



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

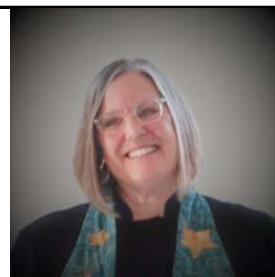
NEWSLETTER

July 2021

1301 Gladewood Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060
Website: www.uucnr.org
E-mail: info@uucnr.org
Phone: (540) 552-9716

Message from Our Minister Rev. Pam Philips

Once again, I write my July letter to you fresh from time engaged with our larger UU movement, attending Ministry Days and the UUA General Assembly. Once again, we gathered on-line instead of in-person, but this year, delegates Stephen Henninger, Jamie McReynolds, Ellen Plummer, and Bob Stimson gathered in Elarth Hall to represent UUC in the general meetings, voting to elect members of the UUA Board of Trustees, make changes to by-laws, and adopt a [Statement of Conscience](#) and [Actions of Immediate Witness](#). And many of you helped Karen Hager and me celebrate the [Service of the Living Tradition](#) in the Crescent Garden. Once again, our congregation connected with UUs across the continent by attending [GA Sunday worship](#) together, inspired by the words and music offered by the First Universalist Church of Minneapolis. It is good to be reminded that we are part of a much larger movement. I will be spending some of my study leave in July viewing many of the recorded workshops I didn't have time to attend and will bring some of that learning back with me in the fall. Likewise, our delegates will share their learnings in a worship service in September.



Looking back on the past church year, I am grateful and amazed at all we have accomplished, in spite **and** because of the pandemic. The Worship Team continued to learn how to make our Sunday services and mid-week gatherings engaging and compelling. What we have learned about Zoom and other technologies will help us as we move to multi-platform services—allowing in-person and on-line participation, starting (if all goes well) in late August. The Safety and Technology Committees are helping pave the way toward this end.

The Connections Committee, Lay Pastoral Care Ministry, Caring Network, Soul Matters and other small groups have continued to hold us together in compassionate community. The Lifespan Faith Development program, including children, youth, and adult classes, groups, and workshops continued to inspire spiritual and ethical growth. The Grounds Ministry has maintained and improved places for gathering and for spiritual sustenance.

The Executive Board continued its usual work while making difficult decisions about the building closure. The entire congregation contributed to a successful stewardship pledge campaign, committing to the present and the future of UUC. The [Strategic Planning Committee report](#), written after surveying and listening to the congregation, will help us live into our mission and vision more fully. The committee will formally introduce and answer questions about their report at the beginning of the next church year. The Leadership Development Committee created a slate of wonderful new Board members and is working on an exciting program you will also hear about soon.

The Anti-Racism Group introduced and educated the congregation about the 8th principle which was adopted at our annual meeting after a vigorous debate. I am proud that we did not “rubber stamp” our adoption, instead expressing and hearing different perspectives. I am excited to see how we will “work to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”

Thanks to all who have made this past year one of moving forward, not standing still, during difficult times. Thanks to all who have continued to show up for each other and this spiritual community. Thanks to you all, our future is bright.

In faith, Rev. Pam

Contact Information

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Staff Office Hours:

Minister:
On vacation and study leave all of July.

Administrator or DLFD:
Contact [Administrator](#) or [Director of Lifespan Faith Development](#) to set up appointments.

