

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

NEWSLETTER

May 2019

Year 54, Issue 5

Message from Our Minister Rev. Pam Philips

As we begin our month of exploring what it means to be a people of **curiosity**, my first thought is that as Unitarian Universalists, we don't need to be reminded to be curious. Many of us found our way to UUC out of curiosity. For those who came from other faith traditions, curiosity led us to question the religious beliefs we were taught as children. For those raised without religion, curiosity led us to find out what belonging to a religious community might offer. Some may have just wondered what a faith called Unitarian Universalism was all about—especially those who remember the Unification Church, or Moonies, with whom we are still sometimes mistaken.



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Whatever brought you to UUC, I'm guessing that at least a little bit of it had to do with your curiosity. We practice curiosity here together, as we seek to inspire spiritual and ethical growth--in Sunday services and lifespan faith development opportunities. Our curiosity leads us to learn about different religious beliefs and

cultural traditions. Our curiosity leads us to learn about how the world works and how we want to live in it. Our curiosity helps us discover what we believe. We are full of, and even fueled, by our curiosity.

And yet, at times when what we know or believe is challenged, we can lose that open sense of curiosity. As much as we crave new knowledge and new ideas, we also crave security. And new ideas, new perspectives, can challenge that security. I've found this to be true especially as I learn about how our culture is one of white supremacy—not the KKK, neo-Nazi variety of white supremacy, but the simple fact that ours is a culture based on white norms that privileges those of us who are white. Finding out that mine is not the only (let alone not the best) perspective of the world can be jarring and unsettling.

I find that when I react strongly to someone or something, it's helpful to stay curious: Am I feeling defensive? Why do I feel threatened? What if I'm wrong? What if there is more to the story than I know?

The practice of staying curious helps open us to possibilities—including the possibility that we may be wrong. Which is, of course, why it can be risky. But it's a risk worth taking. In the month ahead, I invite us all to stay curious, letting these words from Buddhist teacher Pema Chodron be our guide: "Let your curiosity be greater than your fear."

I want to step through the door full of curiosity, wondering... When it's over, I want to say all my life I was a bride married to amazement. Mary Oliver In faith,

Rev. Pam

Contact Information

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Staff Office Hours:

Minister:

Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays, 9-1 Contact for appointment or use this <u>link</u> to set one up online.

Administrator:

Mondays & Fridays, 1-4

DLFD:

Contact for appointment.

Message from Our Board

Amy Pruden-Bagchi, Member-at-large



My first ever contribution to the UUC Newsletter! This coming towards the end of two years of service as a member of our

Board. In this time of the renewal of the splendor of Spring, finishing one thing and starting another, what better opportunity to share some reflections on my personal UUC experience with my church family.

I first began attending UUC ten years ago. Sunday mornings quickly became my solace, my escape from "it all", and where I knew I could find strength and renewal that I was not alone in my hopes for a better world. To this day, there is nothing more sacred to me than the space of love, community, and purpose that we share with each other each Sunday. In our busy over-scheduled lives of bleeps, blings, and tweets, Sunday mornings are a true blessing of sanctity and peace - sometimes I feel one of the few remnants of something "real" in this world.

As I continued to attend UUC and become more involved through the years, I became more and more aware that the "magic" of UUC doesn't actually happen magically, it is through the generous and loving contributions of time, talent, money, blood, sweat, tears, gardening tools, or whatever its members have to offer. Thus, when Molly Lazar first called me two years ago and asked me if I would consider serving on the UUC Board, I knew I had to answer the call.

What has it been like to serve on the Board? Truly an honor that I will cherish. To me, the best part about serving on the Board is the experience of having your finger on the pulse of the entire congregation - basically being first witness to all the good work being done by you all throughout our community, and having the opportunity to help steward that good work and ensure that every soul or group of souls with the desire to serve, has the opportunity to do so. In essence, it is about empowering the democracy that makes our church happen and really having the opportunity to experience first-hand, up close and personal, what democracy is all about.

