



## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

# NEWSLETTER

July 2020

Year 55, Issue 67

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### Message from Our Minister Rev. Pam Philips

**Rooted, Inspired, and Ready**—that was the theme of our annual General Assembly (GA) of Unitarian Universalists. I'm writing this on the last day of GA, which I "attended" from my living room and porch.

Attending GA online wasn't the same as being physically together with thousands of UUs. I missed seeing old friends and colleagues, running into them in line for coffee or racing to workshops. We had to be more intentional about being together by setting up Zoom meetings and messaging each other during the general sessions to chat about the proceedings. I missed singing favorite UU hymns, enveloped by the sound of so many voices around me. I *knew* others were watching from their living rooms and porches, but . . .

And . . . this morning, for the first time ever, I was able to share, really share, a GA Sunday worship with the people I love, with all of you. We all listened to beautiful music and inspiring words, together. (If you didn't attend, you can watch it at this [link](#).)

Like so much of life since the pandemic started, attending GA was a case of sadness for what we've lost and gratitude for new opportunities. And a reminder that we have to be intentional if we want to maintain our connections.

In the end, I did get a sense of being **rooted** in my Unitarian Universalist faith. In meetings, workshops, and worship services, I was reminded of our tradition and of those who paved the way to the present. I was **inspired** by all the energy and enthusiasm and ideas of how we might more fully live into our aspirations as Unitarian Universalists. The report of the *Commission on Institutional Change--Widening the Circle of Concern*-- and the subsequent discussions of how we might follow their recommendations gave me hope that our denomination, that our congregation, can play a role in what feels like a great shift in this country toward greater justice and equity. But am I **ready** to move forward and act? One answer I'm taking from GA is that we may not feel *fully* prepared, but we can move into the future anyway.

Part of my effort to prepare for the year ahead—to get ready—is to take the month of July for vacation and study leave. As for many of you, the demands of stay-at-home have been all-consuming and exhausting. I need time for rest, restoration, and reflection. I'm guessing we all do. In the month ahead, I encourage us all to make time for relaxation, for activities that help restore our energy, and for considering how the lessons from these past few months can help us live into our uncertain future.

I'm grateful for everyone at UUC whose hard work and commitment will make it easier for me to take this needed time away: the Worship Team who will be leading Sunday services that promise to be inspiring; the Lay Pastoral Care Ministry, and particularly Jane Mahone and Jennifer Mercier, who will be answering calls for pastoral support; our administrator, Lisa Evanylo, who will be the contact for setting up Zoom meetings and other day-to-day issues; our Lifespan Faith Development Director, Karen Hager, who will be returning from her sabbatical on **July 5**, and the Executive Board led by incoming president, Wayne Neu, who will handle congregational issues.

I am very grateful for this community of love and care, and I will be glad to be "back" in August.

With gratitude and love,  
Rev. Pam



## Contact Information

### Minister (on vacation & study leave all of July)

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**UUC Website:** uucnrv.org

**UUC Office Phone:**  
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## Staff Office Hours:

**Staff office hours are being held virtually until the building re-opens.**

Contact all staff for an appointment noting that Rev. Pam Philips is on vacation & study leave all of July.

## Message from Our Board

Wayne Neu, Board President



As I begin my year as President, the world is dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic and the political pressures it has brought, a refocusing on racial justice issues, and a myriad of financial issues brought about by the shutdown of many businesses. All of these have directly affected our congregation along with the rest of our nation and world. My year as president is starting out looking like a very challenging one.

