

NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis



Between Us

Rev. Jill McAllister

Welcome to a new church year – a new chapter in the living tradition that is the UU Fellowship of Corvallis. With more than a year of experience of how to be a congregation outside a building, and of how to live our values in the pandemic state of the world, we begin again to name and aim for the values and ideals of our liberal religious community.

Our theme for this year is “Radical Belonging,” in which “radical” means getting to the root or the foundation, and belonging means an emotional experience of being connected and accepted. Here are a few of the questions we’ll explore with our minds and our bodies: How do our experiences with race, gender, class, neighborhoods, schools, cities, institutions and social policies affect our sense of safety which is at the core of belonging? How does evolutionary biology shape the foundations of group acceptance and social inclusion? What are the impacts of impaired belonging on health and learning? How does generational trauma show up in our sense of belonging today? These questions are deep questions about our relations to ourselves, others, and Life, which are of course the foundational questions of religion and spiritual practice. We’ll explore them in the **present contexts of the climate crisis, the need to dismantle racism and the well-being of families with children and youth at home.**

The Fellowship is not just a building, not just a collection of individuals, and it is not whatever it used to be. The Fellowship is a living community of committed persons – persons who share ideals which are continually renewed between us (there is no other way.) The Fellowship is us – all together – both the sum total of all our interactions and more – the rippling effects of our actions on each other and out into a wider world. In this world of fragmentation and confusion, the Fellowship is an ever-present possibility of knitting together a common good as we live always toward right relations.

All of us are needed as stewards of this precious gift – this evolving congregational community and its ideals. Will you join us as we begin again? I hope so!

Monthly Newsletter

About this publication

This monthly newsletter focuses on the life of the Fellowship. Each month we're sharing reports from Fellowship leaders, councils, teams and projects and exploring Unitarian Universalist (and Fellowship) history and practice. We're also sharing important 'save-the-dates' information.

SEPTEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES – both outdoors in person – as long as weather permits, and online. Join us on the back lawn of the Fellowship, or connect via zoom.

Live Zoom Sunday Service
at 10 AM:

[https://zoom.us/j/96231448170?
pwd=cUoxaWxyei9wOTE5cVFVZ0t0Qk5
KUT09](https://zoom.us/j/96231448170?pwd=cUoxaWxyei9wOTE5cVFVZ0t0Qk5KUT09)

Board of Directors

August Board Meeting Highlights

The August Board Meeting was primarily a retreat for new and continuing Board members to review UUFC bylaws, policies, board roles, and our ongoing work in anti-racism, responding to climate change, and working with the consequences (on the Fellowship as a whole) of on-going pandemic fluctuations. We aim to help our councils and teams continue to grow in effectiveness as we all address this changing world.



September Sundays

September 5 Rev. Jill McAllister
Question Box Sermon

September 12 Rev. Jill
McAllister "Radical Belonging"

September 19 Autumn Equinox
All-Ages Worship

September 26 Rev. Jill
McAllister

UUA

From UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray

"One of the most profound lessons of this pandemic is that we hold each others lives in our hands. The corona virus thrived in the divisive conditions of systemic racism and poverty that have long defiled our social bonds. And yet the virus made the reality of our interdependence undeniable.

As Unitarian Universalists we believe in our fundamental interdependence. It is this interconnectedness that has led us throughout our history to engage in the work of justice. We know we belong to each other and to a vision of a world where all can thrive."

Upcoming Events

September 11 Reduce, Re-use, Recycle (Rummage Sale) 10 AM - 12 PM - Parking Lot

September 19 RE Outdoor Kick-off

September 23 -Shared reading of "*Recovering the Sacred*" starts

September 25 UUPath Class for those interested in becoming members. 8:45 AM - 12 PM.

"Every morning we are born again. What we do today is what matters most."
—Buddha



Facilities Council

BUILDING UPDATE: ENERGY CONSERVATION RENOVATIONS

This summer, the UUFC applied for and received a \$10,100 loan from the Corvallis Climate Action Revolving Loan Fund. If paid back in two years, the loan carries no interest. The purpose of the fund is to assist nonprofit organizations in saving energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The application was written by the UUFC's Climate Action Team.

We will use these funds to insulate the Social Hall floor, replace three single-pane windows and two exterior doors with high-efficiency units, reduce air flow and heat loss through four attic access locations, add ceiling insulation in the Social Hall and seal gaps around pipes entering the kitchen from below the floor.

