

JULY | 2022

NEWSLETTER

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis



Between Us Jesse Ford

This month I found myself in conversation with a UU from a far distant congregation. It was a difficult conversation about something unrelated to Unitarian Universalism, but in which we knew each other as UUs. Neither of us was, let it be said, at our best. Now, I'd read *My Grandmother's Hands*, that brilliant book by Reesma Menakem that a few dozen of us here at UUFC have spent quite a bit of time with, many of us in community with others. In fact I've read and practiced this book quite slowly in two different communities. I've worked on and with the somatic practices, not just while reading the book, but sometimes as part of my daily spiritual practice. And yet, and yet ... due at least in part to my very agile brain, not to mention my impetuous and exuberant manner, implementing those grounding, centering practices in the moment can be incredibly difficult. Here's what went well: I noticed my reactivity in the moment. Helpful. Here's what didn't go quite as well: ssslllooowwwiiiiinnngg down the pace of my part of the interaction. In order to breathe -- inhaling deeply, and giving space for a long exhale. Giving the in-spired oxygen a chance to do its chemical magic within my body and brain. Letting go of the carbon dioxide, giving it back in reciprocity to all beings who photosynthesize, for the oxygen they in turn freely give us. (And isn't that its own miracle? I mean, who could make this stuff up? Really.)

Well, at some point the matter came up of where, exactly, our UU values were, to be conversing in this unpleasant manner. Well, OK, maybe I brought it up. And let's say it's even quite possible I added a "y", thus making the "Y" word ("your") out of the usually much more accurate "our" word. Ouch!! Oooooops. Gulp.

Later, after tears were shed and amends made on both our parts, my conversation partner let me know how very painful that moment had been. "What do my UU values have to do with it", they had wondered angrily, especially in this particularly stressful time for themselves, their family, and not incidentally -- unbeknownst to me -- their small UU community. What, indeed? One of the things I realized at our annual national UU meetings this past week was that Unitarian Universalism is alive precisely and only where UUs are living it out in the real world. Our principles are not a creed, to be "believed in" with our minds, but rather a set of values to be continuously practiced in the real world of real beings. (continued on next page)

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.

JULY SUNDAY SERVICES –

via Zoom and in-person outdoors (weather permitting). No reservation required. Covid-19 vaccinations expected.

Live Zoom Sunday Service
at 10 AM:

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

When we practice our values out loud, in the form of our behaviors, then Unitarian Universalism is alive in the world. When we fail to do this, it is not. To conclude, as I often have, that our values are “aspirational” (like all religious principles, right?) is basically to conclude, in the words of one speaker this week “but don’t hold us to it.”

In the words of a dear friend, that’s not good enough. At least for me. I want to not just say I am a Unitarian Universalist, but to actually BE a Unitarian Universalist. Will I be perfect? Of course not. And we’ve been learning that perfectionism as a goal in and of itself creates all kinds of collateral damage. But when I fall short, in words and deeds, in my behaviors, then to that extent, Unitarian Universalism is not alive in the world. Will you join me in continuously co-creating, to the best of our abilities, our living religious tradition?

Summer Services

Weather permitting, we aim to worship on our lawn from July into September. Here’s our plan: on Thursday evenings we’ll look at weather forecasts and air quality. In the event of a >15% chance of rain on Sunday morning, we’ll move the service indoors (not only to make it a more pleasant experience for us, but also to protect our sound equipment, chairs, etc from the rain). In the event of low air quality from wildfire smoke, we’ll move the service on to Zoom so everyone can stay home and avoid exposure to particulates. Any location changes will be announced in advance of Sunday via email. Of course we hope to be together outside for many Sunday mornings this summer! And we know that sometimes we’ll need to pivot in response to factors beyond our control. Thanks for your understanding. If you have questions, or special expertise to share regarding weather and wildfire predictions, contact Monica Jacobson-Tennessen at monica.djt@gmail.com.

Reminder!