Message from Our Board

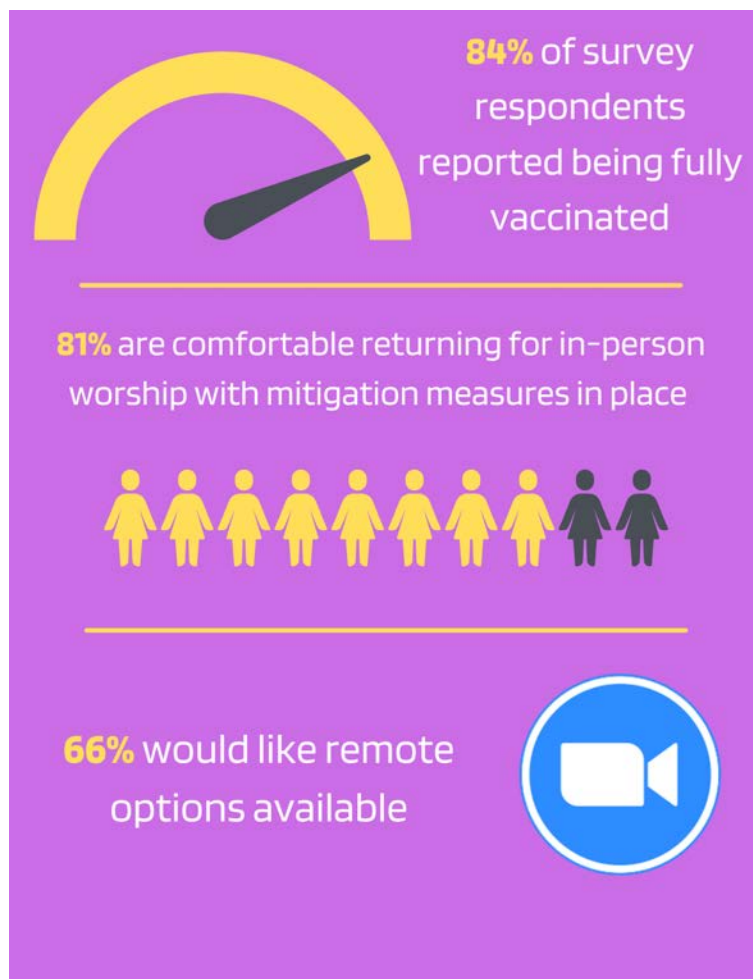
Bob Stimson, President



I am honored to serve this next year as President of our UUC. I feel fortunate to have been able to follow Wayne Neu who has left our UUC in very stable financial shape. Many thanks to Wayne for his hard work the past two years.

The next twelve months will see commencement of the much anticipated in-person gathering for worship services, implementation of the plan created by the Strategic Planning Committee, and initiation of the *Growth Through Service Program* led by the Leadership Development Committee. More information will be forthcoming about all three of these activities.

The Board is very appreciative of all the responses to the survey regarding our reopening. There were 108 respondents reporting on 230 household members. What was very apparent in the responses was the respect for others' situations and needs. The survey results provide valuable information for the Board as we move toward in-person services. Soon you will receive an email with more details on the survey.



Prior to the end of August, there will be several work sessions to spruce up the exterior of the UUC meeting house. Liz Craine, our new Building Maintenance Committee Chair, has plans in process for these. It is hoped that many of you can help.

With many of us having had our Covid vaccinations, here's hoping we can all experience benefits this summer from fewer restrictions on our lives. I look forward with pleasure to working with you over the next year.

Upcoming Events

UUC Poetry Group



All are welcome on the 3rd Thursday of each month (next meeting **July 15**) at 6:30 PM via this [Zoom link](#) to bring and share poems they've read and/or written and to talk about what poetry means in their lives. No requirements!

UUC Hike Starting at Blue Ridge Music Center

Nature's Fireworks: The meadows at the [Blue Ridge Music Center](#) in Galax are bursting with colors right now. We'll hike the 3-mile loop through meadows and forest, stop to listen to the [Buck Mountain Band](#) performing some traditional mountain tunes, and/or hike another 2 or 3.5 mile loop for a total of anywhere between 3 and 6.5 miles. The band plays 12-4 PM, so there will be music with whatever options are chosen. Contact [Jae](#) for more information and to register (free).



Meet on the stone wall outside the gift shop near the restrooms at 10 AM. Gate opens at 10 AM, sometimes a few minutes early.

Volunteers Needed for UUC's Caring Network

This is a vital UUC service that provides assistance, such as meals and rides, to congregants in need. When someone asks for help, the request is emailed to our Caring Network volunteers, and those that can help respond. To join this wonderful and caring group of volunteers, contact [Polly Stimson](#).

Need Help? Contact Polly with your request and include dates, special diet requests, etc.

Staff Vacations

Rev. Pam is on vacation and study leave the **entire month of July**. Please respect her time off.

Lisa Evanylo, Administrator, is on vacation **July 6-24**. She will be checking emails daily and will respond as able. Announcements will be sent as usual but may come at odd times due to her being on the west coast (3 hour time difference).

Weekly Gatherings

Women's Breakfast

All women are invited to join together for coffee, breakfast and conversation at 7 AM each Monday at Panera in Blacksburg.

Men's Breakfast

All men are invited to join together for breakfast (bring your own) and conversation at 7 AM each Monday at UUC in the picnic area. Can't make it in person - join the group via this [Zoom link](#).

Women's Lunch

All women are welcome to join together for lunch every Friday at 11:30 AM at various locations in the area OR at noon in our picnic area - check the [online calendar](#) for the exact location and time each week. Contact [Cynthia](#) for more info.