These and other needs were identified in an energy audit performed last spring by UUFC member Dennis Feeney. Dennis does audits and other energy conservation work for Community Services Consortium downtown. He generously donated his services to help the UUFC reduce energy use.

Once a contractor has been hired, efforts will be made to avoid conflicts with ongoing Fellowship activities, assuming we will be able to occupy our building later this year. The goal is to have the work completed by next summer.

BUILDING EXPANSION UPDATE: PROGRESS ON CLASSROOM ADDITION

Planning proceeds on the construction of the new classroom addition. Our land use consultant, David Dodson of Willamette Valley Planning Services, is preparing an application to the city for a conditional land use permit. A key piece of that application is an assessment of the impact the project will have on our trees. We expect that work to be done in August. The application will include the tree report, the schematic design for the building from Varitone Architecture of Albany, and an engineering report on utility lines, pathways and stormwater.

The city will conduct a public process to consider how the project fits the criteria for a conditional permit in the residential zone we occupy and the impact the project will have on the neighborhood. We are hoping for a decision by the end of the year.

Among the steps we anticipate taking are removal of the garden shed just northeast of the building and construction of a new shed onto the east side of the Fellowship building just north of the Social Hall deck. In addition, we are seeking the city's permission to remove 54 incense cedars along the east boundary line and replace them with smaller trees, shrubs and wildflowers.

Simultaneously, we have enrolled in the Oregon Energy Trust's Path to Net Zero program. We will meet with the architect and energy specialists to identify opportunities to create a facility that produces no net greenhouse gas emissions. The goal is to reduce energy losses to a minimum, generate as much of our own fossil-fuel-free power on site as possible and invest in solar, wind or other energy projects elsewhere to meet the rest of our needs.

The net effect of this project is that over the next few years, the Fellowship building and grounds will undergo a transformation. We will build the addition, redesign parts of our landscape, renovate our existing facilities, and remodel the existing RE wing to accommodate a new social hall and commercial kitchen. The goal is a facility that responds to the climate crisis by reducing our use of fossil fuels (eventually to zero), enhances pollinator and wildlife habitat, and meets the Fellowship's need for a larger space for social activities.

Religious Exploration Council

If you enjoyed the iGen town hall in June, have a passion for books, or just plain love RE you should consider serving on the Religious Exploration Council! Priorities for the coming year include identifying and planning positive shifts within the RE program and cultivating a fellowship library that is aligned with our values and current cultural needs. We will resume monthly meetings on 2nd Sundays beginning September 12th. Contact Skyla King-Christison (mommaskyla@gmail.com) for more information.



Justice Council

INDIGENOUS CONNECTIONS TEAM OFFERS SHARED READING AND STUDY

The Indigenous Connections Team is offering a book group beginning Thursday Sept. 23 4-5:30. *Recovering the Sacred: the Power of Naming and Claiming* by Winona LaDuke will be our next read. This book focuses on Indigenous peoples reclaiming their cultures in various ways; it's said to be about change and full of hope. We will order paperback copies from our local independent bookstore, Grass Roots, for \$18.70 (\$22.00 less 15%). Please let Susan Breckenridge (sbreck@peak.org) know if you'd like to order a copy of this book. It will take about two weeks for the books to arrive after we put in the order. Assistance is available if/as needed for payment and/or delivery of your book; please contact Susan directly if/as.

OPB INTERVIEW ON CLIMATE WITH FELLOWSHIP MEMBER ALAN MIX

OSU Professor and UUFC member Alan Mix was one of many scientists contributing to the latest report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which includes over 230 authors from 65 nations. The IPCC report plays a role in addressing the ongoing issue of global warming by highlighting what is currently happening, such as extreme weather and rising sea levels, and what is expected in the future. Mix is a distinguished professor of Earth, ocean and atmospheric sciences and was the lead author on the "Ocean, Cryosphere and Sea Level Change" chapter. He was recently interviewed by Oregon Public Broadcasting's "Think Out Loud."

Listen, or read the transcript, here: <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/08/17/oregon-state-university-climate-change-report-/>

Justice Council, cont.