A reminder that Rev. Jill McAllister is on a much-needed Sabbatical through August. If you have any pressing needs, please contact temporary Chiefs of Staff, Jamie Petts and/or Jean Gilbert. For Pastoral Care needs, please contact Leslie Chartier and MaryAnne Sellers. For Sunday Worship questions, please contact Monica Jacobson-Tennessen. If you have something to share with Jill, please write her a postcard (paper and pens are in the foyer) and drop it in the box in the foyer for her.

July Sundays

July 3 Rev. Monica Jacobson-Tennessen
July 10 Nick Houtman
July 17 Jesse Ford
July 24 Shannon Hays-Truex
July 31 Lughnasadh

Upcoming Events

July 10 Service discussion with Shikha Ghosh Gottfried, 11 AM
July 17 Gentle Yoga on the Lawn, bring your own mat, 12 PM
July 23 UU-Path Class, 9 AM

“When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it.”

- Henry Ford



UUA General Assembly 2022

REPORT FROM MONICA JACOBSON-TENNESSEN

Our first multiplatform Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly has happened! Around 3200 people attended, with about half attending onsite in Portland and half online and an additional 222 people participating as Business-Only delegate registrants. As an onsite attendee, I experienced it as a GA of powerful moments. There were acknowledgements of people we've lost and whom we mourn, of the uncertainty of this moment, of rampant injustice in our society and of the shifting nature of religious community in these days. And there also was a great deal of rejoicing at being able to gather physically with some of our community and at all the ways we wove onsite and online participation together.

Following the Opening Worship on our first evening, which was offered by Rev. Bill Sinkford and the team from First Unitarian Portland, we had energetic interlude music prior to the first General Session. Our UUA President, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, was waiting near the stage and started dancing, and soon an impromptu dance party had formed in the aisles (which included me! And I am not an impromptu dance party type, so you know the mood was infectious). I tell you this to give context for my favorite line of her President's Report, from the next day's General Session. She referenced that dance party and she said, "We need joy. Joy feels like love and it moves like freedom." This, too, was a thread woven through our General Assembly, along with lamentation, uncertainty, grief, and struggle.

We did the business of our Association at GA, as always: we elected people to our UUA Board, we approved a project to review and renew our national bylaws, we gave input to the Article II Study Commission. Article II of our national bylaws is the section that holds our purpose, principles, and sources; in our national bylaws there is also a requirement to review and consider updates to Article II every fifteen years. We are in such a review period now, and the conversations are rich and designed to include input from as many people as possible. You can participate here, through July 18:

<https://padlet.com/A2SC/GA22> The Study Commission will present their work to us in the spring of 2023 for our GA which will be in Pittsburgh and online.

Hopefully you got to tune in for some portion of the publicly available livestreams – all our General Sessions (which contain reports from our UUA and various organizations like the UUSC and Side with Love, theological grounding and presentations of conversation prompts from the A2SC, and more) and major worship services (the Service of the Living Tradition, which honors milestone achievements by religious professionals; the Synergy bridging worship, which honors youth bridging into emerging adulthood; and the Sunday worship) are available as on-demand video on the UUA website, and can still be watched now. If you only have time to watch one thing, I commend to you Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray's President's Report, which you can find here: **<https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2022/business/ii/presidents-report>**

It is a time of change and challenge. And in the theme of this General Assembly, we are called, together, to meet this moment. With resolve, with collaboration, and yes, with joy as one source of our power and a spark for our imagination. In our UUA President's words: "We were meant for joy, and joy feels like love and it moves like freedom. We were made for this moment. We are the people we have been waiting for. May we be the people that we are called to be."