By the time you read this, the state of Virginia will have entered Phase III of reopening. As of July 1, UUC's building will have been closed for 16 weeks. I, and the rest of the Executive Board, are keenly aware of the desire of many of our congregants to find comfort and seek answers through person-to-person interaction, including Sunday services, in our building. We are also keenly aware of the real fears and dangers that are involved in close contact with others, particularly for our many older congregants. When and how to reopen our building safely will certainly be one of the most important issues we will face over the coming months. At our June meeting, the Board tasked the Safety Committee with pouring through the many guidance documents we have accumulated to formulate a set of procedures tailored to our situation that we might use during that reopening, when it comes. The Board has been fortunate to be able to consult with our member, Linsey Marr, whose research at Virginia Tech includes how viruses spread. We are so grateful to have someone we can speak with who has first-hand knowledge of the latest research on this subject. Do trust that any reopening of the building will be done in phases, beginning with small groups and begun only when we judge that local conditions will allow it. When that does happen, you can expect to see many precautions, perhaps including hand sanitizer stations, one-way traffic flow, and plenty of extra cleaning. When the time comes to begin services in the building, we do not plan to stop the virtual Zoom services. We'll just be broadcasting those from the pulpit. That will require that some additional, as-yet undefined, equipment be installed in the sanctuary. Those expenses may well be offset by the savings we have realized by having the building closed. The Board certainly has many important decisions to make this year!

And speaking of virtual services, I've been impressed with the way Rev. Pam has held us together via Zoom. I can't say that it's almost like being in the sanctuary, but it has been a wonderful way to stay connected to all the feelings and thoughts that came with attending an in-person service. Learning the technology has been a challenge in many ways but Rev. Pam, with Jamie McReynolds doing facilitation work in the background, continues to gain a level of mastery that is impressive. Jared and Natalie Gibbs have teamed up to lead us in hymns, and I particularly appreciate the chance to sing along. Of course, we still have Jared's music for a prelude and postlude. I hope you all have had the chance to join us virtually on Sunday mornings. For an attendee, Zoom is very easy to use, and I always come away being glad I was there.

In other goings on, our Strategic Planning Committee has been working to map out how we will work in the future to advance our mission and vision. They have prepared a survey that I encourage each of us to take (see page 8 for more info and the link). This will help determine what we, as a congregation, feel is important and ways we can work toward progress in those areas. On the Finance Committee, Chris Eagan has stepped down as chair, and Joe Powers has graciously agreed to take his place. I want to thank Chris for his service in that capacity and Joe for agreeing to carry that committee forward.

Continued on page 7

# Upcoming Events

## Update on Building Closure & Use of Outdoor Space

The Board has authorized the closing of our building until further notice, although the situation is reevaluated month by month. If you have a group of 10 or fewer and would like to gather in either of our picnic areas or else-where on our grounds, let [Lisa](#) know the date and time. Note that the building and bathrooms remain locked and will **NOT** be accessible.

## Update on UUC's Fundraiser 2020 (formerly known as the Auction)

Our auction date has been set for **October 24!** Of course, we don't know if we'll be able to make this an in-person event yet, so we are planning for various possibilities. We may meet in-person or do a live Zoom event which would allow us to still have a live auction with people Zooming in their bids! In the meantime, we don't want to waste an opportunity to fundraise for UUC!

Using the new **Auctria software** allows us to post items/events immediately, enables bidder registration and buying to take place NOW! Bid and buy through the website or app. It's easy to donate items by contacting the Auction Committee with the details of your offer along with a picture of the item. Items in the auction may vary from month to month, with some items having a limited offer time. Check the site often.

**Ideas: Could you host a social distance party this summer? Offer food delivery? Provide a needed service for someone or need a chore done yourself? Be creative!**

The website allows bidders to register a credit card and easily check your balance and items you have won. It lets you know if you have been outbid and allows you to set a proxy amount for rebidding.

We have some exciting items already posted: a quilt made by UUC's *Piecemakers*, delicious cakes, donut delivery, fresh egg delivery, and many more with wonderful, creative ideas yet to come!

To get to the website go to <https://app.auctria.com/auction/UUCNRV2020Fundraiser>

For donating items, please contact: [Irene Peterson](#) or [Molly McClintock](#).





Many committees, groups, and activities are taking place via Zoom or outdoors on our grounds during this time of isolating from one another. See below for some of our current Zoom meetings with links and those taking place outdoors at UUC. LFD groups meeting via Zoom can be found on page 6. Be sure to continually check the [online calendar](#) and [website](#) for updates about activities as well as our twice-weekly email announcements. If your group's Zoom link is not included, please contact [Lisa](#) to get it on our calendar and publicized to the congregation.

