, Music Director



## COFFEEHOUSE ADULT GAME NIGHT

Friday, May 8 & 22 • 7:00PM - 9:00PM

ZOOM link will be revealed in an eblast

The first Jackbox COFFEEHOUSE Adult Game Night was highly successful. Enough so that we want to do it twice a month! Join us the 2nd and 4th Friday of May 7:00 - 9:00PM.

\*\*\*You just need a smartphone and wifi to play. You do not have to download a special app to your phone.\*\*\*

Deb Hope and Jean Helms are pairing up to offer this virtual game night.

If you have a computer or tablet that you have been using for Zoom meetings, you can set that up so that you can see the graphics of the game by joining us with the Zoom link.

If you want to check out some of our favorite games in advance, you can go to [jackboxgames.com](http://jackboxgames.com) or just search for trailers on YouTube. We have four party packs #1, 3, 5 and 6.

At the inaugural Jackbox Coffeehouse on Friday, April 24, we played Drawful, QuipLash, Trivia Murder Party, Guesspionage, Fibbage and LIEswatter.

# Report of the Board of Trustees

*From Emily Cameron Shattil, Board President*

Your Board of Trustees has been meeting bi-weekly since this pandemic started. The Unitarian Church of Lincoln, Nebraska has existed 150 years and will continue to exist. We expect pandemic decreased revenues this year so we applied for and received \$49,300 from the federal government's stimulus package to ensure that we can continue to meet payroll through 2020.

We decided to keep the building closed through June 15 and will reassess at our May meeting whether we should be closed during the summer.

We will be holding the Town Halls Thursday, April 30, 6:00 - 7:00PM before Vespers and Sunday, May 3, 11:00AM after the Worship Service. The Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, May 17, 11:00AM electronically.

We sent the materials for the Congregational meeting electronically on April 30 (eblast subject "Virtual Voting - Spring Congregational Mtg"). We encourage questions, concerns, and comments be made at the Town Hall meetings about church activities during the pandemic. You can submit questions before to [admin@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:admin@unitarianlincoln.org).

We will also be taking live questions. Dorothy Ramsey, Treasurer, Charles Coley, Program Council Chair, and Emily Cameron Shattil, President will be responding to the questions. You will be able to vote electronically at the Congregational meeting for Board of Trustees candidates, Program Council Chair, and Share

The Plate. Absentee voting will be available, but discouraged in order to have a quorum.

The new leadership of the church beginning June 1 will be Trevor Jones, President; Lori Straatmann, Vice-President; Dan Payzant Secretary; Theresa Forsman Treasurer; and Wendy Hestermann Vice-Treasurer. We are fortunate that these talented people have stepped up and assumed the leadership of our church in these troubled times.

The Board of Trustees wants to thank Rev. Oscar Sinclair and his staff for all the hard work they have done during this pandemic. They have transformed our church by offering virtual services and activities to us all.

## *Rule to be voted on at Spring Congregational Meeting*

For the purpose of this meeting only, voting will be done electronically.

## *Recommendation From Your President*

An opportunity of a life time to attend General Assembly which will be done virtually. The cost to participate off-site is \$150.00 and it will be held June 24 - 28.

<https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/registrant>



ROOTED, INSPIRED AND READY! is the theme for the 2020 General Assembly. Find out more [HERE](#).

# Showing Up for Social Justice

From Jackie Kehl

## This month we:

- Partnered with Planned Parenthood to write 116 post cards encouraging supporters to vote for a state legislature candidate who supports reproductive rights
- Donated \$200 from our reserve fund (funds generated by profits from Fair Trade sales) to Lincoln's COVID-19 Response Fund.

## Reaching out to the Lincoln community

*Here are a few ways to help locally:*

- **The Lincoln Tree of Hope**  
[www.thelincolntreeofhope.com](http://www.thelincolntreeofhope.com) works with another non-profit to provide resources throughout Lincoln to ensure that school-aged children, medically fragile or disabled people, and those without transport have adequate food. Also on Facebook [LINK](#)
- **Support Melanie and Michael Reinmiller's Little Free Pantry.**

Donate at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/1w82b389tc>, drop items off on their porch or send a check. Check Realm for address.

- **May is Give to Lincoln month.**

Check out opportunities here to go beyond organizations that you already know about and support: <https://www.givetolincoln.com/>

## Facebook

If you're on Facebook, check out these groups. Both are private groups; so you need to join to participate. You'll find some UCL friends there.