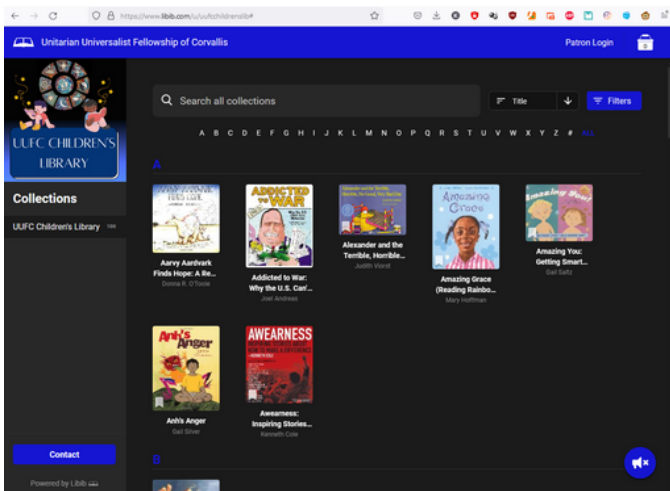
Religious Exploration Council

A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS STRENGTHENED OUR RE PROGRAM THIS YEAR!

This is the time of year in which we honor those who have helped to create and support our Religious Exploration programming to make the community of the UUFC richer and more meaningful for people of all ages and generations. Our Director of Religious Exploration and RE Council have put in so much work to support our programs this year -- Rachel Kohler, Skyla King-Christison, Janet Farrell, Dawn Dirks, Dorrie Board, Naomi Hisch, and Rachel Ozretich. Our YRUU guides, Mark Aron and Kedo Baye, have been a strong, regular presence in the lives of our youth. Our childcare associate Cleo Sandler makes sure our youngest have a safe place to explore and play during services. Our volunteers who have helped out as needed, Steve Farrell, Scott Bruslind, Bonnie Morihara, and Priscilla Galasso, have made it possible to offer RE in an unpredictable time. Our consulting minister, Monica Jacobson-Tennessen, has brought her invaluable worship experience to helping to bring our intergenerational Wheel of the Year services to life. We're so grateful to all of the families who have found time in their busy lives to participate in our programs, whether they've come in-person or engaged online. And of course, we recognize every participant in all of our intergenerational activities, which is, well, everyone! Together, we've created a beautiful program despite the difficulties that the pandemic has brought.



UUFC CHILDREN'S LIBRARY WEBSITE LAUNCH



The UUFC Children's Library renewal process is moving into the cataloguing and acquisitions phase. Besides the generous donation that's allowed us to fund the project, other members and friends have been donating books to add to our shelves, which is very exciting! We're compiling lists of books to fill in thematic gaps and to add newer books with more complete understandings of the complex issues that surround us. However, even after last year's process of culling outdated books, we of course still have hundreds of wonderful stories and reference materials on our shelves already! It's always been a little tricky to find what you're looking for in the RE library, but this is especially true during a pandemic that limits access to the building.

To make it easier for families and members to discover what resources we have available to them, we've started creating a searchable online catalog of our collection. This website can be accessed at <https://www.libib.com/u/uufcchildrenslib#>. It's searchable by title or author, and it even has pictures of the covers of the books! Once we have things mostly catalogued, we'll create a process for people to create library accounts so that they can request books. The website will track checkouts and holds and allow us to keep tabs of all of our books in a way that will make them more accessible for everyone. The website will update itself in real time as we scan in more books, so look to see it expand more and more in the coming weeks and months. Eventually, we'll be able to add tags to the collection to allow people to search by topic and principle. We hope this will be an excellent, approachable resource for people of all ages!

Board of Directors Update

Greetings from the Board of Directors, and a BIG THANK YOU to all who responded to the pledge drive. Your contributions of money, time, and heart help keep the UUFC a vibrant and thriving community full of possibilities. Speaking of possibilities, the board was tasked with developing a policy for helping us select the UUFC's delegates to the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly (GA) - the annual gathering of the central organization for the UU religious movement in the United States. No official policy had been needed in the past because the number of volunteer delegates were generally fewer than the number of positions available. This year that changed! Because of hybrid in-person/on-line access, and a no-cost option for delegates to participate in the business portion of GA, many more folks were willing and able to serve as delegates. The new policy asks the board to select delegates by vote based on participation in UUFC affairs and previous GAs, and to discern those delegates best able to represent the views of most members of the UUFC, and to maintain respectful and congenial interactions with others. To spread the opportunity among volunteers, priority will be given to first- or second-time attendees. We look forward to hearing from our delegates.

