



Monthly Newsletter

June 2016 Worship Services

June 2016

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June Office Hours:
 Tuesday & Thursday
 9:30 AM-1:30 PM

www.uucorvallis.org

Summer Schedule Begins: One Sunday Service at 10:00 AM

Sunday, June 5, 10:00 AM

“Helping and Sharing”

Jill McAllister

In September we set out to explore peace and justice more deeply, especially with respect to the truths of our inner lives, the facts of our complicity in everything, and the weight of our expectations. As we arrive at the end of the regular church year, before summer services begin, we might stop to consider the fruits of our explorations.

Sunday, June 12, 10:00 AM

Bridging Ceremony and Service

Michael Molk and all

The annual Bridging worship service celebrates and honors graduating high school seniors and gives us a chance to hear what the UUFC has meant to them. We also recognize 6th graders moving into our 7th/8th grade group, and 8th graders moving into our high school group. All ages are welcome! Please come to this service with your open minds, open hands, and open hearts, to let our bridging young adults know that we appreciate, honor, and welcome them here at the Fellowship.

Sunday, June 19, 10:00 AM

“The Wild Horse of Your Life”

Jill McAllister and Ann Mbacke

Life calls. Sometimes we hear the call, and sometimes we also answer. Our Director of Adult Religious Growth and Learning has heard Life calling her again, and is about to answer that call. Before she leaves, she is willing to share with us some of what she has seen and learned among us. Following the service we’ll celebrate her time and her work with us, with strawberry shortcake for all!

Sunday, June 26, 10:00 AM

“Creating Happiness”

Jim Gouveia

How do we create the life that we want to live in spite of the pressures of life, love, and climate change? Organically unfolding with whatever life presents to us and knowing we can embrace it all. UUFC member Jim Gouveia is a licensed clinical social who has been working in mental health for 25 years, currently at OSU counseling and psychological services. He practices Zen and being present with whatever presents itself in the moment; sometimes he is really good at it and sometimes he is not.

Between Us ...

Jill McAllister

Congratulations to all of us, and thank-you for a great UUFC annual meeting on May 15! 180 members attended and participated. The notes about business transacted are elsewhere in this newsletter – I simply want to acknowledge the beauty of what happens between us when we gather to make our ideals real. The conversations were broad, deep, and respectful and easily helped our shared sense of purpose emerge.

Later that same week, twenty leaders of committees, events, councils and tasks gathered for supper and conversation for the third time this year. Around the tables I heard such helpful things – discussions of misunderstandings, appreciation for collaborations, questions answered. It made me think of a song I learned as a child – “the more we get together, the happier we’ll be...”

The Fellowship is a religious community full of strengths, full of resources. It is a congregation of breadth and depth in religious perspective, practices, and wisdom. When we offer to one another who we are, what we know, what we can give, what we need, what we’ve seen, what is true for us, so much becomes possible, between us. These kinds of sharing happen all the time in smaller groups within the Fellowship – in chalice groups and committees, classes and work groups, over coffee and meals and walks—and this is a beautiful thing. But we are not merely a collection of small groups, unconnected, unconcerned about the others, focused only on our particular concerns. We are members together of a congregation, a community of shared values and ideals, values and ideals that are much bigger than any one group. The values we espouse – pluralism and inclusivity, freedom and responsibility, searching for wisdom and truth, making peace and justice more real – need all of us working together. We must keep reaching out to each other, bringing the insight, experience and questions of smaller groups into the larger circle which holds all of us together.

Along the way, in every way possible we must keep reaching out to invite people in – into our circles, into our activities, into our work, into our challenges, into our joys. Sharing, sharing, sharing. I know there are many in the Fellowship who feel not quite connected, not known, not quite “a part of.” Belonging is not immediate, it is not simple or easy, and it is not a given – but it is possible, always. It is possible because it happens between us, and we can keep reaching out. This is the work for peace, the work for justice, the work for a better world – it is between us, everyday.