- **Stand In For Lincoln**

SIFL is a grassroots activist group. It is a forum for advocating for human rights and justice, with a current focus on immigrants, prison reform and Missing/Murdered Indigenous Women. [LINK](#)

- **Stand In For Nebraska CONNECTS!**

SIFNC is a place to connect within the community in positive, non-political ways, such as watch parties, show-and-tell, music, and jokes. [LINK](#)

## Reaching Out Beyond Lincoln

- **Immigrants: No More Deaths Emergency COVID-19 Bond Fund**

<https://nomoredeaths.org/no-more-deaths-emergency-covid19-bond-fund/>

- **Other UU congregations: UUA COVID-19 Pandemic Response:**

<https://www.uua.org/giving/areas-support/funds/covid-19-response>

## May Sunday Services:

**May 3** – Rest Assured: Death in Unitarian Universalism, Oscar Sinclair

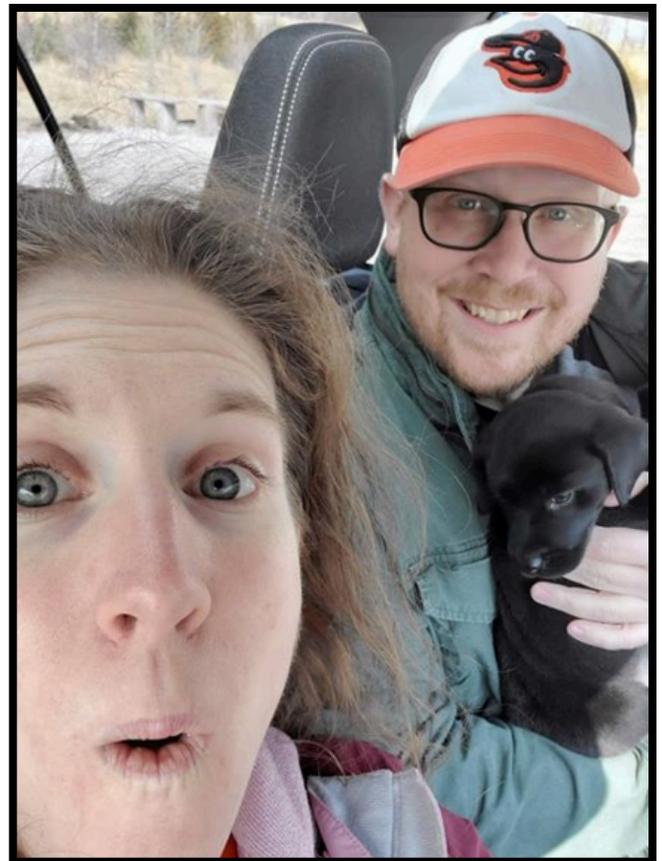
**May 10** – Mother's Day, Youth in Action

**May 17** – Notes for a Congregational Meeting, Oscar Sinclair & Kimberley Debus

**May 24** – Stillness, Schuyler Geery-Zink

**May 31** – Bridging, Graduating Youth, Chelsea Krafka & Oscar Sinclair

# FROM OUR #staffmemberinthewild SERIES ON FACEBOOK APRIL FOOLS DAY 2020



## Lay Pastoral Care News

*From Elizabeth Meyer*

Numerous studies indicate that social support can improve the physical, cognitive and emotional well-being of people who are under stress. For many of us, the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic has created a new and wide-ranging level of stress. Simply going to the grocery store today might seem fraught with peril. Managing work from home while caring for other family members creates daily challenges. Adapting to the ways in which our lives have been altered may require as many different coping mechanisms as there are new challenges.

Susan Griffin says that "hearing-into-being"—in other words, simply saying something out loud to another person—often makes the experience real in a way that enables us to understand and evaluate it in new ways. Ever find yourself talking to a good friend about a problem and suddenly realize the solution? It's a process in which we tap into our own wisdom and strength because someone is listening supportively without telling us what to do.

The nine people trained by Oscar to provide lay pastoral care are poised and eager to respond in just this way to the Church's members and friends upon request. You may easily and confidentially ask to be contacted by one of the lay pastoral care associates. Email [pastoralcare@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:pastoralcare@unitarianlincoln.org) or contact the minister Rev. Oscar Sinclair at [minister@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:minister@unitarianlincoln.org).