For some strange reason, my 9-year old daughter, Tanya, likes to tag along with me on Board meeting nights and hang out in the lobby reading a book, enjoying a treat with us when we have break time, and peeking in the window from time to time to see how we're coming along. As we left a recent Board meeting the other night, she said to me, "Mommy, I love our church." I must admit, I was a bit surprised, and I asked her "why?" In her words she said, "it just feels like home to me." And that's what service on the Board is all about -I couldn't have said it better myself. I hope that many of you will consider experiencing this joy for yourself at some point in your UUC journey.

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.

Upcoming Events

UUC Annual Meeting and Info Meeting

All members are asked to attend our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, **June 2** immediately following the service. We will elect new Board members, vote on the budget for 2019-20, and conduct other congregational business as needed. An informational packet, including a proxy form, will be made available to all members two weeks before the meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, please be sure to get your proxy to a member to ensure a quorum.

There will also be an informational meeting on Sunday, **May 19** following the service which provides an opportunity for you to ask questions regarding the budget or other issues.

Childcare available for both meetings.



Stewardship Celebration Ice Cream Social

All ages are invited to stay following the service on Sunday, **May 5** to celebrate the conclusion of our (hopefully successful) Stewardship Pledge Drive. Tables will be set up in Elarth with a variety of ice cream flavors, many yummy toppings, and sauces. Just get a bowl of ice cream and create your own

delicious sundae.

Haven't pledged yet? Simply go to our <u>Stewardship webpage</u> and pledge online or email <u>administrator@uucnrv.org</u> with your pledge.

Remember that the fiscal year runs **July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020**. If paying by check before that time, please indicate on the memo line that it's for 2019-20, so it gets properly credited.

Newcomers' Orientation

Have you wondered how our congregation works? Do you want to know more about Unitarian Universalism? Would you like to get acquainted with other newcomers? Do you want to know what membership entails? Would you like to connect with



others who have inquiring minds? The Newcomers' Orientation on Saturday, **May 11**, 9 AM-noon, is just the place to get the answers. We don't pressure anyone to join the congregation - we simply want to share something about Unitarian Universalism and how our congregation works. This is open to newcomers and for people who have been attending for a while but want to know more. If interested in attending, contact <u>Pauletta</u> <u>Copenheaver</u>. Child care provided upon request.

New Member Ceremony

Interested in becoming a member of UUC? We will hold a new member ceremony/book signing during the service on Sunday, **May 19** for anyone wishing to join the congregation. Unable to be there – contact <u>Rev. Pam</u> and sign the book in her office. Note that this is the last date to join and be eligible to vote at our annual meeting on **June 2**.

Child Dedication

We will hold a child dedication during the service on Sunday, **May 12** (Mother's Day) for anyone wishing to have their child(ren) dedicated. The dedication ceremony is generally a celebration of the blessing of new life, an expression of the parents' hopes for their child, and a call to the parents and the congregation's members to lead and nurture the child's spiritual life as it grows. Children of any age are welcome. Contact <u>Rev. Pam</u> if interested in participating.

Second-Sunday Potluck

Everyone is invited to enjoy lunch together following the service on **May 12**. This month, if your last name begins with **Pi-Sig**, bring a beverage; **A-Lam** bring a main dish; **Lan-Ph and Sih-Z** bring a side dish or dessert. Don't forget your list of the ingredients in your dish to assist those with food allergies. Please be sure to bring a **LARGE DISH** as there are many mouths to feed and to be considerate of those at the end of the line that are also hungry.

As always, bring your non-perishable food donations (canned meats, fruits, vegetables, macaroni and cheese, rice, beans, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, coffee, sugar, etc.) for the **Interfaith Food Pantry**. The donation basket is in the lobby just outside the Sanctuary.

Auction Planning Meeting

What?!! Auction time already?? Yes, it's time to meet and pick a date and theme for the 2019 UUC Goods & Services Auction. Come to the meeting after the service on Sunday, **May 12** at 11:30 AM in our library to help get this auction planning underway. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm!