See you Sunday – *Jill*

PS – The political situation in our country has moved me beyond the bounds of my usual perspective, because all of my strongest convictions as a person and as a UU are now at stake. I share with you this link to an article by Robert Kagan of the Washington Post, on what facism looks like. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/this-is-how-fascism-comes-to-america/2016/05/17/c4e32c58-1c47-11e6-8c7b-6931e66333e7_story.html

Words for Reflection

In the Buddha’s teachings on transience, his point is that everything is *always* changing. When we take loved objects into our egos with the hope or expectation of having them forever, we are deluding ourselves and postponing an inevitable grief. The solution is not to deny attachment but to become less controlling in how we love. From a Buddhist perspective, it is the very tendency to protect ourselves against mourning that is the cause of the greatest dissatisfaction.

Marc Epstein, in Going to Pieces Without Falling Apart

Drop-In Choir

If you want to sing in the choir before September, we’ll be having three “Drop-in Choir” days this summer: June 19, July 24, and August 21. Show up in the sanctuary at 9:15 AM to learn a song or two to sing in the service. All are welcome.

WORSHIP

Next Wheel of the Year Gathering: Summer Solstice, Sunday, June 19

- Connecting to nature, to ourselves, to each other and to the mystery that is greater than us -

On May 1st, we gathered outside on the UUFC patio to light the fire and celebrate Beltane. We expressed our gratitude for the fire -- its transforming and cleansing qualities -- which are so much a part of traditional Beltane celebrations. We invited the fairies to bless us with their magic as they returned from their winter respites. We jumped over the fire, danced the Maypole and celebrated the parts within us which bring us joy. Fairy houses and lots of flowers were seen, music was played and delicious food was eaten. Did you miss this wonderful occasion? Make sure to come along for the next one!

Summer Solstice Gathering – A time to celebrate the Sun’s gifts. On Sunday, June 19th, you are invited to join in nature-connected celebration and ceremony honoring the Summer Solstice (Litha) – at the peak of the three months of greatest daylight. We plan to once again be outside to gather around the fire. This family-friendly event is scheduled to begin at 3:00 PM and you are welcome to attend any part of it. There will be time to arrive and get connected, followed by an hour-long ceremony (starting around 4:00 PM) and finally a potluck. To learn more about what to bring and the thoughts behind the format, visit http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=3112. For more information, contact Cliff Pereira (peartree15@comcast.net).

LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

ON “BRIDGING”

Michael Molk

In our Unitarian Universalist movement, we use the word “bridging” to connote the transition our young people make as they move from being a youth to a young adult. For many, this time coincides with their graduation from high school, around age 18. The “bridge” is the social connections which can support young people as they move through this time. For some in our Fellowship, it means they are wrapping up their involvement with school, looking ahead to college and/or a job, moving to a new city, saying goodbye to childhood friends, developing new ways of relating to family, travelling, and becoming more independent. For others it means staying in Corvallis, possibly continuing to live at home with family, attending community college, or finding work.

Whatever the particular circumstances, this is a time of change, filled with the possibility of excitement and new undertakings, but it can also be a time of uncertainty and distress, with old ways left behind, and new ways yet to be known. Our Fellowship is one source of spiritual and social support for these emerging young adults in our midst.

The “Bridging” worship service we hold every year is a ritual to recognize and honor these people in our religious community. We get a chance to hear from them: what the Fellowship has meant to them over their years of involvement; what being a Unitarian Universalist means to them; what their hopes and worries are, their dreams and ambitions for the future; and how they intend to take the values they’ve learned out into the world, and apply them in their lives. We welcome them into young adulthood, with words and song and ritual and gifts. Many traditional cultures commonly held this rite of passage to affirm their young people entering fully into the world of adult responsibilities. Our modern society has largely left this behind, to our detriment. Young adults are all too often left to fend for themselves, as they attempt to navigate all the new pressures and expectations they encounter.

Our Bridging worship service this year will happen on Sunday, June 12th at 10:00 AM at the Fellowship. We will also recognize 6th graders moving into our 7th/8th grade group, and 8th graders moving into our high school group. So all ages are welcome! Please come to this service with your open minds, open hands, and open hearts, to let our bridging young adults know that we appreciate, honor, and welcome them here at the Fellowship.