Sages

Join us on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 2 PM in our library for stimulating conversation on topics that affect older adults. For those who prefer not to attend in person, join via this [Zoom link](#). All ages welcome.

Yoga

Weather permitting, join us outdoors on the UUC grounds on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. To get on the email list for weekly status of class, contact [Lori](#).

July Food Pantry Donations



Our Community Service Team is collecting food in the bins located near the accessible entrance to UUC. Suggested donations for July are boxes of cereal, Hamburger, Tuna or Chicken Helper, and instant pudding mix. Thanks for helping to feed the hungry.

Monthly Support Groups at UUC

Parent Bereavement Support

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. Next meeting on **July 12**. For more info and the Zoom link, contact [Katherine](#) or [Lisa](#).

NAMI Support Groups

Connections Support: Persons living with a mental illness are welcome to join this NAMI support group on the 3rd Monday of each month from 6-7:30 PM. Next meeting **July 19**. Contact [Kimberley](#) for the Zoom link or for more info.

Family Support: Family and friends of persons living with a mental illness are welcome to join this NAMI support group on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 6-7:30 PM. Next meeting **July 21**. Contact [Kristine](#) for the Zoom link or for more info.

Caregivers Support

UUC hosts a monthly support group for caregivers to share their experiences and challenges. The group meets on the 2nd Tuesdays of each month—next meeting on **July 13** 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 NRV in a safe, anonymous and affirming environment. Contact [Hayden](#) for more info.

The **Adult Group** meets every other week, alternating between Thursday evenings and Saturday afternoons. Next meeting on Saturday, **July 10** at 1 PM and Thursday, **July 22** at 7 PM. All adults who identify under the trans umbrella or are questioning their gender are welcome. Contact transsupportinfo@uucnrv.org for the Zoom link.

The **Youth & Families Group** meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM and is for anyone under 18 that falls under the trans umbrella, whether they have started their transition or are just questioning their gender. Next meeting **July 27**. Parents are welcome with or without their children. Contact secretary@heshezewe.org for location.

UUC Community News

June Board Mtg. Highlights

- ◆ Guidelines for indoor and outdoor use of the building were updated — see page 8 for details.
- ◆ The results of the recent congregational survey with questions about returning to in-person services were discussed. 84% of us are vaccinated with 90% expected to be so within the next 3 months. Results available shortly.
- ◆ It is hoped that hybrid services (both via Zoom and in person) will start in late August.
- ◆ Budget for 2021-22 was finalized.
- ◆ Rev. Jamie McReynolds was approved as our 4th delegate to General Assembly.
- ◆ A gift of \$800 to pay for an energy check of the building was accepted as were 2 gifts totaling \$1050 for our grounds.
- ◆ The Board approved UUC's co-sponsorship of forums being held in the Roanoke and New River Valleys by an interfaith racial justice group.

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, **July 8** at 7 PM. The [minutes and reports](#) of meetings for the past two calendar years are available.

Update on ½-Plate Donations

Thanks to your generosity, UUC continued its practice of helping others in both our community and beyond. The June recipients were:

June 6: Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism, \$176

June 13: Planned Parenthood, \$259

June 20: Interfaith Food Pantry, \$135

June 27: Milwaukee Inner-City Congregations Allied for Hope, \$85

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.

Round the Grounds

by Susan Baker, chair

The usage of UUC's grounds is happily in full swing - from a wedding to meetings, Yoga, play days, and quiet walking. I'm delighted to announce my new co-chair, **Denise Martin**. Denise has been an indispensable help in keeping the grounds in top shape for use by congregants, friends, and neighbors. She is not only a quick learner and an idea person, but she's also a valued friend.



Another new addition to the Grounds Ministry is **Greg Evanylo**. Greg has been providing sound advice to the Grounds Ministry for several years, does some of the mowing, and is moving UUC toward an improved system of composting on our grounds.

Kudos to Denise and Greg!



The Grounds Ministry takes seriously the mandate to welcome all. This welcomed baby fawn was found outside Rev Pam's office waiting for its appointment with Pam. The fawn's mother eventually arrived to move her baby to a more fitting environment.

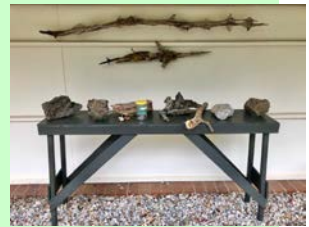


Tah-dah! **George Lally** has completed his "12-step program" with the completion of 12 stabilizing steps leading from the far end of the parking lot to the upper lawn. Handrails were added - one for adults and one for children (lower height of the rail). George got construction assistance from man-of-many-talents, **Dick Luke**.