CLIMATE ACTION TEAM (CAT)

Together we make a difference! The Oregon Legislature passed the *Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act* this last June. Recycling can reduce greenhouse gas emissions because producing new products from recovered materials requires fewer raw resources and less energy. Specifically, this law will

- **Require producers to share responsibility** with local government and ratepayers for recycling of their products after use. Oregon is the second state in the US to adopt a producer responsibility policy for packaging.
- **Prevent plastic pollution** by ensuring collected material is actually recycled.
- **Reduce public confusion** over what can be recycled by making one list for the entire state of what can be recycled.
- **Increase access to recycling** by providing recycling services to people who didn't previously have it, such as those who live in apartments and rural areas.
- **Incentivize innovation** by charging higher producer fees for non-recyclable products and those creating more environmental pollution.

<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/recycling/Pages/Modernizing-Oregons-Recycling-System.aspx>

Shared by Deborah Clark, member UUFC Climate Action Team

Upcoming Justice Council events to watch for in UU-Announce!

- September Town Hall, sponsored by EDI and ICT, our Indigenous Connections team
- A book group discussion in September, for her newest publication, *Nice Racism*, by Robin DiAngelo
- A workshop on proposed Principle 8, coming in later this fall. Join us and learn How did this principle come to be proposed? Why is it important?
- October Pumpkin Patch, a great way to select a fresh organic pumpkin and benefit refugees and immigrants.

Connections Council

LEARN ABOUT BECOMING A FELLOWSHIP MEMBER AT IN-PERSON UU PATH CLASS

Join us for our first in-person UUPath class since the pandemic started! It will be held on Saturday, September 25, starting at 8:45am - noon on the patio outside the social hall.

Unitarian Universalism

UU-ISM: FROM FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER TO RANWA HAMMANY

From Rev. Ranwa Hammamy, the new Congregational Justice Organizer with the UUA's Organizing Strategy Team (which includes Side with Love, Love Resists, Create Climate Justice and more):

"I became a Unitarian Universalist in 2010, joining the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia and its choir. Every Sunday, when I sat in the choir pews, a flag swayed gently above my head, embroidered with an image of one of Unitarianism's most prophetic ancestors – Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. (Click on the link to read more about Harper's life and work). Over the years, I've come to learn so much about and from Harper's bold and courageous faith, and how it motivated her perseverant work for abolition, universal suffrage, economic justice, gender equality, and more. As a Unitarian Universalist & Muslim, I hold a deep appreciation of how her lived faith wove together her African Methodist Episcopal roots and her Unitarian wings.

I know that what I believe and how I act are inextricably connected. Whether it is teaching anti-racism in a Sunday school classroom in New York, interrupting inhumane immigration proceedings in San Diego, or protesting the desecration of sacred lands by Enbridge in Minnesota, my actions are out of a joyful obligation to my beliefs.

Our world is at a turning point, and we have the power and responsibility to choose its direction. As Harper once wrote, "Are there not wrongs to be righted?" We can choose to continue the cycles of racism, capitalism, and imperialism by restoring the white supremacist status-quo that pretends to look like "change" when it knows we are tired or scared. Or, we can be bold and courageous like our ancestor Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and take new action in faith-rooted and collective ways."

Black Lives Matter

"ENDING RACISM: HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD IN ONE GENERATION"

- BY JUSTIN MICHAEL WILLIAMS, MUSICIAN, SPEAKER AND AUTHOR OF **STAY WOKE: A MEDITATION GUIDE FOR THE REST OF US.**

An excerpt: "Almost every piece of work or literature that I've read on racism is built on one assumption: that it cannot end. Or at best, that it will be a "lifelong fight." That ending racism will be something that "will probably never happen in our generation..." But, if we all continue to say, "racism is something that can never end in our generation." Then who the hell ever gets to take responsibility for ending it?

Enter: us. We still have a dream. But we are the vessel for the dreams our ancestors were unable to dream. The current work and research on anti-racism is phenomenal, and so is the tireless work that has been done by our ancestors for generations. But much of this work has one fatal flaw—it's created from the automatic assumption (whether subconscious or conscious) that racism is unlikely to ever end. And if that's our starting point, —if that's the plateau from which we're writing our books, creating our podcasts, and doing our activism and anti-racism work—then we're missing a big opportunity here.

I'm not saying becoming an anti-racist or dismantling white supremacy isn't important work... What I am saying is this: Imagine how much more important our work becomes if it were done in a different context. If it were done not just as some sort of bootcamp "to be in a lifelong fight," but with a common, united goal of actually ending racism in this generation..." *Justin Michael Williams*

Read the full article "Ending Racism: How to Change the World in One Generation" by Justin Michael Williams, at this link: <https://www.justinmichaelwilliams.com/blog/endingracism>
(video version of article here: <https://youtu.be/d04sXFUiCBk>)

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