Sunday, May 29th, 11:00 AM: All children and youth are invited to come create gifts for their RE teachers and advisors, which they will present to their teachers the following Sunday, June 5th.

Sunday, June 5th, 10:00 AM: RE Party! We will appreciate the teachers and advisors during our “Time for All Ages”, then have an end-of-year party during RE. We’ll play games, the children and teens will serve refreshments to their teachers and advisors, present their gifts to them, and have the opportunity to perform music and share words of appreciation. We hope you will come!

Starting *Sunday, June 12th, 10:00 AM:* Summer Creative Sundays

Do you have a passion for some creative endeavor you’d like to share one-time with the children? Sign up on the easel in the foyer for one Sunday this summer, to present to a small group of elementary-age children. Share your love for—and knowledge about—an art or craft, music, dance, story-telling, poetry, nature, animals, astronomy, you name it! Other adult(s) who know the children will also be present to help assist.

Opportunity to Volunteer with our Children & Youth!

We need adult volunteer RE guides and advisors for next year. Next year’s theme is “Who are UU? Putting our Principles into Practice.” Volunteers get

- orientation, training, lesson plans, and support from Director of RE Michael Molk
- teammates who are experienced guides
- flexible scheduling
- a deeper understanding of Unitarian Universalism
- to further your own religious path & spiritual practice
- friendships with children, teens, and other adults
- the opportunity for meaningful and purposeful service
- appreciation from parents and the congregation
- amazing insights, inspiration, and fun!

Our religious exploration program depends on volunteers. Please consider signing up for this! To learn more, write your name and contact information on the easel in the foyer, next to the age group you’d like to work with. Or email molk@uucorvallis.org DRE Michael Molk will contact you.

Announcing a new Service Project for Religious Exploration!

Willamette Park Community Garden is now open. We have rented space for volunteers to garden there. Produce harvested will be donated to the Food Bank and Soup Kitchens. This is a great opportunity for all ages to do community service together, and take concrete action to address climate change.

For more information and to volunteer, talk to DRE Michael Molk (molk@uucorvallis.org).

ADULT RELIGIOUS GROWTH AND LEARNING

Ann Mbacke

Adult Religious Exploration (RE) and Growth invites you to learn more about who we are and to join us in our work. The past couple of months we have been exploring the seven principles. Our goal is to help answer the question of who, what, and where as it relates to Unitarian Universalism: who are we in our community and the world, what does it mean to be an active engaged UU and where is it that we are to take action and be able to live those golden seven principles.

5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. If you were at our annual meeting this past month, you saw a beautiful way of living this principle. We had two major initiatives to discuss: 1) the decision and agreement to sell the rental we have to the Zen Buddhist group; 2) the decision to hire a consultant to help us find out what we want in our potential use of space for the Fellowship expansion or renovation. Way to go UUFC – that peaceful democratic decision-making was awesome!

6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all. We must recognize that there is much work to be done in our community and our world, and none of us can do this alone. All of us are called to make peace with ourselves and find ways of keeping this peace with those around us as we speak to those issues that affect us all in

one way or another. "I am my brother's keeper" is one motto I am reminded of when I think of this principle. Joining together to advocate for justice for all – be it social issues like mass incarceration or racism, addressing the decimation of our planet, or other ills that plague our world, there is something we can do. Let's find out what that is and put our voices and faith into action.

Interested in joining in our work? The Adult RE Steering Committee meets monthly on the 2nd Thursday at 3:45 PM. We are also exploring how we might involve you, so we are looking at changing the meeting time to accommodate those who work or would prefer to meet on another day. If this speaks to you, let us know and join us. Have a class/program related to Religious Exploration? Let us know that too! We are open, innovative and creative. If you are excited about these possibilities contact Ann Mbacke, Director of Adult Religious Growth and Learning at reassociate@uucorvallis.org.

