

UUC QUARTERLY REVIEW, October 2022

MINISTER'S MUSINGS

What a joyous start to a new congregational year! 61 people joined us in person and on Zoom for our Ingathering Service on September 11th. I am glad to greet so many new faces in our sanctuary, and to welcome back the very familiar ones too.



Interfaith Walk for Unity

Gathering is the place where our community begins. We come together in worship as a large assembly on Sunday morning to enact the rituals of our faith- lighting the chalice, sharing joys and sorrows, singing and sharing words together. Sometimes we hold special ceremonies- such as the combining of our waters into a common bowl. These rituals recognize our movement from the individual to the collective- a movement that both honors our differences and celebrates our unity.

Last year, we focused on gathering as our primary task. We learned how to gather in different spaces, both in person and virtually, amidst the challenges of the pandemic and building repairs. We adapted to new circumstances, and we grew.

As we enter a new congregational year, I present us with a new charge: to deepen and to expand our ways of gathering as we seek to create a truly *earth-honoring beloved community* (this phrase was recently expressed by the Rev. Sofia Betancourt in her General Assembly Fahs Lecture).

We deepen in community through our small group ministries: through intentional, reflective covenantal conversations around a chalice or a meal; through one-on-one listening to each other's stories; through learning together in religious education for all ages. Our community room is now full of sign-up sheets for new opportunities to deepen



through Social Souls, Social Justice, small group ministry groups such as Soul Matters and UU Wellspring, and Religious Education. There is a place for everyone to go deeper and nourish your spirit in community (and if you can't find your place, do reach out and we can discern- or create something new- together!)

I also charge us to expand beyond our doors- as several of us have done recently through the Arts and Crafts on Bedford event and Interfaith Day of Impact at Mill River Park. I enjoyed the opportunity to talk with people in the larger community at these events- and to share more about Unitarian Universalism! We also have a new Social Justice Ministry looking to join with others to make a difference in Stamford and beyond (sign up in the community room).

As we move forward into this year, let us take the energy of our gathering into the spaces of engagement and deepening, as we continue to grow in and expand our faith in earth-honoring beloved community together.

In faith,

Rev. Terri

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Roger Rosenblatt in his book of reflections "Kayak Morning" writes: "You can't always make your way in the world by moving up. Or down, for that matter. Boats move laterally on the water which levels everything."

So as we at UUC paddle along into fall, I reflect on all of the interesting and provocative Sunday services we have had over the summer. I thank all of the people who have volunteered to share their stories and have invited us to share ours. We also have enjoyed Community Potlucks together.

Some things are in stationary mode----such as our Sanctuary ceiling, though I've heard through our Buildings and Grounds committee that the project will move forward beginning in mid - October. Some things have moved backward, such as the need to repair the cranky air conditioning for cooling and the boiler for hot water in the RE building.

Mostly, though, we are in forward motion with the kick-off of our RE program, and the establishment of a separate Foundation to promote and preserve our historic Sanctuary. There are opportunities to dig deeper through UU Wellspring, UU101, The 8th Principal group, and Soul Matters, as well as through social activities sponsored by Social Souls. Lend a hand on Sunday morning by volunteering to be a greeter, participate in a service, or prepare treats for coffee hour. There is room for all in our UU kayak. How will you become involved? Grab a paddle and hop aboard!





Outing to Curtain Call for the Summer Youth Theater Production of "The Pajama Game" to support Jonah Farber, a young member of UUC

RE UPDATES

The search for our next Director of Religious Education (DRE) is underway. In June, the DRE Search Committee, comprised of Rev. Terri, Dave Rasekh, and Kim Farber developed the job announcement and posted the position. The Search Committee, in partnership with the RE Ministry Team, is considering creative ways to find our next leader for the RE program. If you know someone who would be a terrific leader of our RE program, please [invite them to apply](#).

While we await our next DRE, our RE program will forge ahead under the leadership of our RE Ministry Team (REMT), Carolyn Kagan, Diana Martinez-Rasekh, Rev. Terri and Kim Farber. The RE Program will kick off on September 18th. All RE families are asked to register in advance (families, please see your email from Kim Farber with a link to the Google form). Our RE Theme for the year is **Sources of Connection**. We will explore the 6 UU Sources throughout the year and especially Direct Experience as we foster deeper connection among our young UUs. We will offer new and fun opportunities for our children to play, share and listen with one another.