Other on-going work of the board is to update and refine our policy on disruptive behavior. This work goes hand in hand with work of the task force to refresh our Covenant of Right Relations. We heard from the Minister and former Board President at the Tahoma UU Congregation in Tacoma, WA about their challenges with disruptive behavior and the policy they adopted as a result.

The board gratefully acknowledges the many contributions of out-going secretary, Kedo Baye and enthusiastically welcomes new member, Jema Patterson.

Sheryl Stuart
UUFC Board Director

Connections Council

SAVE THE DATE FOR UPCOMING MEN'S RETREAT

As a reminder, the men's connection team is planning a full in-person retreat, similar to that in past years, from Friday evening through Sunday lunch, November 4-6, at the Menucha Retreat & Conference Center in the Columbia Gorge near Corbett, OR.

To make sure you have it on your calendar, we will send reminders and updates monthly.

The theme is expected to be "Where Do I Belong?" It will focus on our feelings of belonging, especially in this pandemic and politically fractious time. Where and to whom do we belong? What does that mean as we age, change employers, or move our home from one community to another? How have our gender, ethnic, racial, and political identities affected our sense of belonging? How has it been affected by pandemic restrictions and our political polarization? When have we felt excluded from groups or organizations, and when have we excluded others? How do we build a community together where we feel like we belong?

The COVID situation is still in flux, but we will adhere to all COVID protocols in place at the time to provide a very low-risk experience. Please mark your calendars, and pass this notice along to friends and especially any newer members.

Questions? Contact the Men's Connection Team, including: Steve Strauss, steve.strauss@oregonstate.edu, Jed Irvine, jedirvine@gmail.com, Gary Barnes, gary32640@gmail.com, Lloyd Wagenschutz, lpwz124@comcast.net, Nick Houtman, houtman58@gmail.com

Justice Council

REPORT ON THE JUSTICE COUNCIL FROM JESSE FORD

UUFC's Justice Council (JC) is one of several Councils that serve to support teams focusing on specific areas of congregational life. JC teams pursue our tripartite UUFC mission ("Explore. Love. Act.") in numerous ways. Shared book reads/discussion of critical historic and emerging social justice issues are sponsored, some including members of other regional UU congregations. Examination of congregational processes through both climate and anti-racist lenses has been initiated, and activities offered to familiarize congregants with our outdoor campus, establish a UUFC Carbon Reduction and Responsibility fund, and encourage/support actions on both individual congregational scales to speed work towards carbon Net Zero mitigation. Highway cleanup along a highly visible stretch of Philomath Boulevard continues, sobered by the demise some years ago of a staunch justice-seeking member during this very community service, coupled with the critical injury of a second team member. Public witness opportunities in civic space are supported and/or led by various teams in partnership with local, regional, and national community nonprofits. In fact, partnerships abound, from tree planting to legislative letter-writing, from direct action to direct financial and moral support to our partner church in Korispatak, Transylvania (in Romania), as well as direct support of immigrant and refugee families in our area, from ongoing reinvestment of microloans to microbusinesses worldwide through KIVA, to proposed scholarship support for DACA and asylum seekers. Not to mention our longstanding support for a Sonoran grower-owned coffee co-op (Café Justo) bridging Agua Prieto, Sonora and Douglas, AZ communities that continues to feed our coffee lovers and coffee hours since well before Covid.

JC is presently comprised of 12 teams (Climate Action, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Indigenous Connections, Immigrant & Refugee Support, Democracy Action, Health Care for All, Gender Equity, Partner Church, Secure Housing & Food for All, Social Concerns, Justice Theatre, and Adopt-a-Highway), most of which send one or more representatives to JC functions. During the 2021-2022 church year these included (1) two rounds of a training led by our minister Jill McAllister on some ways of approaching team dynamics when the going gets rough, (2) two rounds of training on the UUFC budgeting and Justice Outreach Fund processes, and (3) spurred by similar activities by the Climate Action Team, one round of reflection on justice making as a spiritual practice. In addition, Jill organized three concurrent multiweek sessions on Resmaa Menakem's useful 2017 book *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*, a foundational resource for anyone seeking to understand the effects and mitigation of individual and systemic trauma on daily life, and learn specific techniques to convert our own trauma-based reactivity to slower, more reflective and trauma-informed interactions, increasing both compassion and accountability in our shared congregational life.