PROGRAM COUNCIL

UUFC Men's Spring Work Party: Saturday, June 18, 8:30 AM-2:00 PM

UU men are invited to come work side by side on building and maintenance projects to benefit our UUFC community! NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY. We'll have crew leaders to direct you. Meet at the UUFC at 8:30 AM for coffee, tea, etc. We'll work from 9:00-11:30 AM, break for lunch, and finish projects from 12:30-2:00 PM. Projects may include minor repairs, roof cleaning, painting, and grounds work. Plan to wear work clothes and bring gloves. If you have specific skills and tools, though, we would welcome them. *Please register for this event, so we can plan the food for the day.* There is no charge. (Donations will be accepted to offset the cost of food.) To register: *visit the sign up table on Sunday, or contact Lloyd Wagenschütz (541-753-9071, lpwz124@comcast.net).*

Art Exhibit in the Sanctuary

The Art Show in the Sanctuary from May 24 to July 12 presents the work of Sally Ishikawa, Nena Bement and Rinee Merritt. Titled "Color from Three Perspectives," the show will include varied mediums: fused glass, prints, weaving and quilts. Here is a short statement from our artists: "We are three friends who enjoy each other's work, each admiring the others use of color, line and texture. Whenever we can, we enable each other to try new and challenging ideas and then seek each other's critiques to keep the challenges alive. So, we challenge each other, we enable each other and we enthusiastically support each other. Thank you for the opportunity to show our work together."

Disaster Preparedness Sessions

Ninety people attended a half-day seminar at the Fellowship on May 6 to learn about preparing their households to deal with natural disasters (including a potentially devastating earthquake). This seminar was the first in a series of educational events at the Fellowship designed to develop a "culture of preparedness." Speakers provided information on proper water and food storage, creating an emergency response plan, what to organize in "go-bags," and preparing to shelter in place.

For those interested in the next step of preparedness, plan to attend the FREE session at UUFC entitled "Map Your Neighborhood" on Thursday June 2, 7:30 PM. Registration required: contact Wolfgang Dengler (wolfdengler3@gmail.com) to sign up, for more information, or to receive a copy of the "Just Get Started" checklist. Anyone interested in the materials presented at the seminar can find copies in the UUFC Library.

JUSTICE COUNCIL

Social Concerns Committee Updates

Voting for your favorite Charity of the Month: We want to thank those of you who cast your ballots for the charity for the month of October. Since voting was light we plan to hold an all-fellowship on-line vote this summer.

Refreshments for the Coffee Hour: This summer our Fellowship is raising funds and awareness for school children in our community whose families are currently unable to meet all their needs for the new school year. During June and July we help Vina Moses purchase school supplies and clothing, and during August and September we support the McKinney Homeless Education Program to cover other school expenses such as transportation and sports fees.

Members of the Social Concerns Committee will still set up the bake sale table, but we will not be solely responsible for providing the refreshments. That way some of us, who have been bringing snacks, can take a break. We thus ask members of the general congregation to occasionally bring plates of cookies, crackers and cheese, boiled eggs, fruit and other snacks to share and then pick up their plate after the coffee hour. Thank you. Submitted by Sylvia Yamada (yamadas@science.oregonstate.edu) for the Social Concerns Committee.

Working on Racism

If you were moved by our Sunday speakers who focused on “other histories” of Oregon – Richard Mayuk on Native Americans, Russ Yamada on Japanese Americans, and Walidah Imarisha on Black Americans – you may be looking for a way to be more active in the work of anti-racism. Our new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion task force plans to offer many opportunities for skill-building, insight and action. Stay tuned to the weekly announcements to learn more.

Doctrine of Discovery Documentary

The Doctrine of Discovery is the name given to a series of 15th century papal bulls (letters) instructing Christian explorers on the appropriate behavior and expectations upon encountering lands supporting non-Christian people. Believe it or not, it *continues* to affect the lives of indigenous peoples worldwide. How can this be? This long-awaited documentary by Dakota filmmaker/director Sheldon Wolfchild and Shawnee/Lenape historian and writer Steve Newcomb explains why. (See <http://www.38plus2productions.com/> for more info.) Join us Wednesday June 1, 5:30 PM, in UUFC Room 7 for an interfaith evening viewing of this important video, followed by conversation. This offering is a follow-up to the interfaith discussions of *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis’s recent encyclical on climate and poverty, offered by the UUFC Climate Justice Committee and sponsored by the UUFC Adult Religious Exploration program.