Women's Lunch

All women are invited to lunch together on the 1st & 3rd Fridays of the month at various restaurants in the area. On Friday, **May 3**, gather at Café Mekong in Blacksburg. On Friday, **May 17**, gather at Parkway Café in Floyd. Interesting in carpooling? Meet in the Lowe's parking lot at 11 AM. This is a great way to enjoy good food and fellowship.

EarthSpirit Sisters' Beltane Celebration & Full Moon Ritual



All women are invited to celebrate Beltane on Sunday, **May 5** in our labyrinth. The event will begin with the children's ritual (story time and maypole dance) at 5:45 PM. The adult

ritual starts at 7 PM. Rain date, Monday, **May 6**. Childcare provided.

Beltane is mid-way between the spring equinox and summer solstice and celebrates the return of summer and fertility to the land.

All women are welcome to join in the monthly celebration of the full moon on Saturday, **May 18** at 6:30 PM.

Over 50 Singles Potluck

Memorial Day Concert and Potluck Iftar*

*iftar - the meal eaten by Muslims after sunset during Ramadan

All are invited on Monday, **May 27** to come celebrate the breaking of the daily fast during Ramadan with the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership at UUC. *Itraab Ensemble* will perform Arab music before and after the meal. Please bring a dish to share (no pork and please label any meat as halal or non-halal). Doors open at 6:30 PM. Concert begins at 7. Meal service begins at sundown at 8:30. Music and dancing will follow the feast. Monetary donations graciously accepted.

If you are able to help with set up or clean up, please contact <u>Molly McClintock</u>.

Video Monitor Listening Sessions

The Board is hosting listening sessions for people to express their thoughts and feelings about video monitors. We want to know what you think about mounting permanent video monitor(s) in the sanctuary so that we can display images, videos, and hymn lyrics during Sunday services and at other times. What would we gain? What would we lose? What do you want to see?

We invite people to stay in the sanctuary after the service on **May 12** or come to a smallgroup session on Wednesday, **May 8** at 1 PM or Wednesday, **May 15** at 6:30 PM. People who cannot attend any of these sessions can share their thoughts via this <u>survey form</u>.





Are you 50+ years and single? Come to our next gathering to meet other 50+ singles on Friday, **May 24** at 6 PM at UUC. We'll enjoy our potluck outside at

the picnic tables (indoors if raining). Bring a favorite dish to share, and if you'd like, your favorite game.



Children having fun in the sandbox while their parents who are volunteers in our children's and youth RE programs enjoy a fun night out.

Lifespan Faith Development

LFD Volunteers

Fall and Summer Volunteers Needed!

We are currently recruiting for fall and summer volunteer positions within RE. Fall teachers serve on a 4 or 6-teacher team, leading 4 Sundays and assisting 4 Sundays, for a total 8-Sunday commitment. Summer RE adult supervisors can volunteer for as little as 1 Sunday in either the K-5 *Holidays & Holy Days Summer Edition* room or in the PreK *Sunday Funday* room. If you've thought that you'd like to become part of RE, now is the time! We need your help!





YRUU/COA Bridging Service May 19

MSYG

Friday, May 17, 6:30-8:30 PM

Middle School Youth Group meets this month at UUC for a bonfire with rising 6th graders. This will be our last meeting of the year. Youth in grades 6-8 are invited to come join the fun. Parents, watch your email for more information.

MSYG meets the 3rd Friday of the month, with meetings at UUC and offsite locations. Contact dlfd@uucnrv.org to learn more.

Register online.

YRUU

Sundays, 6-8 PM, May 5 & 12 only

Our high school youth group, YRUU, meets on Sunday evenings September-May, with some meetings held offsite. Teens participate in fundraisers, fun activities, social action, and conferences while forming bonds with other teens.

YRUU is open to youth in grades 9-12. Friends are welcome at meetings. Contact <u>dlfd@uucnrv.org</u> to learn more.

Register online.

Last day of Children's RE: May 19 Summer RE begins June 9

Social Justice Film Series

UUC shows a different movie on the first Friday of each month (September-May) on a pertinent social justice topic. The community is welcome—bring a friend!

