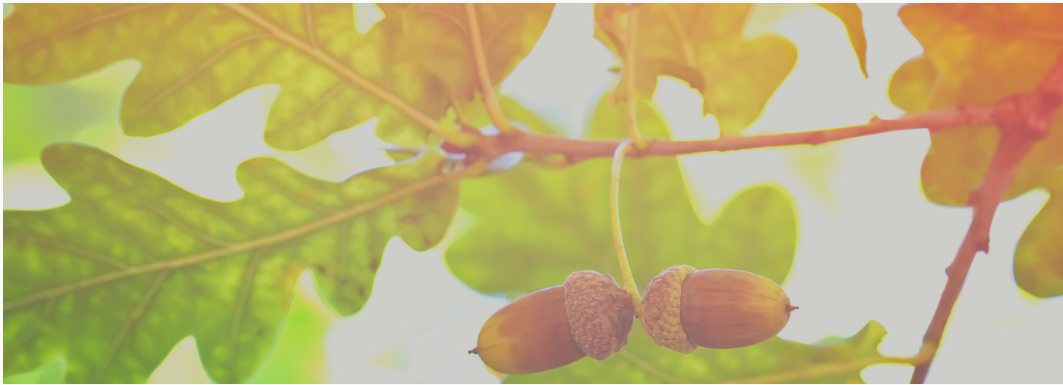


OCTOBER | 2021

# NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis



## Between Us

## Rev. Jill McAllister

Friends – It's October! Cooler, moister, colorful...if you watch the light, you can feel the shift of the Earth. Pause, notice, breathe, be moved, and be thankful. Remember that we belong to the Earth. The delta variant of COVID-19 seems to be plateauing, even beginning to decline. More than 700,000 persons dead in the USA – so much loss and so much grieving. Let us not forget these realities.

This month we move deeper into considering Radical Belonging, our theme for the year. Indigenous and African American guest speakers will help us explore the wide circle of our relations and multi-cultural competency. We'll slowly begin to learn more about how trauma affects the lives of almost everyone, and how trauma is generational. We'll keep exploring how belonging to the Fellowship, to this religious life, is a process of joining in the struggle for freedom for all, for dignity, compassion, and peace.

I'm so grateful for a new circle of shared ministry for the Fellowship this year. Several colleagues will join me, including The Rev. Leslie Chartier – as an affiliated Community Minister and focusing on ministry for elders; The Rev. Monica Jacobson-Tennessen – as a consulting minister for families and RE; Chaplain Jesse Ford – as a Chaplain for Transformative Social Justice; and ministry student Jacob King – as part of our Care and Support Team. The greater the breadth of shared ministry, the better for all of us. (And all of us – UUFC members and friends – are part of shared ministry.)

Changes are still constant this month. We will eventually be able to return to using our building. The Pandemic Response Task Force will meet again soon to continue to figure out how to begin the process of coming back in, safely. And when the weather no longer allows for outdoor Sunday worship, we'll return to a new version of on-line worship – most likely hosted in the Sanctuary, and slowly inviting small groups to join there. It will take some time – we'll proceed at the “speed of trust.” (adrienne maree brown.) Are you “here?” Are you connected? Are you in need of making or renewing Fellowship connections? Please call or ask or reach out, including to each other.

## 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.

### OCTOBER SUNDAY SERVICES

– 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=cUoxaWxyei9wOTE5cVFVZ0t0Qk5KUT09>

# Board of Directors

## October Board Meeting Highlights

Your Board of Directors met on Tuesday, 09/28/21. We were a week later than usual and in October, we'll be back to the 3rd Tuesday (10/18/21) at 7pm. We're meeting on Zoom, so if you'd like to attend as a visitor, please RSVP to Operations Manager Jamie Petts. You are very welcome. We worked through quite a bit of business on Tuesday, and I'll break it out into 2 installments- topics related to the Mission of our Beloved Community and topics related to governance (forthcoming).

### Mission:

--We welcome the Rev. Leslie Chartier as an Affiliated Community Minister. This is an understanding between our settled, parish Minister, Rev. Jill McAllister and Rev. Chartier regarding pastoral outreach, preaching in-fill and coordinating the representation of our denomination in our local community. We're blessed to have Leslie in our midst. Please welcome her in her new role. Ask her about her vision as a Community Minister and check out UUA background on the Ministry here:

<https://www.uua.org/careers/ministers/community>

--8th Principle- Your Board is unanimous in support of the process undertaken by our UUFC teams: EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) and ICT (Indigenous Connections Team) regarding the conversation to dismantle racism and oppression (individual/institutional) and build a diverse multiculturalism. The work is engaging and far from done. One aspect includes a comprehensive review of the 7 Principles to see how this current justice work resonates with our past and provides a path to a wider circle.