Solar Energy for Corvallis

Loan Funds for Seeds for the Sol

Would you like to contribute to UUFC for a future capital campaign and know that your money is doing good work in along the way? If this sounds like responsible and ethical financial management to you, you can make a designated donation to a UUFC loan fund that will support Seeds for the Sol (SFTS), a local nonprofit that is helping Corvallis move toward a sustainable future. The money in the UUFC loan fund will be loaned to SFTS, which will in turn loan money to homeowners for solar installations. As the loans are repaid to UUFC, the money will be re-loaned until SFTS is no longer in need of the funds, or until UUFC requires the funds for its own use. For more information, contact Martha Clemons (clemm12@comcast.net) or Louise Ferrell (lferrell2@peak.org), or just send a check to UUFC with “SFTS loan fund” in the memo line.

Seeds for the Sol “Pass Through Partners” and “Sun Harvesters”

You may be surprised to find that you can do good in our community while doing well financially. If you will be paying state taxes of at least \$1,500 per year for the next four years, you could become a “Pass Through Partner” for the Seeds for the Sol program. A contribution of \$5,400 this year to help a lower income household install solar panels on their roof would result in repayment to you in tax credits of \$6,000 over the next four years (\$1,500 per year). This is a return of \$600 on an investment of \$5,400, guaranteed by the State of Oregon! OR, do you own a home with a south-facing roof that would be just right for solar panels if you only had the money to do it? Do you pay federal income taxes? You may qualify for a zero interest loan to help you with the upfront costs of putting solar on your home. See <http://www.seedsforthesol.org/> for more information on both these programs.

GOVERNANCE & SHARED MINISTRY

UUFC ANNUAL MEETING PROCEEDINGS: May 15, 2016

The Annual Meeting was called to order at 12:45 PM, and began with shared singing of several hymns.

Sale of Adjacent House at 2935 NW Circle to the Corvallis Zen Circle

President Kyle Jansson presented pros and cons of selling the house next door to the Corvallis Zen Circle. An engaged and respectful discussion followed, covering the past ideas for use of the house and the possibilities of creating an interfaith “campus” with two liberal religious organizations as neighbors. Voting was conducted by paper ballot, and the motion to sell the house to the Corvallis Zen Circle passed, 155 in favor to 18 against.

Nominating Committee Presents Slate of Officers and Trustees for 2016-17

Russ Anderson presented the slate of officers and new trustees which was approved by unanimous vote. Those elected are: Carl English-Young, President; Linda Hardison, VP; Kathy Kopczynski, Secretary; Joan Rose, Treasurer; Kyle Jansson, Past President; Virginia Shapiro and Elona Meyers, 3-year Trustees; Jack Elder, Investment Committee; Rachel Houtman, Program Council Chair; and Jamie Simmons, Rachel Brinker and Susan Christie for the Nominating Committee.

Presentation of Building Design

Chris Bentley reviewed the wish list of the congregation, based upon congregational input over the past 1 ½ years. The next step will be to work with an architect for a preliminary concept design. After the results of the Feasibility Study are in, they will then go back to the architect with actual dollar amounts available to support a new design.

Presentation of Finance Feasibility Study

Kyle introduced Jeff Susor, of Praxis Nonprofit Strategies, as our consultant to help determine the feasibility of a capital campaign for a building project. Forty households were recruited for interviews with Jeff; all other members were invited and encouraged to give input via the questionnaire which has been mailed out and is available online.

Climate Change Investment Report

Cheryl Stuart announced the results of the Investment Committee’s work to divest from fossil fuel investments: all of our investments carbon-free! In addition, we have invested \$11,000 with the Seeds for Sol, a Corvallis initiative to fund solar panel installations on homes.