Friday, May 3, 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary

Before the Flood

If you could know the truth about the threat of climate change — would you want to know? Join Leonardo DiCaprio on a journey as a United Nations Messenger of Peace, traveling to five continents and the Arctic to witness climate change firsthand. A discussion will be facilitated after the movie by BHS AP Environmental Science teacher, **Adam Rotche**, and his class.

On-Going Adult RE Programs

Sunday Circle

Meets the first and third Sundays (September-May), 8:30-9:30 AM

May 5: Erich Hester and Linsey Marr discuss "A Year in Taiwan".

May 19: Patrick Feucht discusses "Solar Energy: Answers and Updates".

Anti-Racism Discussion Groups

Meets the second and fourth Sundays, 8:30-9:30 AM

All are welcome to join our ongoing discussion group on white privilege and racism. Topics are announced via email. <u>Email Karen Hager</u> to join the listserv and receive links to the discussion articles.

Meditation Group

Meets Tuesdays, 7-8 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.

Conversations on Our Faith

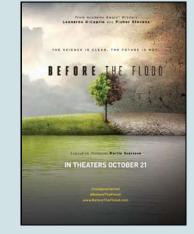
Meets Wednesdays, 12-1 PM

Bring a brown bag lunch and join our conversation as we read our current book, *Love Your Enemies,* by Arthur Brooks. All are welcome, even if you have not read the chapters of the book under discussion. Group members share their insights and personal experiences, and all thoughts and opinions are welcome. To learn more, contact <u>Tim Pickering</u>.

Owning Your Religious Past

Final Meeting May 2, 7-8:30 PM

Join Rev. Pam as we examine and retrieve positive aspects of our past religious connections. Registered participants only, please.





UUC Community News

Update on 1/2-Plate Donations

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

April 7: Planned Parenthood, \$262

April 14: Belview UMC Backpack Program, \$317

April 21: UU Ministry for Earth, \$262

April 28: Black Lives of UUism, \$270

Watch the weekly announcements and website for the coming weeks' ½-plate recipients. Have a suggestion—fill out the form in Elarth Hall and place in the lantern or email <u>Lisa</u>.

Two Mental Health Support Groups at UUC

All are welcome on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6 PM to attend our community-wide mental health support group for those with a mental illness. Next meeting on **May 20**. A second support group for friends and family of those with a mental illness meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6 PM. Next meeting on **May 15**.

Parent Bereavement Support Group

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 to listen, to share our stories of loss and love, and to help one another on our journeys. The next meeting will be on Monday, **May 13** from 6-7 PM at UUC in our library and will continue monthly on the 2nd Mondays. For more info, contact <u>Katherine</u> or <u>Lisa</u>.



April Board Mtg. Highlights

- At the April meeting, Steve Keighton, Alan Moore, and Jamie McReynolds were approved as UUC delegates to General Assembly. In addition, the Board approved that funds allocated in the budget for attending GA may be used to help delegates defray costs associated with attending GA.
- There will be 3 listening sessions in May to provide an opportunity for congregants to give opinions regarding a monitor in the sanctuary (see page 4).
- The Board approved \$1,000 for the choir performance on April 14 at UUC to pay the musicians. The Roanoke congregation will provide an equal amount.

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, **May 9** at 7 PM. The <u>minutes and reports</u> of meetings for the past two calendar years are available.

Questions, Ideas, Complaints for the Board: Simply send an email to addresstheBoard@uucnrv.org.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPOKANE, WASHINGTON | 2019

This year's theme is "The Power of We", and attendees will explore the power, possibility, purpose, struggle and joy of finding the path forward together as UUs.

Not going to General Assembly (GA)? Many of the inspiring events at GA are available to stream at no cost including the opening and closing ceremonies, daily worship services, and the Ware lecture being given this year by Richard Blanco, selected by President Obama as the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history, and the youngest and the first Latino, immigrant, and gay person to serve in such a role. Check out the <u>website</u> listing these events.