Because justice work is both time consuming and often emotionally intense, it's suggested that justice teams have a core of five active members willing to commit for one year. The annual budgeting/visioning process provides an opportunity for each team to reflect on how they are feeling about both past and proposed upcoming activities, and whether individual members want to commit for another year. These general policies give emerging teams 2 specific organizing goals, and existing teams an annual opportunity to reflect on their immediate past and upcoming budget years, and tired teams a chance to discern whether it's time to naturally sunset.

During the 2021-22 church year, I've been pleased to serve as the Interim co-lead (with Jill) of Justice Council, and look forward to stepping down this coming year as leadership planning develops. In the meanwhile, though, feel free to contact me via my calendly.com account (calendly.com/jesseecand22) for any questions you may have about Justice Council!

Justice Council, continued

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS HAPPENINGS

Shared by Deborah Clark, member UUFC Climate Action Coordination Team

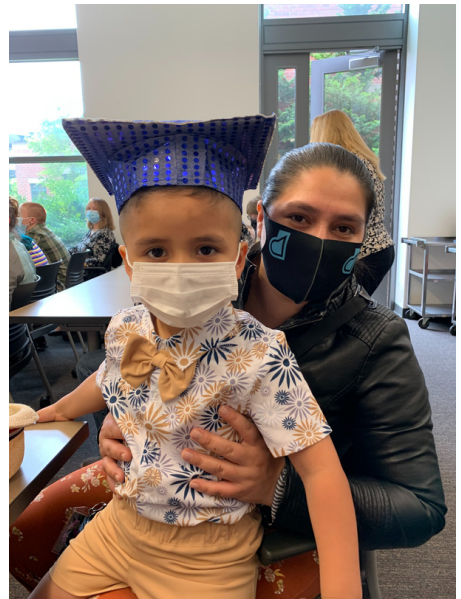
Since 2007 the **Oregon Global Warming Commission** has recommended ways to coordinate state and local efforts to reduce Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions, and to help the state, local governments, businesses, and Oregonians prepare for the effects of climate change. Currently the Oregon Global Warming Commission is developing a plan, "**Roadmap to 2035**," to meet Oregon's climate goals. The plan will recommend a suite of climate actions to the legislature, the governor, and policy makers that have been evaluated for their impact on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, their cost-effectiveness, and their additional benefits beyond emissions reductions. The Oregon Global Warming Commissions invites and welcomes public input for the plan, which is scheduled to be completed at the end of the year. **Together we make a difference!**

UPDATE ON THE PERLA FAMILY

Shared by Nancy Kyle, member of IRST



Jeremías played in the Elementary Strings concert.



Mateo "graduated" from his first year in Head Start.

Support Our Neighbors

Sangha Jewel Open House & Book Sale:
July 30, 2022 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

2935 NW Circle • Corvallis OR 97330
www.corvalliszencircle.com



Fellowship staff

**SENIOR MINISTER: JILL K. MCALLISTER
(ON SABBATICAL)**

**AFFILIATED COMMUNITY MINISTER:
LESLIE CHARTIER**

**CONSULTING MINISTER:
MONICA D. JACOBSON-TENNESSEN**

**CHAPLAIN FOR TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE:
JESSE FORD**

CHURCH OPERATIONS MANAGER: JAMIE PETTS

BUSINESS MANAGER: JEAN GILBERT

**DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION:
RACHEL KOHLER**

RE ASSISTANT: SKYLA KING-CHRISTISON

MUSIC DIRECTOR: DAVID SERVIAS

PIANIST: LAUREN SERVIAS

BUILDING MAINTENANCE: STEVE FERRELL

CUSTODIAN: FELISA TORRES

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**OFFICE HOURS: CURRENTLY CLOSED
PHONE AND E-MAIL ARE CHECKED REGULARLY.**

CONTACT US

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