Adoption of FY 2017 Budgets

Kyle presented the proposed 2016-17 operating budget, noting a proposed deficit. The past several years we have had overages, which give us a margin for a deficit budget this year. The proposal passed unanimously. The operating budget was followed by the proposed Building Research and Design Budget. This plan includes initial expenses and income for the building project, separate from the operating budget. The expenses in this budget will be covered by revenue raised in the capital campaign. It also passed unanimously.

Religious Education

Michael Molk presented the theme for next year’s Religious Exploration Program (Who Are UU?) and requested volunteers to be guides for RE sessions and for Summer Creative Sundays. He also introduced a community service project for all ages – the new Willamette Park Community Garden. The UUFC has rented space for volunteers to garden to produce food for the food banks and soup kitchens.

A President’s Perspective: The Year in Review and the Year Ahead

UUFC President Kyle Jansson shared remarks on what has been accomplished this year at the Fellowship and what new developments are likely to be coming in the future year. The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Help Wanted: Fellowship Care & Support Team

Members of the Fellowship Care & Support Team are trained and ready to provide a listening ear to individuals in our community. One part of UUFC's mission statement states that we will "build deep connections." This program is one way to make this happen. It is a structured way of getting to know each other better, to develop a stronger community. Consider doing your part to make this happen!

At a recent meeting, the Team members practiced skills by listening to one another. One of the participants later reflected that although she didn't "need" a listening ear, she was surprised at how good it felt to have someone listening with their full attention. In fact, she reported that it was "beautiful"! Questions? Comments? Contact Pastoral Care Coordinator Diana Vezmar-Bailey (541-740-9006; dianavb@inbox.com) for further information or to request a listener. Diana is also the person to contact for pastoral care needs when Jill McAllister is away.

Annual Report

All leaders of councils, committees, tasks, and events are invited to contribute to the Annual Report which gives an overview of our Fellowship year – how we have accomplished our mission and goals, what we have learned, what has challenged us to grow. Aim for six good sentences with concrete details – no need for flowery introductions! Reports are due by June 15. Questions? Contact Dianne Roth.

General Assembly Streaming

General Assembly (aka "GA") is the annual meeting UU Association of Congregations. Congregational delegates come together each year to broaden our understanding of who "we" are, find truly amazing larger community (5000 UUs singing together!), engage in moving shared social justice agendas forward, celebrate youth and ministerial transitions, and learn about the health of our larger body. (Our youth are prominent in the plenary discussions about both polity and social justice!) If you can't attend the GA (this year in Columbus OH, June 22-26) plenary events can be live-streamed in real time. The theme for this year's GA is *Heartland: Where Faiths Connect*. Among other highlights, the Ware Lecture will be given this year by Krista Tippett (creator and host of NPR's "On Being"). The Ware Lecture is livestreamed for all to watch.

AND, we will be setting up "GA Central – Corvallis" at the UUFC with livestreaming, as well as a display of the program book (all the workshops that you'd be able to attend, were you there), and a delegate booth where you can contact one or more of UUFC's "distant delegates." Long-distance delegates will be participating in the on-site mini-assemblies and listening closely to discussions that require voting in order to register their votes. These are not livestreamed except to delegates; it's the place in which work is done on general governance issues as well as on Actions of Immediate Witness and the four-year Congregational Study Action Issues (CSAIs).

To join the learning community preparing for GA together (on-site or distant), the UUA is recommending a common read and pre-conference local and online discussions (William J. Barber's *The Third Reconstruction*) as well as delving into both Eboo Patel's *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer*, and a series of important links about #Black Lives Matter. (Those of you who attended GA 2015 to the very end may recall the difficult discussions there, covered in part by UU World.) Follow-up is planned. See <http://www.uua.org/ga/congregations/delegates/learning-community> for more information. Welcome to the run-up to GA! See you there, and here!