Steve Keighton, Jamie McReynolds, and Alan Moore are our delegates. Rev. Pam is also going.

Round the Grounds



Bluebells blooming in Gloria Heath's wildflower area

Spring is a magical time of year on UUC's grounds. The color

palette is impressive, the birds are building nests and chatting away in "bird talk", and each day brings new surprises of plants popping through the soil. There are numerous meditation spots on our grounds waiting for people to enjoy them. Take a walk!

The VT Big Event was a BIG event. Thanks to the supervision and enthusiasm of our members (Bill Conk, George Lally, Bob Stimson, Tom Bube, David Warner, Joe Powers, Walter Pirie, Gloria Heath, Amanda Havnes, Valerie

Bidwell and Susan Baker), the very capable 27 cadets from the VT Corp of Cadets helped us accomplish some major projects. Stephanie Gilmore, Polly Stimson and Sharon Day took charge of lunch for the workers. Many congregants donated food and beverages. You are AWESOME!



Spring blossoms provide a colorful landscape (and the bees love the blossoms)

UUC's grounds are one of 7 gardens on the *Friends of the Library Garden Tour*, Saturday, **July 6**, 9-5. This annual tour raises money for enrichment programs at the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library. We are

expecting 400-800 ticket-holders to visit our grounds. It is exciting but also a bit intimidating/terrifying. In preparation, we will hold a work day on Saturday, **June 29**, 10 AM-noon and hope many of you will help with fine-tuning the grounds in preparation for the tour. PLEASE put the workday and the tour on your schedule. More information will be forthcoming.

NEW Youth Camp at The Mountain

One of the primary motivations in establishment of <u>The Mountain Retreat & Learning Center</u> in Highland,



NC 40 years ago was the development of a UU youth camp in the Southeast. The Youth Camp has been very successful over the years, and a number of UUC teens have attended, the latest being Jason Kern. Now The Mountain is initiating an exciting new opportunity for those youth interested in sustainable farming practices. **Farm Camp!**

Farm Camp is a new and exciting program for older campers 12-17 years old (rising 7th -12th graders) to get a taste of life on a farm. Campers will stay in cabins and spend time each day learning about different aspects of sustainable farming/living including (but not limited to):

- Growing/harvesting various organic fruits and vegetables
- Taking care of chickens, ducks, and turkeys
- Running a farmers' market stand
- Wild plant and mushroom identification
- Food preservation
- Growing gourmet mushrooms with waste products
- Arts and crafts with natural supplies

Campers will help with daily tasks on the farm and will walk away with the knowledge, skills, seeds, plants, and mushroom spawn to start or contribute to an existing home garden.

For more information and to register, go to <u>https://themountainrlc.org/event/farm-camp-2019/</u>. Note that there are many other camps available – for adults, families, and children and youth of all ages.



Unitarian Universalist Congregation Sunday Services May 2019

Services at 10:00 AM in the Meeting Hall Religious Education Classes and Nursery Care All are invited to share coffee & conversation following the service.

Theme for May: Curiosity

May 5: Guest singer/speaker Andrew Neil with Worship Associate Earle Irwin, *Hope's Alive and Singing*. Come hear Andrew Neil, singer/songwriter, who will share his story in words and songs. It is a story of trauma, recovery, and hope. He'll be joined by his parents and members of UUC's Mental Health Justice Ministry and the New River Valley chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). UUC's Choir will sing at the service.



May 12: Rev. Pam Philips with Worship Associate Stephen Henninger. *Nurturing Curiosity*. Children are naturally curious, asking constant questions to help them understand the world and their place in it. We'll explore how we might tap into and cultivate our natural inquisitiveness to help us discover who we are and who we strive to be. We will celebrate the youngest members of our community with a child dedication ceremony.

All are invited to our monthly potluck following the service.

May 19: YRUU Members (Young Religious UUs) and Rev. Pam Philips, *Bridging into the Future*. Each year, the youth of UUC lead a service to mark transitions--the Coming of Age youth move into YRUU and the high school seniors move into young adulthood. This year, we'll also recognize those who are ready to join UUC with a New Member Recognition Ceremony.