### Women's Breakfast

All women are invited to meet for breakfast, coffee and conversation at 7 AM each Monday via Zoom until we can once again gather at Panera. Use this [link](#) to join. If 7 AM is too early, join when you are able.

### Men's Breakfast

All men are invited to enjoy breakfast, coffee and conversation each Monday morning at 7 AM via Zoom until we can once again meet at Panera. Use this [link](#) to join. **Note that this is a new link.** If 7 AM is too early, join when you are able.

### Women's Lunch

All women are welcome to join together for lunch **every** Friday at noon on our UUC grounds to picnic together at a distance. Bring your own lunch and please wear a mask when not eating. If raining, we'll meet via Zoom at this [link](#). Contact [Cynthia Luke](#) for more info.

### Mid-Week Gatherings

Join us each Wednesday at 5:30 PM for an opportunity to share some words, music, and conversation via this Zoom [link](#). Gather together for a while and then go to small breakout groups for further conversation.

### Sages Meeting Weekly

Join us each Tuesday at 2 PM for stimulating conversation via this Zoom [link](#). This group focuses on topics facing older adults as well as general conversation. All ages are welcome.

### Yoga Resumes Outdoors!

Yoga resumes on UUC's grounds each Wednesday at 5:30 PM. To participate in our weekly Yoga gatherings, meet near the UUC entrance at 5:30 PM. We'll walk as a (distanced) group to our chosen spot for those unfamiliar with the grounds. Bring your own mat and whatever else you will need. All are welcome to this free class.

### Quarterlifers Potluck & Social Time

The Quarterlifers Group (a social group for those in their 20s and 30s) will hold a potluck dinner and hang-out session at the UUC picnic area on Sunday, **July 12** beginning at 5:30 PM. To ensure we can all maintain social distance and stay safe, we're limiting attendance to 10 people. If you plan to attend, please contact [Ashley Spinks](#).



### SUUSI 2020 Is Going Virtual

SUUSI (Southeast UU Summer Institute), normally held in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina, is a week-long gathering of UUs from all over who come together to play, learn, worship, laugh, rest, restore and commune. However, this year due to Covid-19, it will be held virtually and **FREE July 18-25**.

You can expect worship, a concert hour, age group programming, workshops, sports and games activities, small group discussions, nature experiences, cabaret, and even a dance option. They'll have virtual versions of sacred SUUSI traditions including ingathering, the Transitions Worship Service, Teen Way Off Broadway, and closing circle.

Check out the [SUUSI webpage](#) and find much info on [SOLIS](#), the **SUUSI Online Information System**, including information on workshops, nature trips, youth workshops, sports and games, and how to register.

Come recharge your spirits with Virtual SUUSI 2020: **Kaleidoscope!**

# Lifespan Faith Development

## Summer RE

### Virtual Summer RE—Grades PreK-5

*Books and Cooks Volume II* introduces UU kids to cultural cooking through books from around the world. Blessings, great stories and delicious food guarantee a great time for our budding sous chefs as they learn to make food from around the world! This summer's program is a brand new collection of recipes!

*Lessons will be emailed home each Sunday.*

### Books and Cooks VOLUME II



Date	Book / Recipe	Blessing
July 5	No Summer RE	
July 12	Strawberry Paleta and Smoothies	Latin America
July 19	Matzo Ball Soup	Judaism
July 26	Strawberry Wajapi and Fry Bread	Native American

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### Children's Story Time

Children in PreK-5th grade are invited to meet virtually on Zoom each Wednesday from 10-11 AM for stories and sharing via this [Zoom link](#).



July 5 Family Service—no Summer RE

# On-Going Adult RE Programs

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## Anti-Racism Discussion Group

*Meets the second and fourth Sundays, 1:00–2:00 PM via this [NEW Zoom link](#) [Note: new time!]*  
All are welcome to join our ongoing discussion group on white privilege and racism. Topics are announced via email. Email [Lisa](#) to join the listserv to receive links to the discussion articles.