--COVID- The Board and the Pandemic Task Force labor to find the balance between personal liberty, the right of conscience, and obligations to the common good. Our message is fundamentally one of inclusivity. We recognize that we are at a different place from a year ago, and that the weather is closing in, and that accommodations to open the building are in order. Decisions are forthcoming in early-mid October. Thank you for your patience and please share with us your insights.

## October Sundays

**October 10** Indigenous Peoples

Day: Guest Johnnie Asuran

**October 17** Rev. Jill McA -

Condering trauma.

**October 24** Guest Speaker Rev. A.

Mtuaswa Johnson - Multi-Kulti

**October 31** Samhain / Halloween  
for all ages

## Upcoming Events

**October 10 Pumpkin Patch**

12-2:30 PM - UUFC Parking Lot

*"It's when we start working together that the real healing takes place."*

—David Hume



# Facilities Council

## BUILDING EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE

Jon Pywell, a certified Corvallis arborist, conducted an assessment of likely construction impacts to trees on our site. On August 24, he delivered three reports: 1) on trees along Firwood and Elmwood affected by moving the sidewalk six feet back from the curb; 2) the incense cedar trees along the eastern boundary; and 3) trees near the proposed addition, including pathways and stormwater lines. The reports will be part of the conditional land use application to the city, which we expect to be submitted this fall.

The reports recommend that about 50 trees — depending on decisions about facility locations — will be threatened or need to be removed. Most of those trees are the incense cedars along the eastern property boundary, but other trees will have to be removed as well.

In addition to the cedars along the east side, threatened trees include ash and maple trees near the proposed addition and close to new stormwater lines that run from the northside of the parking lot directly to the addition and then through the parking lot entrance to intercept a public stormwater line. Roots of the large red oak just northeast of the addition are also threatened by the building and the proposed location of the playground.

The building construction team has expressed a desire to protect the oak and maples and asked Varitone Architecture and MSS Engineering to suggest ways to reduce those impacts. We have also asked the engineers to address groundwater flow which caused ponding under the Sanctuary when it was built in the mid 1980s. A French drain designed by Edith Yang has prevented water from accumulating under the building since then, and we have asked the architect and engineer to make sure it is maintained after the addition is built.

The effort to reduce energy use through the Oregon Energy Trust's Path to Net Zero program will get started this fall with a meeting among the UUFC construction team, the architect, a mechanical engineer, a solar energy installer and an energy modeling company. Energy Trust provides financial support for this meeting and for installing measures to minimize energy use, including heat pumps and other appliances.

## GROUNDS UPDATE

The big news for fall is the multi-species hedge to be planted along the drip line of the Api'nefu Oak **<here & here>** on the Circle Blvd side of the wooden fence, as indicated by the row of stakes. In keeping with our guiding principles **<here>** for our grounds, the hedge is a key component of efforts to (a) protect the oak, (b) increase wildlife habitat, (c) complement the to-be-created new Memorial Garden, (c) maintain the privacy of the social hall deck and patio, and (d) accommodates a mural on the fence for several years. The 12 plants **<here>** that will form the backbone of the hedge are arriving soon, and volunteers are invited to help get them planted. Please contact Michael Hughes if you are willing and available for a work party, 10:00 AM, Saturday, Oct. 30: michael.a.hughes1951@gmail.com

You are invited to collect unblemished acorns from the Api'nefu Oak and the two smaller white oaks off the social hall deck and to put them in the labelled white bucket on the deck. We will use the acorns to create seedlings for planting on the UUFC campus and elsewhere.

Help managing our coming fall leaves will be much appreciated. All are welcome to take leaves for use in their home gardens.

- Rakes have been left out at the garden shed and leaves and sticks on the north lawn can be raked into "donuts" around trees.
- Leaves on the parking lot can be raked up and dumped either in the row of cedars along the east boundary or in square in the elbow of the parking lot at Fir and Elmwood. Wheelbarrows are available at the garden shed.
- There are brooms on the social hall deck, and leaves can be swept off the north end (towards the ladders hanging on the side of the building) of the deck.