May 26: Rev. Pam Philips with Worship Associate Victoria Taylor, *Connecting with Curiosity*. At this Memorial Day service, we'll explore how curiosity can help us create the basis for connections—with ourselves, with others, and with the past. After the service, we'll make our way up the Meditation Path for a special dedication of the Othakarhaka water feature. Transportation will be provided to the upper grounds for anyone who needs it.

Lay Pastoral Care Ministry "Office Hours"

Lay Pastoral Care Ministry (LPCM) will have two Associates available for conversation about any issue of a personal nature you would like to discuss in confidence after the services on Sundays. They are prepared to discuss whatever is weighing on your mind and heart and also to offer information on the services of LPCM and our Minister. Meet them in the small room just off the foyer. If that is not an option for you, there are Contact Cards in an envelope hanging on the LPCM kiosk section in Elarth Hall. Fill one out, place in the slot in the wooden box outside the minister's office, and you will be contacted shortly.





Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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CALENDAR: May 2019

Staff Office Hours:

Minister: 9–1 Tu – Th; Contact for appointment **Administrator**: Mondays & Fridays 1– 4 **DLFD**: Contact for appointment All times are PM unless noted otherwise

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
(All Sundays) 10:00 AM Worship Service; Children's RE No RE on May 26 א 6:00 YRUU (May 5 & 12 only)	(All Mondays) 7:00 AM Women's Breakfast & Men's Breakfast at Panera Bread (Bburg)	(All Tuesdays) א 7:00 Meditation	(All Wednesdays) × Noon Conversations on Our Faith 5:30 Yoga UUC Choir rehearsals: 6 Children, 7 Adult			
			1 6:00 Connection Committee	2 א 7:00 Adult RE: <i>Owning Your</i> <i>Religious Past</i>	3 ℵ 11:30 AM Women's Lunch Bunch: <i>Café</i> <i>Mekong</i> (Bburg) ℵ 6:30 Social-Justice Film Series: <i>Before the</i> <i>Flood</i>	4
5 × 8:30 AM Sunday Circle × 11:15 Stewardship Celebration Ice Cream Social 11:30 Men's Group × 5:45 EarthSpirit Sisters <i>Celebration of Beltane</i>	6 × 5:45 Rain date for EarthSpirit Sisters Celebration of Beltane	7 2:00 Sages 5:30 Mental Health Justice Ministries	8 × 1:00 Video monitor discussion 5:45 Finance Comm 7:00 Worship Team	9 7:00 Board Meeting	10 6:00 YRUU	11 × 9:00 AM <i>Newcomers'</i> <i>Orientation</i> 5:00 Parents' <i>Covenant</i> <i>Group</i>
 12 × 8:30 AM Anti-Racism discussion group Child Dedication during the service × 11:15 2nd-Sunday Potluck × 11:15 Video monitor discussion × 11:30 Auction meeting 	13 κ 6:00 Parent Bereavement support group	14 4:00 Committee on Ministry meeting	 15 4:30 Lay Pastoral Care Ministry κ 6:00 Mental Health Support group κ 6:30 Video monitor discussion 	16 5:30 Leadership Development	17 × 11:30 AM Women's Lunch Bunch: <i>Parkway</i> <i>Café</i> (Floyd) × 6:30 Middle-School Youth Group	18 א 6:30 EarthSpirit Sisters Full- Moon Ritual
19 × 8:30 AM Sunday Circle New Member Ceremony during the service × 11:15 Informational Meeting 11:30 Men's Group	20 א א 6:00 Mental Health support group	21 2:00 Sages 5:30 National Alliance on Mental Illness steering committee	22	23 4:30 Environmental Justice Team mtg 9:00 June Newsletter Deadline	24 א 6:00 50+ Singles Potluck	25
26 κ 8:30 AM Anti-Racism discussion group	27 א 7:00 Memorial Day concert and <u>Iftar</u> potluck	28 1:30 Creative Writers' Group	29	30	31 5:30 Greeters' Salad Supper	