

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis

April 2020 Monthly Update



Explorations

Israel Buffardi, Assistant Minister

The world may be “On Hold” as was proclaimed in a recent headline on CNN, but our lives, our hopes, our dreams for our communities, and our responsibilities to each other certainly are not on hold. Life’s pressing needs—desires for health, connection, and economic stability— have not come to a standstill, even as the daily routines of many have slowed down—or at least altered drastically. So much still to do, and so much is so uncertain.

Amidst the uncertainty around us, we must still remember to take the time to ask how we can continue to support and be there for each other, as members of this fellowship. You are the fellowship, because your connections to each other are the fabric of our community! I urge you not to forget those connections, especially right now! So even if we cannot be in the same room or even building together, remember right now how vitally important it is to reach out to each other. Remember that you are still connected to each other through your shared values, commitments, and intentions to create transformative connections and create a more just world.

In fact, this time of viral pandemic, shows to us all, just how truly interconnected and interdependent we all are with each other. The needs of this moment remind us how our individual actions can have far reaching cumulative consequences that reach out and touch the lives of people we have never even met. It shows us how we are all responsible to one another, and how we must live our lives with the concerns and safety of the most vulnerable amongst us, always in our minds.

This is why we are physically distancing ourselves from one another right now, because we realize that our interconnected web is woven tighter than it ever has been. So as you sit in your separate homes, waiting for this pandemic moment to pass, as all moments in life must eventually, remember that you are not sitting alone. You are not separate from society; you are now more than ever, a vital part of it!

Between Us

Jill K. McAllister, Senior Minister

April is Earth Month. Many events and activities were planned – most of which are now on hold, as with so many other things. Yet, April will

Don't forget to complete the Census!

The Census is all about the distribution of power and money from the federal government to our communities. Money that goes toward things like emergency services, school lunches, hospitals, schools, fire departments, and affordable housing. And power, which is determined by the number of congresspersons, state legislatures, and other elected officials representing your interests.

It's simple: [if you haven't already completed the Census, take a few minutes to fill it out, and share it with your family and friends!](#)

The 2020 Census will determine funding and representation for the next 10 years, so ensure our community gets our fair share by completing the 9 questions on the Census today.

Thank you!

A huge thank you to everyone in the Fellowship who has helped us make the leap to virtual connections in such a short time. From our Sunday Services to our RE Podcasts; from chalice groups and regular meetings; from special offerings and new things emerging – thank you, thank you!

now simply be a different kind of Earth Month, without rallies and meetings, but with less driving and more walking. With skies much more clear of pollution in many places. Perhaps this April offers us opportunities to understand the interdependent web of life in ways we were never able or willing to imagine. Not all lessons are easy. At the Fellowship, we have several Earth Month activities to share which we can still do while staying at home. I invite you to give your attention to these Earth Month connections.

April is also Stewardship Month at the Fellowship – the usual time for our annual Pledge Drive. Holding a pledge drive in the midst of a pandemic is certainly new, and will bring our covenantal commitments into focus in unprecedented ways. It will be a leap of faith. In some ways, I can think of no more beautiful challenge. As I wrote about stewardship recently “Our care and support for each other, which has long been at the heart of congregational life, is paramount now. Circumstances are changing for everyone. Our fundamental question remains, “How do we live in right relations”, even in these days? And what does it mean to take care of our resources now? Staff and employees, buildings and grounds, renters and suppliers? These are new questions for us, and we must work to find new ways.”

Last August I attended a retreat with Susan Tweit, an ecologist and writer who focuses on “Sacred Stewardship.” By this she means a dedication to repairing damage we have done to the Earth, in big and little ways, and in the process renewing and strengthening community bonds toward sustaining the whole community into the years to come. I can think of no better description of our work as the Fellowship, and no more essential responsibility for this time than to commit ourselves to lives of sacred stewardship -- for the earth, for our community and for our congregation.

It is an understatement to say that as we enter into April together, circumstances have changed. We know this! For some, it will mean that finances are stretched, at the very least. For some, it will mean sharing more than ever before. For all of us, we are asked this month, at this time in our lives, with respect for the responsibilities we share by virtue of being members and friends of the Fellowship, to contemplate our part in the present and future sustaining of the Fellowship. It is a complex question, worth our time and attention.

Perhaps this is one of our most important thresholds now – to move from simply being “part of” the Fellowship, enjoying it when and as we want to, to considering it part of a life of Sacred Stewardship, a life that we are each an important part of, a commitment we each make. What an important time this April will be!

With best wishes for your health and happiness! Jill

Help is Available

Help is available in this time of distancing: The ministers, members of the Fellowship Care and Support Team, and several counselors and psychologists are available to talk if you need us. Food and grocery delivery is available. Technical support for making phone and computer connections is available. Contact Jill or Israel, even if you’re not sure what you need and you just want to talk: minister@uucorvallis.org, assistantminister@uucorvallis.org.

Words For Reflection

...All I have is a voice
To undo the folded lie,
The romantic lie in the brain
Of the sensual man-in-the-street
And the lie of Authority
Whose buildings grope the sky:
There is no such thing as the State
And no one exists alone;
Hunger allows no choice
To the citizen or the police;
We must love one another or die...

From W.H. Auden "September 1, 1939" Read the whole poem here: [poem](#)

Weekly Events and Offerings

Each weekday, a UU-Announce is sent out with a Daily Practice.

Each weekday, join us on the Fellowship's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/uucorvallis/>) for a live Meditation.

Each Wednesday at 11:30, join us for Virtual Coffee Hour and sharing of our Joys & Sorrows. Watch UU-Announce for the weekly Zoom link.

Each Friday, a UU-Announce is sent out with the Sermon Title, Description, and a link to the Weekly Announcements.

Each weekend, a UU-Announce is sent out with the link to the Sunday sermon. We invite you to light your own Chalice and watch it on Sunday morning.

Each weekend, and mid-week, a UU-Announce is sent out with a Religious Exploration (RE) Podcast.

Wednesdays, Evening Mindfulness Practice is live on Zoom from 7:00PM – 7:30PM in April. You may join on your computer or by phone call. Join about 5 minutes before to make sure your system is connected. This week's Zoom Meeting: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2326020719>. Meeting ID: 232 602 0719. If you are new to Zoom email Patti ahead of time and she may be able to help you. Patricia White: minerva5cl@gmail.com.

Thursday, April 2, 4-5:30 PM, Turning toward our Hearts (future weeks on Tuesdays), Led by Susan Sanford, Anna Coffman and Cliff Periera on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/173333179>

*Are there any additional weekly offerings that others are welcome to join? Please email Jamie at office@uucorvallis.org so we can include it in the upcoming weekly announcements.