Along the Crescent Garden side of the building is a nature table built by **David Warner**. Objects found on our grounds and from nearby farms are displayed on the table. Of interest is a bird's nest with plastic netting woven into its construction (not a great idea, but the birds use the materials they can find). In addition,

there are some remarkably interesting rocks on the table. Some are from the nearby Sunshine's farm. The rocks show the presence of lava and steam-created air pockets that confirm the millions-of-years-ago volcanic activity in this area. Two other rocks found about 20 miles from UUC contain aquatic fossils from the time when much of this area was under a shallow sea.



We welcome your additions of other locally found natural materials that help inform us of our geologic history and the ingenuity and adaptability of wildlife and nature. Bring it on and add them to the table!!

Sally and Doug Pfeiffer are our official "Monitors of Bird Watching". They periodically inspect the bird houses on our grounds looking for the species using the boxes, number of eggs in the boxes, fledglings, and box condition. When inspecting on June 13, Doug noted 2 boxes being used by bluebirds, 3 by tree swallows, and 7 by house wrens. While doing the inspection, Doug saw 14 different species of birds on the grounds! Now that is diversity in a small space!



Ground ministry wish list:

- 1) "Master of the Playground". Duties: keeping the playground's mulched areas weeded, periodically trimming the honeysuckle vines growing on the playground fence, and inspecting playground equipment and toys for safety. Anticipated time commitment is 45 minutes once every 2 weeks.
- 2) Small-engine repair/maintenance person to adjust a gas powered, like new, Stihl leaf blower so that it easily starts.

One of the previous wish lists requests was for an individual to monitor and maintain the Meditation Path, benches, and signage. Yippee! Amanda Haynes is now the official "Path Keeper".

Our grounds workers are a valued group of individuals who invest their time and passion for UUC's grounds. We want to embrace your volunteerism - JOIN THE GROUNDS MINISTRY NOW! We have small, but critical jobs for volunteers. Contact [Denise Martin](#) or [Susan Baker](#).

Lifespan Faith Development

Children's Summer RE

SUUMer AdventUUre JoUUrnl—Grades PreK-5

Are you having an AdventUUroUU sUUMer?

We hope all of our friends PreK-grade 5 are enjoying their SUUMer AdventUUre JoUUrnl! AdventUUres can be completed at home, at UUC, or while you're on vacation—pretty much anywhere the summer takes you!

Don't forget—complete 10 adventures, and you will win a prize! See the last page of your JoUUrnl for details.



2021-22 Registration is now open

Families registered in 2020-21 have been sent a pre-filled registration link via email to make registering easier.

New families can register at
<https://forms.gle/ohdNqVGQJUFdd5eu8>.

Please register ASAP to help with fall planning.

Draft RE Fall Reopening Plan can be viewed at
<https://uucnr.org/uucwp/wp-content/uploads/Fall-Reopening-Plan.pdf>

Please send any comments to [Karen](mailto:karen@uucnr.org) at dlfd@uucnr.org.

On-Going Adult RE Programs

Anti-Racism Group

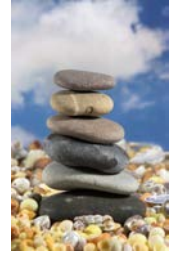
Meets second and fourth Sundays, 1-2 PM

All are welcome to join our ongoing group addressing white privilege and racism via this [Zoom link](#). Contact [Barbara Taylor](#) for meeting topics. Contact [Karen Hager](#) to join the listserv for group announcements.

Meditation Group

Meets Tuesdays, 5-6 PM

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. Join via this [Zoom link](#).



Conversations on Our Faith

Meets Wednesdays, 12-1 PM

Join our conversation as we read the book, *Making Peace with Our Own Death* by Tom Owen-Towle. All are welcome, even if you have not read the chapters of the book under discussion. Meet at UUC, or if you prefer not to meet in person, join via this [Zoom link](#). To learn more, contact [Tim Pickering](#).

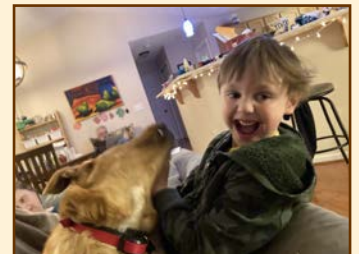
Fall RE Teacher Recruitment

One more RE Teacher needed for the grade 6-8 RE class!