Rummage Sale Coming in August

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle! Our annual extravaganza of sharing and re-purposing – the UUFC Rummage Sale – is about to commence. Start sorting your stuff now, and decide what you no longer need that someone else could make good use of: furniture, small appliances, art, household items, sports equipment, books, etc. are welcome. Items can be stored at the Fellowship beginning on Sunday, June 12, in room 8. Please, no clothing (save that for the Clothing Exchange) or big exercise machines, old software, older computers/monitors/TVs, paint, poisons, tires, halogen lamps, or broken items (those must be recycled elsewhere).

THE BACK PAGE: AN ETHIC OF RISK

In May our services touched on themes of risk and experimentation: from Thoreau's adventure in minimalist life on Walden Pond, to imagining what our democratic congregational life might look like, to living into the change and loss that inevitably come with life itself, we have been considering how to embrace uncertainty.

Unitarian Universalist academic and theologian Sharon Welch writes about the challenge in embracing risk when we have been accustomed to an "ethic of control." An ethic of control says that an action is only responsible, moral, or good when it is understood completely and will definitely have the intended result. Understanding responsible action this way, Welch says, causes us not to act in the face of complex problems: "It seems natural to many people, when faced with a problem too big to be solved alone or within the foreseeable future, simply to do nothing." This ethic can even lead us to argue against other people's attempts to address a problem, dismissing partial or uncertain ideas as foolhardy, deluded, or even harmful.

Welch argues that what is needed now is an ethic of risk. An ethic of risk requires us to move toward three ideas: first, that thinking about a problem does not contribute to addressing it. Doing something to change the problem does. For example, for those of us who are white, educating ourselves about racism is a good start, but does not address racism. Using our white privilege to make changes in systemic racism by lifting up the voices of people of color, engaging with police departments and governments, and speaking up when we witness micro-aggressions, is **DOING** something.

Second, that we will need to try approaches and changes that, while they seem like reasonable things to attempt, do not come with guaranteed outcomes. When we allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the scale of a problem, from racism to world hunger to climate change, and then excuse ourselves from working on it because we have not arrived definitively at a guaranteed solution, we are falling into cultured despair: the fiction having a detailed understanding of injustice is a contribution, and that because we cannot do something perfectly to address injustice, it is better to do nothing at all.

And third, that in our imperfect attempts to create more justice, as we try and fail and learn from our mistakes so we can "fail better" next time, we must be mindful of who bears the cost of our attempts. The more privileged we are, the more insulated we are from the costs of our projects. To keep us in touch with the real impact of our actions, we are called to create relationships across different identities: relationships with people of different races, classes, sexual orientation and relationship structure, and ability/disability.

Because this, the truth we already know and yet are always remembering, is what allows us to engage with life in ways that involve risk and challenge. Welch writes, "Change occurs when the response to the knowledge that we have caused others harm is not guilt but repentance, a deep commitment to make amends and to change patterns of behavior." Our relationships with others give us accountability and resilience when our actions are critiqued. Our relationships also bring love into our lives, and "it is the gift of being loved and loving that enables work for justice."

Our congregational life in the next few years will include opportunities to engage in an ethic of risk as we work to create a Fellowship that equips more people to work toward more justice in the world, and in their relationships to others and themselves. Let us be brave in taking action, and let us do so mindfully and in love.

Administrative News and New Positions at the Fellowship

Changes are underway, again! The interview process for a Church Operations Manager will be completed by the second week of June, and this new position will begin on July 1st. The Church Operations Manager replaces the former Office Administrator, in a position with more administrative responsibility. Jean Gilbert will move from her current position as interim Office Administrator to 1/3 time Business Manager, responsible for overseeing payroll and employee benefits and coordinating bookkeeping and financial management. We'll also be posting the position of half-time Religious Exploration Associate in mid-June. Questions about or interest in the RE position? Contact Jill McAllister (minister@uucorvallis.org) or Michael Molk (molk@uucorvallis.org).



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Explore. Love. Act.

We gather as an inclusive religious community to search for meaning, build deep connections, and inspire action toward a better world for all.



UUFC Staff

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Looking for the calendar?

For the most up-to-date information, see our website at http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=211
Our online calendar is updated weekly or sometimes even more frequently!