To discuss opportunities to work outdoors with others to create and maintain a campus that supports and enhances UUFC as a religious community, members and friends are invited and encouraged to contact michael.a.hughes1951@gmail.com.

# Religious Exploration Council

## FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION, RACHEL KOHLER

A new church year, a new Religious Exploration year, a new set of pandemic restrictions, a new Director of Religious Exploration...there are a lot of changes happening here at the Fellowship. There are likely even more changes to come as the year progresses, before we settle into some kind of "new normal" -- whatever that new normal looks like. Right now, it seems impossible to tell, which is a little overwhelming in some ways. Change is complicated and unpredictable, but it also opens new frontiers for exploration, and lucky for us, that's what religious exploration is all about.

Over the past year, our circumstances have inspired new ways to gather and new ways to present spiritual content. Our forays into the digital world will continue in this new RE year, with a continuation of online podcast stories and activities for people of all ages, as well as the continual integration of storytelling into our services. Stories, after all, are the ultimate exploration of the human condition, ripe with metaphor and themes that are both timeless and ever-evolving. We'll continue to innovate new ways to connect both digitally and in-person as safely as we can as time goes on.

Our previous RE year also saw the resurrection of the RE Council, which spent months brainstorming ways to create more opportunities for intergenerational interaction. The theme of this church year is, after all, "Radical Belonging," and a more thorough integration of all ages into as much RE content as possible is an extension of that. As we move forward with this stated goal, we will also find ways to balance the needs of spaces dedicated to different phases of life, for that, too, is a kind of belonging.

So what's our "new normal"? The long and short of it is: "We don't know." But we're going to explore and figure it out together. I'm proud and grateful to be trusted with helping to guide that exploration as the new UUFC Director of Religious Exploration, and I'm excited to head out on this journey with our community.



# Justice Council

## CLIMATE SOLUTIONS HAPPENINGS

**Together we make a difference!** “In a world that seems increasingly out of control, **we are desperate for hope:** real hope, a hope that acknowledges the full magnitude of the challenge we face and the very imminent risk of failure...

**“Where can we find such hope?** We find it in action. The world has changed before and, when it did, it wasn’t because a president, a prime minister, a CEO or a celebrity decided it had to.

**“Change didn’t begin with the King of England deciding to end slavery** or the President of the United States giving women the vote or the National Party of South Africa opting to end apartheid. It began when ordinary people – people of no particular power, wealth, or fame – decided that the world could and should be different... They were people who had the courage of their convictions, who used their voices to advocate for the systemic societal changes needed.

**“We are the people who changed the world before: and we are the people who can change it again.”** Katharine Hayhoe “In the Face of Climate Change, We Must Act So That We Can Feel Hopeful – Not the Other Way Around”

Shared by Deborah Clark, member UUFC Climate Action Team



## AN INVITATION TO LEARN ABOUT THE PROPOSED 8TH PRINCIPLE

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) and Indigenous Connections (ICT) Teams invite you to save the date! Saturday, November 6th, 1-3 PM, for our “PRINCIPLE 8” WORKSHOP!

Have you been wondering...

- ~ What the proposed “principle 8” is all about?
- ~ Who created this principle & why?
- ~ Why does it matter? And for whom?
- ~ What difference could it make for us?



Join us November 6th! We’ll explore all this & more! Questions? Contact Elona Meyer [elonameyer@icloud.com](mailto:elonameyer@icloud.com)



# Justice Council, cont.

## ENDORSEMENTS IN OUR YEAR OF EXPLORATION

The EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) team, along with ICT (Indigenous Connections Team) have been working to engage members and friends of UUFC in conversations regarding the proposed 8th principle:

Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

Thus far, we have held two Town Halls, with a proposed Principle 8 workshop scheduled for November 6th. Further opportunities for discussion are planned for later in the year. Ultimately, our hope is for consensus-building to evolve over time, with a growing realization that we are not “whole,” until we are all whole; we are not free, until we are all free. UUs have always and must always address oppression in all its forms.

To have a beloved, diverse, multicultural community within and beyond UUFC, we must lead with love. As Cornel West as said, “Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public.”