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## Meditation Group

*Meets Tuesdays, 5-6 PM via [Zoom](#)*

Our meditation group meets weekly for those interested in starting or deepening their meditation practice. Our format is drop-in, so you need not attend all sessions. Open with centering words and basic instruction, followed by sitting practice. Meditators from all traditions and all levels of experience are welcome.



## Conversations on Our Faith

*Meets Wednesdays, 12-1 PM via [Zoom](#)*

Join our conversation as we continue to read the book, *The Lost Art of Scripture* by Karen Armstrong. All are welcome, even if you have not read the chapters of the book under discussion. To learn more, contact [Tim Pickering](#).

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### Join our virtual conversation on Sunday, July 26

Bridging Conversations are a conversational bridge across issues that divide and separate us. They provide an easy structure for engaging in friendly yet meaningful conversation with those with whom we may not agree. These conversations increase understanding, reveal common ground, and sometimes even allow us to discuss possible solutions.

Join us **July 26** at 11:30 AM at this [Zoom link](#) for our conversation on **Upcoming Election in the Time of Corona**. COVID-19 has affected every American and has been called unprecedented. It has also hit during a time of transition for our country as we prepare for the 2020 elections. Our conversation seeks to explore how COVID-19 is impacting our experience of the 2020 election cycle. Led by [Rev. Jamie McReynolds](#).



# UUC Community News

## Update on ½-Plate Donations

Thanks to your generosity (see next article on how to donate), UUC continued its practice of helping others in both our community and beyond. The June recipients were:

**June 7:** Campaign Zero, \$223

**June 14:** ACCE, \$140

**June 21:** Living Room Conversations, \$84

**June 28:** TBA

Watch the weekly announcements and website for the coming weeks' ½-plate recipients. Have a suggestion—email [Lisa](#).

Check out our [Give webpage](#) for information on donating options.

## Join UUC's Anti-racism Group Listserv

Many of us are interested in doing more anti-racism work, but the first question we ask is, "What can I do?" UUC's Anti-racism Discussion Group has a listserv for anyone interest in reading excellent articles and discussions or viewing videos about anti-racism and ways to help combat it. The Anti-racism Group also meets on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 8:30 AM for discussion which all are most welcome to participate in. You are also welcome to join the listserv solely to receive the suggested reading materials. To get on the list, email [administrator@uucnr.org](mailto:administrator@uucnr.org). To attend a meeting, use this Zoom [link](#).

## Join Our UUC Facebook Group

To facilitate more conversation among us, we have set up a Facebook group -- **UUC New River Valley** -- where everyone can post. To make this a positive experience, we'll continue to honor our Congregational Covenant. This is a private group (only members can see who's in the group and what they post) but it is visible (anyone can find the group). Ask to join the [group](#) today!

## June Board Mtg. Highlights

- ♦ The Board discussed the **Strategic Planning survey** with committee member, Stephen Henninger, and provided feedback. See page 8 for more info and the survey link.
- ♦ The Board continued discussion on an **Animal Policy** and plans to move toward a resolution that will balance meeting a need to welcome those with service animals and those who have problems with the attendance of dogs.
- ♦ The Board continues working on updating the Policy and Procedures Manual. The work will continue with the new Board.
- ♦ The Board discussed reopening our building—see page 2 for detailed info.
- ♦ The Board approved Isabel Berney as a member of the Memorial Garden Committee.
- ♦ The Finance Committee will explore a mortgage refinance while rates might be lower and look at our Vanguard investments to assess the mix of investments in terms of UU values and risk management.
- ♦ The Board gratefully accepted a restricted gift of \$300 from Walt Pirie for picnic table replacements for the grounds.

The next Board meeting will be held via Zoom on Thursday, **July 9** at 7 PM. The [minutes and reports](#) of meetings for the past two calendar years are available.

### Questions, Ideas, Complaints for the Board:

Simply send an email to [addresstheBoard@uucnr.org](mailto:addresstheBoard@uucnr.org).

Continued from page 2....