Join a 4-teacher team for our journey into The Twilight Zone this fall with the curriculum "The Fifth Dimension". One week per month will feature our Middle School Youth Group social time instead of curriculum. Lead 4 classes and assist in 4 classes for a total 8-Sunday commitment. We do all the prep required for class, so you can concentrate simply on teaching.



Please note that due to COVID distancing requirements, this class will be held this year on Sundays in the late afternoon, allowing you to attend the Sunday morning service. To volunteer, please contact [Karen](#) or [Rachel](#).





Unitarian Universalist Congregation Sunday Services July 2021

Virtual Services at 10:00 AM via [Zoom](#)

There are no monthly worship themes during July and August.

Join us at 10 AM each Sunday via this [Zoom link](#). Stay following each service for small group conversation with others in our UUC community.

July 4: *Notions of Freedom*, Victoria Taylor. July 4th celebrates our country's independence from the tyrannical rule of the king of England. Is independence synonymous with freedom? Using historical readings, song, and personal reflection, we will explore notions of freedom.

July 11: *Looking for Shark Teeth*, Rev. Viola Abbott and Victoria Taylor. We don't have to look hard to find joyous, enlightening, and affirming things in our everyday lives. Who knows what can be revealed to us if we take the time to pay attention to the moment we are in and then . . . pause. Come and hear a summer story about the wonder in the pause.

July 18: *Exploring Sacred Languages*, Alyssa Short and Stephen Heninger. Pack your bags! Travel guides Alyssa and Stephen will lead us on a journey of discovery and reclamation through exploring our most sacred and spiritual words. This adventurous service will be fun and interactive.

July 25: *Original Sin*, Kimberley Homer. Unitarian Universalists, especially the Humanists among us, reject the notion that Original Sin has any dominion over us. Does that mean we are absolved? Come hear about a brief history of sin, and where we fit in it.

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.

Building & Grounds Use

Outside gatherings of any size are now permitted at UUC. Non-vaccinated people are strongly encouraged to wear masks and/or social distance.

Indoor gatherings of 25 or fewer are permitted in the building. People in the building are strongly encouraged to meet with masks and social distancing. Groups meeting in the building are encouraged to take time to listen deeply to one another's concerns and fears before making decisions about masks and distancing, even if everyone is vaccinated. Group singing is not allowed.

To schedule an event indoors or outdoors, contact our [Administrator](#).

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

1301 Gladewood Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060

Phone: (540) 552-9716 E-mail: info@nrv.org

P.O. Box 10116, Bburg 24062-0116 URL: uucnr.org

CALENDAR: July 2021

Staff Office Hours: See below

All times are PM unless noted otherwise

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
(All Sundays) ⌘ 10:00 Worship Service	(All Mondays) ⌘ 7:00 AM Women's Breakfast (Blacksburg Panera) ⌘ 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast (picnic area with a Zoom option)	(All Tuesdays) ⌘ 5:00 Meditation	(All Wednesdays) ⌘ Noon Conversations on Our Faith ⌘ 5:30 Yoga Outdoors (UUC grounds)		(All Fridays) ⌘ Women's Lunch Bunch (11:30 if local restaurant or Noon if at UUC. Check Online Calendar)	
				1	2	3
4	5 ⌘ 10:00 AM UUC Hike (Blue Ridge Music Center, Galax)	6 ⌘ 2:00 Sages	7 6:00 Finance Committee	8 ⌘ 7:00 Board Meeting	9	10 ⌘ 1:00 Transgender Support Group
11 ⌘ 1:00 Anti-Racism Group	12 ⌘ 6:00 Parent Bereavement Support Group	13 4:00 Committee on Ministries ⌘ 7:00 Caregivers' Support Group	14 7:00 Worship Team	15 ⌘ 6:30 UUC Poetry Group	16	17 5:00 Parent covenant group (outdoor areas)
18	19 ⌘ 6:00 NAMI Connections Support Group	20 ⌘ 2:00 Sages	21 ⌘ 6:00 NAMI Family Support Group	22 ⌘ 7:00 Transgender Support Group 9:00 August Newsletter Deadline	23	24
25 ⌘ 1:00 Anti-Racism Group	26	27 ⌘ 6:30 Trans Support Group for Youth & Families	28	29	30	31 11:00 AM Memorial Service for Stephanie Gilmore

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UUC Staff office hours: Minister: On Vacation and Study Leave for all of July **Administrator:** Vacation, July 6-24. Otherwise, [Contact for appointment](#)
DLFD: [Contact for appointment](#)