It is heartening to note that 91% of GA delegates in 2021 voted in favor of a principle addressing racism. UU Black and BIPOC leadership at a national level have endorsed the proposed principle 8. The staff, Board, RE Council, and selected justice teams are currently considering endorsement within our UUFC community. During our year of exploration, considering endorsement is an important part of the process. Here is our suggested statement of endorsement:

*As Unitarian-Universalists of Corvallis, Oregon, and members of \_\_\_\_\_, we acknowledge that our community and the world around us does not yet reflect our aspirations or commitments; we see everywhere evidence of oppression and marginalization based on race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, age, abilities, poverty, homelessness and more. We see the oppressive effect of treating homelessness, addiction, and mental illness as crimes, when what is needed is crisis intervention and treatment. We see how the lack of access to healthcare oppresses communities of color and the impoverished. We see the oppressive effects of climate change and environmental degradation on communities who are flooded, or who subsist without clean water or air. We see the damage done to our democracy through voter suppression and gerrymandering that marginalizes and silences those whose voices are then unheeded.*

*Our mission calls us to gather as an inclusive religious community to search for meaning, build deep connections, and inspire action toward a better world for all. In keeping with our living tradition, our mission, and principles, we embrace the spirit and intent of the 8th principle as proposed, understanding that it may be re-interpreted over time.*

*In our journey toward spiritual wholeness, we affirm and promote the following operational principle to guide our justice work individually and communally:*

***Building a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by accountably dismantling racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.***

*We support and encourage the work of our justice teams and congregants; we look forward to sharing our engagement with the proposed 8th principle as a guide, helping us assess our impact accountably, within a beloved and dedicated community that becomes ever more diverse and multicultural moving forward.*

*We call on the UUFC community to fully engage in the conversations addressing the proposed principle 8 and what it could mean for us, individually and as a congregation.*

# Unitarian Universalism

## CHALICE LIGHTING FOR CHALLENGING TIMES

"Why a flaming chalice?" the question comes.

It's the cup of life, we answer.

A cup of blessings overflowing.

A cup of water to quench our spirits' thirst.

A cup of wine for celebration and dedication.

The flame of truth. The fire of purification. Oil for anointing, healing.

Out of chaos, fear, and horror, thus was the symbol crafted, a generation ago.

So may it be for us, in these days of uncertainty, sorrow, and rage.

And a light to warm our souls and guide us home.

*by Lisa Doege*

*These chalice lighting words were written for the Sunday after 9/11 /2001, but is appropriate for many occasions. It might be particularly useful on "difficult" days.*

# Black Lives Matter

## PUTTING ON ARMOUR

BY SHANNON LANG, A MEMBER OF THE UNITARIAN CHURCH OF EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

I love my congregation, but as a Black Woman, before I enter the doors of my church or a committee meeting, I often feel like I have to put on my armor. Chances are someone's going to say something hurtful. They're not going to mean it, but it's going to happen and I've got to gird myself up for the unintended pain that will come. I know my siblings in faith love me—and I love them, too—but it has happened time and time again.

I'm not alone in this; it's a common experience for Black and other UUs of color. I identify with the findings of a 2018 survey that BLUU (Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism) conducted of Black UUs. Most Black UUs feel a deep sense of isolation and rely heavily on social media to connect with other Black UUs. Black people tend to become a part of UU congregations because of the theology, not because of the community. White dominant culture gets in the way of their communal experience and serves as an exclusionary force in church life. Simply put: Black people, when they show up in ways that are culturally divergent from white, middle- and upper-class culture, do not feel welcomed.

The impact of these experiences, regardless of intention, is clear: the lack of Black and Brown faces in our spaces speaks volumes.

In contrast, when I attend BLUU worship services, which are Black-only sacred spaces, I feel like I am home. I am comforted. I am nourished. I don't have to explain myself, I don't have to address microaggressions, I don't have to say "I am sorry, but you really can't say that, and here's why." Instead of having to enter the space girded with armor for protection, I can enter the space with an open mind, heart, and soul.

My hope is that every member of each UU congregation pledges to do their individual anti-racism and anti-oppression work; that every member searches honestly within themselves, and analyzes their individual part in creating an atmosphere that has been historically unwelcoming to Black and Brown siblings of color.

In order to be a truly welcoming community, the systems of power and privilege that exist in our spaces need to be actively dismantled. Together, we can become radically welcoming—but only if we're willing, as individuals and as a movement, to do the hard work that comes along with it.



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