These opportunities for deeper connection will come by incorporating 2 UU resources into our RE program, **Soulful Home** and **Popcorn Theology**. The REMT will continue to send the monthly **Soulful Home** packets to RE families. During our RE classes, we'll integrate the **Soulful Home** theme, such as Belonging in September, offering a connection between what families may be doing at home and in RE. **Soulful Home** also offers lovely alignment between RE, Soul Matters groups topics and themes that Rev Terri will bring to the Sanctuary.

We are also very excited to bring in a new curriculum this year called **Popcorn Theology**. Designed by Shancar Faith Development, a UU organization based in Indiana, the curriculum brings together popular family-friendly movies, such as the Lion King, Zootopia and Moana, and a UU theme or principle. Children will watch clips of movies in the classroom and our RE teachers will facilitate activities related to the movie to highlight the theme.

If you would like to learn more about this year's RE program or would like to volunteer, please reach out to Kim Farber.

COMMUNITY POTLUCKS

Summer potlucks inaugurated our Fourth Friday Community Potlucks series. Fans, open windows, good food and a sense of community made it all worthwhile.

The most recent September Homecoming Potluck brought together 18 folks and some delicious and interesting dishes, such as Silvia Fernandez-Stein's Chilean corn and chicken dish, Wayne Esquivel's Jambalaya, and Elizabeth Jenkins-Sahlin's Swedish pancakes, among many other tasty contributions. We introduced ourselves, our heritage and our dishes before the meal and spent time getting to know newcomers and catching up with old friends.

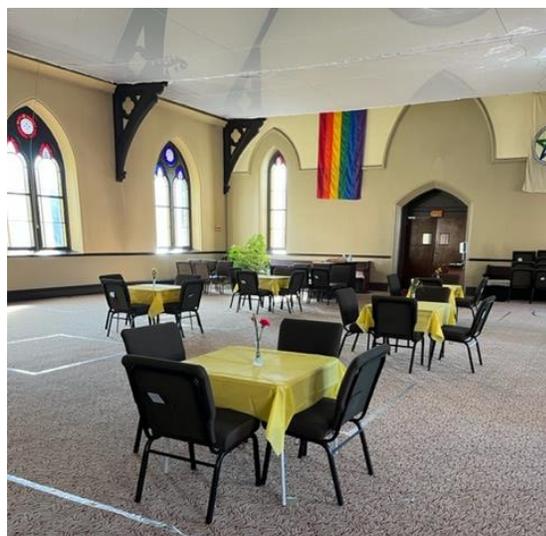


Recent Community Potluck with the theme of "Home & Heritage"

Stay tuned for the October potluck and check the eblast for more details.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

On September 18th, we held a Congregational Meeting to approve the establishment of a separate (501)(c)(3) Foundation to preserve and promote our Sanctuary building. This will enable us to get grants from sources that might not fund a religious organization and to promote our building for rental purposes and community events. Motion to approve was made and passed. A vote on naming the Hall for promotional purposes was tabled for more input from the congregation. The space will continue to be known as the Sanctuary for all UUC purposes.



Safety netting in the sanctuary

ROOF UPDATE & CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

After a summer of delays, the scaffolding will go up on October 12th, taking 2-3 days to install. Starting on the 17th, they will secure the plaster around the failed area and remove the lath to gain access to the attic space. Then the engineers will come in and create an action plan.

In addition, we have had recent capital expenses, including replacing the hot water heater and one air conditioning unit in the Child Care space, as well as the removal of a dead tree on the property line.

IN MEMORIAM

On July 13th, Barbara Poccia passed away at her home in Darien. She was a Secretary Administrator for UUC, UUSIS (Unitarian Universalist Society in Stamford) as it was then called, for many years when Rev. Stan Aronson was our minister. She was in the old office one day when the chandelier over her desk came crashing down. That was the first step towards what would result in the removal of our offices to the existing Religious Education building and the rehabilitation of the old building into Metcalf House. She took falling chandeliers in her stride! As her obituary says, she was a “special, classy lady, she loved animals, plants, her home, parties and theater.”

MAKING CONNECTIONS



Baking and Bonding



Fiber Arts Group



Social Souls at the Second Sunday Brunch



Grace Farms Latin Jazz Concert