Finally, although the building is still closed, I want to encourage everyone to take the time to come out and stroll around our grounds. They are beautiful! Susan Baker and her crew have once again outdone themselves in creating a magnificent garden. I was fortunate enough to attend a committee meeting outdoors at UUC a couple weeks ago and was struck to find what a wonderful park-like atmosphere they have created. I was glad to see three groups of people I did not recognize, presumably neighbors, walking the grounds that evening and enjoying some time outside. This is truly a gem of a resource for us all.



## Strategic Planning Requests Your Input

Since February 2020, UUC's Strategic Planning Committee (Kim Feucht, Stephen Henninger, Jim Kern, Frank Napolitano, Amy Pruden-Bagchi, and Polly Stimson) has been developing a plan to ensure that our congregation lives more fully into its mission and vision:

**Mission:** *Inspire spiritual and ethical growth. Create compassionate community. Transform our community and world through courageous love.*

**Vision:** *The UUC will be a beacon of liberal religion in the New River Valley. We will join with other organizations and faiths to work for just causes. We will practice generosity and radical hospitality. We will be known as a place of beauty, welcome, joy, and celebration.*

Our group has been working hard, but we need your thoughts, opinions, and perspectives to inform our continued efforts. To that end, we're asking the entire congregation to participate in a **survey** via this link - <https://forms.gle/hDwk9ruCCB5Vudwq8> - on how well our congregation is abiding by its mission and vision. As an added bonus, all survey participants may enter to win a few modest prizes that will support local merchants and restaurants. We sincerely hope that everyone will complete this survey which will be available starting **July 1**. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to send them to [strategicplanning@uucnr.org](mailto:strategicplanning@uucnr.org).

## Monthly Support Groups at UUC

### Parent Bereavement

We are a community-wide support group for bereaved parents and grandparents who have lost an adult or adolescent child. We come together once a month on 2nd Mondays from 6-7 PM to help one another on our journeys. The next meeting is on Monday, **July 13**. Join the group via Zoom. For more info and the Zoom link, contact [Katherine](#) or [Lisa](#).

### Caregivers

UUC hosts a monthly support group for caregivers to share their experiences and challenges. The group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays of each month—next meeting **July 14** at 7-8:30 PM. Join us via this [Zoom link](#). Questions or concerns - contact [Rev. Pam](#).

### Transgender Support

NRV Trans\* Support is a peer-led organization whose mission is to offer support, resources, and social activities to all transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in the New River Valley in a safe, anonymous and affirming environment. To learn more about NRV Trans\* Support, visit their [website](#).

The Adult Group meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of each month (**July 9 & 23**) via Zoom from 6:30-8 PM and welcomes all adults who identify under the trans umbrella or are questioning their gender. Contact [nrvtrans@gmail.com](mailto:nrvtrans@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.



Happy  
July 4th!



# Round the Grounds

## Come Out and Help on Grounds Maintenance Day!

**When:** Saturday, **July 25**, 8:30-10:30 AM (with social distancing)

**Why:** Because we love you! Seriously, without VT's Big Event in April, we are critically behind in completing the necessities of ground's maintenance and preserving what we have.

**Pay:** Your help is priceless; the bank is broke

Many helping hands make for breakneck progress. Plus, you'll get to be outdoors with UUC friends!! And coffee and donuts provided beginning at 8 AM!

Tasks will primarily be painting, staining, and moving wood chips to the Meditation Path so dress accordingly. Contact [Susan Baker](#) or use this [Sign Up Genius link](#) to volunteer. Knowing who will be helping makes us more efficient when doing the event planning.

Below: Compare the "before photos" from 2012-13 and the "after photos" of some of the improvements that have been made possible with the help of volunteers like you. Can you tell the "befores" from the "afters"?



Our wonderful volunteers from a previous workday.







## Unitarian Universalist Congregation Sunday Services July 2020

Virtual Services at 10:00 AM via [Zoom](#)  
Religious Education Classes at Home (contact [Rachel](#) for more info)  
All are invited to share conversation in small groups following the service by staying on the Zoom link.

Join us at 10 AM each Sunday at this Zoom [link](#). Why not bookmark it?