## Grounds Task Force

Looking for a way to exercise and meditate while practicing social distancing? Our church landscape needs our care in real time. The Grounds Task Force is a group of unsung heroes who each tend a specific area. There are many areas available for adoption, large and small. We can find an area to fit your skills and interests, and the church provides the tools. Work in solitude on your own schedule. Call or email Martha Horvay 402.432.8423 or [marthahorvay71@gmail.com](mailto:marthahorvay71@gmail.com)

## Friendly Faces - not held back by virus!

We continue to reach out to church members by phone, mail and email.

We hope you will let us know if/when you need something by calling Jackie Egan 402.435.6111 or Shirley Maly 402.477.6787.

AND if/when you think of someone you wish you could see, call them, send them a card, or email them. They are missing you, too!

AND take good care of you!

Sincerely, Jackie Egan

## UCL Art Gallery

We have artists scheduled until the end of the year! When the church reopens, we will have art on the walls! No worries.

Cheers, Bob Egan

## Hello UU makers and crafters.

Handmade Harvest, "a celebration of handmade items" is scheduled for November 20 & 21 at church. Please let me know if you want to be a vendor at this event, and what you make for sale. We don't know what gathering will look like in November, but I'm being proactive by making sure that you are on the mailing list for details as soon as they are available. For more information contact Judy Hart - [judithkhart@gmail.com](mailto:judithkhart@gmail.com) or 402.805.7866.

## UCL PANDEMIC BINGO

Check all the boxes - win fabulous prizes

Can't remember which day it was you last took a shower	Yelled at your coworker to get off the table	Halfway there to get curbside pick up lunch and realize you're going "commando"	Gave a donation via text giving	Made or bought baked goods for the Church Discretionary Fund
Made or bought a mask for the Church Discretionary Fund	Exceeded 3 Zoom meetings in any one day	Participated in Sunday morning 9:00am Zoom coffee hour	Picked up items at 3 or more places in one trip without getting out of your car	Rearranged the fences and orchards on your ancient Farmville land
Completed 2 or more puzzles in the last month	Binge watched an entire Netflix series you've already seen	<b>FREE SPACE</b>	Cut your own hair when you usually go to a stylist	Have heard yourself or others say "It's five o'clock somewhere"
Watched 3 of Oscar's Daily Updates in a row	Proud of yourself for figuring out how to use Zoom	Made a donation to Church Discretionary Fund and got CHOCOLATE delivered	Re-engaged in an old hobby	Made or baked a new version of "refrigerator surprise" casserole
Sang along with a hymn on Virtual Sunday Morning	Tried to bargain with someone to get or pay with toilet paper	Tipped a delivery driver twice as much as usual	Wore the same PJ's 2 nights in a row - without changing in between	Visited a new (to you) green space - park, dog park, etc.

This Pandemic Bingo (CoronaBingo) card was released on Wednesday, April 29 at Open Office Hours with the Dazzlers and Kelly and Jean. As of May 1, we have had two bingos and there are two more dvd movies to be won. If you have a bingo, email Dorothy Ramsey at [dorothyramsey@gmail.com](mailto:dorothyramsey@gmail.com).

# Green Corner

From Marj Willeke

## *April was Earth Month*

This year we marked the 50th anniversary of Earth Day (April 22). During Earth Month, many organizations offered virtual experiences (marches, demonstrations, webinars, meetings) to highlight the work ahead of us. The Green Sanctuary Committee continues our strong commitment to all people, the planet, and to justice on earth.

## *Parallels between COVID-19 Pandemic and Climate Crisis*

Christiana Figueres (international climate change negotiator and an architect of the 2015 Paris Agreement) wrote "5 Lessons from Coronavirus that Will Help Us Tackle Climate Change."

(1) Global challenges have no national borders. (2) As a society, we're only as safe as our most vulnerable people. (3) Global challenges require systemic changes. (4) Prevention is better than cure. (5) All our response measures need to be based on science. Figueres stated, "I hope that the shock of this pandemic will jolt people out of their desire to ignore global issues like climate change" (TIME - 3/24/20).

Nebraska's Dr. Donald Wilhite published "A Tale of Two Crises" in the Lincoln Journal Star 4/15/20. He discussed Action vs. Inaction, Proactive vs. Reactive, and Managing Risk vs. Managing a Crisis. Wilhite concluded, "To be ready for the next crisis, we must take action now. We must believe the scientists. Action leads to hope for children, our grandchildren, planet and us."