**July 5:** *Searching for Our Better Angels*, Rev. Amy Russell (minister of Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Glen Allen) with Worship Associate Stephen Henninger. Lincoln used the term "better angels" just as the South had seceded from the Union. He had no intention to use his "better angel" to end slavery, but history turned that around. We are at a turning point in our country when we must search for those radical changes that will reflect our country's "better angels".

**July 12:** *Celebrating Our UU Principles Through Song*, Victoria Taylor with Worship Associate Tommy Iafrate. A hymn will be presented for each of the principles. Learn more about our Principles [here](#).

**July 19:** *Wisdom Is More Beautiful than the Sun*, Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig (minister of Unitarian Universalists Williamsburg) with Worship Associate Ellen Plummer. Where do we turn when life hurts, and the world seems to be against us? Today we'll explore the surprisingly timely advice found in an ancient text, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, written by a Roman politician who fell out of favor and lost everything but the resources of his own mind and spirit.

**July 26:** *Wisdom Literature*, Seminarian and UUC member, Ellen Plummer, with Worship Associate Kimberley Homer. While Jewish and Christian teachings are among our six sources, we seldom turn to them in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. What might the wisdom literature from the Hebrew scriptures have to offer us as Unitarian Universalists today?

Rev. Pam will be on vacation and study leave the **entire month of July**. During that time, please contact [Jane Mahone](#) or [Jennifer Mercier](#) for pastoral care matters. For other matters, including a request for a Zoom link via our UUC account for holding a meeting or gathering, contact our [administrator](#).

### Our Mission

**Inspire. Create. Transform.**

**Inspire** spiritual and ethical growth. **Create** compassionate community.  
**Transform** our community and the world through courageous love.

### Our Vision

UUC will be a beacon of liberal religion in the New River Valley. We will join with other organizations and faiths to work for just causes.

We will practice generosity and radical hospitality. We will be known as a place of beauty, welcome, joy, and celebration.



## Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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## CALENDAR: July 2020

### Staff Virtual Office Hours:

**Minister:** On vacation/study-leave

**Administrator:** [Contact for appointment](#)

**DLFD:** [Contact for appointment](#)

All times are PM unless noted otherwise

⌘ indicates that there is a write-up in the newsletter

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>(All Sundays)</b> 10:00 AM Worship Service	<b>(All Mondays)</b> ⌘ 7:00 AM Women's Breakfast & Men's Breakfast	<b>(All Tuesdays)</b> ⌘ 2:00 Sages ⌘ 5:00 Meditation	<b>(All Wednesdays)</b> ⌘ 10:00 AM Children's Story Time ⌘ Noon Conversations on Our Faith ⌘ 5:30 Mid-week Congregational Gathering ⌘ 5:30 Yoga (outdoors on UUC grounds)		<b>(All Fridays)</b> ⌘ Noon Women's Lunch Bunch (UUC picnic area— weather permitting)	
			<b>1</b> 6:00 Connection Committee	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 11:30 AM Men's Group	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 6:00 Finance Committee 7:00 Worship Team	<b>9</b> ⌘ 6:30 Transgender Support Group 7:00 Board Meeting	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> ⌘ 1:00 Anti-Racism discussion group [NOTE NEW TIME] ⌘ 5:30 Quarterlifers' Picnic (outdoors: UUC picnic area)	<b>13</b> ⌘ 6:00 Parent Bereavement Support Group	<b>14</b> ⌘ 7:00 Caregivers' Support Group	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 11:30 AM Men's Group	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> ⌘ 6:30 Transgender Support Group 9:00 August Newsletter Deadline	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> ⌘ 8:30 AM Grounds Maintenance Saturday
<b>26</b> ⌘ 11:30 AM Bridging Conversations: <i>Upcoming Election in the Time of Corona</i> ⌘ 1:00 Anti-Racism discussion group [NOTE NEW TIME]	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

**NOTE:** The UUC Meeting House is closed until further notice. To schedule an outdoor event on our property, [contact administrator](#) Events listed above will be held via ZOOM unless otherwise noted. See the July UUC newsletter (this file) for details. For ZOOM gatherings, the [Online Calendar](#) will have the ZOOM url. That calendar will be updated as conditions change.