ARTICLE: [TALE OF TWO CRISES](#)

As Earth Month comes to a close, we hope you had an opportunity to participate in Earth Day events, celebrating its 50th anniversary and thinking about our future on earth. Maybe you did some reading, reflecting, and sharing with others. Maybe you joined virtual events, such as EarthDay Live, EarthRise Digital, or Lincoln Earth Day.

## **GREEN RENOVATION**

Becky Seth told the story of the green renovation of our church building when she served on a local panel on Faith and the Environment.

## **EARTH DAY SERVICE**

Our annual Earth Day Service was held last Sunday. Rev. Oscar Sinclair reminded us that the theme for the month was liberation. There was a sequence of three Holy Days during the past few weeks; Easter, Passover, and Earth Day (hope for liberation). Yet, we can't separate environmental justice work from poverty, public health, or the self-determination of marginalized people.

Mary K Stillwell delivered an inspiring sermon, reminding us of our UU earth-centered traditions. She talked about Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (published in 1962), calling for a global environmental movement, the founding of Earth Day in 1970, and the theme of Earth Day 2020, "Vote for the Earth." Mary K asked, "How can we move forward in this time of overwhelming uncertainty?"

We need to move forward with renewed hope and determination; there is much more work to do to secure our future. The UCL Choir's rendition of the hymn, "Keepers of the Earth," provided a superb close to this Earth Day 2020 service.

Watch the Earth Day service [HERE](#).

## BOARD AND PROGRAM COUNCIL CANDIDATES

At this [LINK](#) you will find the Nomination Forms for the candidates for the five positions our congregation will be voting on at the May Congregational Meeting.

*In order clockwise beginning at the top right corner, our candidates are:*

- Karen Heafer: Program Council Chair (3 - year term)
- Burt Smith: Board of Trustees (3 - year term)
- Judy Hart: Board of Trustees (3 - year term)
- Keith McGuffey: Board of Trustees (2 - year term to fill vacant position)
- Tonya Haigh: Board of Trustees (3 - year term)

I'm very pleased with our slate of candidates! If you have any questions, feel free to call or email me.

Thank you,

Kate McDougall, Nominations Committee Chair

[katelmcdougall@gmail.com](mailto:katelmcdougall@gmail.com) 402.610.4796



# Milestones, Millstones and Stepping Stones



Please hold member Dana Attaberry in your thoughts after the death of her son in late March.

We are also keeping Charles Coley in our hearts and minds after his grandmother Emma Lou Johnson died in mid April.

Wendy Hines experienced the loss of her mother last month as well. Please keep her in your thoughts.

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](mailto:news@unitarianlincoln.org). The Beacon is available online at [www.unitarianlincoln.org/newsletter](http://www.unitarianlincoln.org/newsletter).

## Staff

Rev. Oscar Sinclair, Minister • [minister@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:minister@unitarianlincoln.org)

Rev. Fritz Hudson, Minister Emeritus • [fHUDSON@uuma.org](mailto:fHUDSON@uuma.org)

Chelsea Krafska, Religious Growth Dir. • [religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org)

Jean Helms, Administrative Director • [admin@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:admin@unitarianlincoln.org)

Dr. Bob Fuson, Music Director • [music@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:music@unitarianlincoln.org)

Kelly Ross, Member & Admin Coordinator [MemberAdmin@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:MemberAdmin@unitarianlincoln.org)



## Board of Trustees

Emily Cameron Shattil,  
President

Trevor Jones, Vice-President

Colleen Kadleck, Secretary

Schuyler Geery-Zink

Dan Payzant

Kay Hoff

Michael Reinmiller

Michael Krumm

Lori Straatmann

Linda Brown,

Past President

## Other Key Leaders

Dorothy Ramsey, Treasurer

Theresa Forsman, Vice-Treasurer

Charles Coley, Program Council Chair

Gene Hanlon, Lincoln Unitarian

Foundation (LUF) Chair

## Church Office

6300 A Street

Lincoln, NE 68510

Office closed until 6/15/20

Phone: 402.483.2213

## KEEP CALM AND STAY CONNECTED!

Worship Service premieres on YouTube at 10:00AM Sunday.

Thursday Evening Service on ZOOM - links in daily eblast.

Website: [www.unitarianlincoln.org](http://www.unitarianlincoln.org)

Religious Growth/Sunday School on ZOOM - links in eblast.

Email Chelsea [religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org](mailto:religiousgrowth@unitarianlincoln.org) for password.