

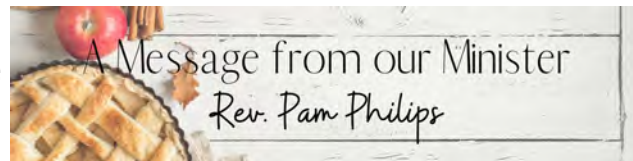


Newsletter

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November 2022

"Change is the only constant in life." So said the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, and this month we'll be exploring change as a theme in our worship and small groups. Change is certainly in the air as we watch this amazing season of autumn colors. Half the trees have lost their leaves, yet some remain a mixture of green and gold, orange, yellow, and red. We are in the midst of change. But even as I revel in the colors of the trees, I feel some sadness knowing that it will end, and winter will begin. And there will be new beauty – stark trees against a backdrop of gray skies or white snow – and all the festivities of December.



Yes, change is constant and sometimes difficult, especially when it comes to beloved aspects of our lives. Especially when those changes seem out of our control. And yet, without change we cannot grow. Unitarian Universalism is undergoing some fundamental changes that have been difficult for some, exciting for others. The Unitarian Universalist Association has charged a commission to revise Article II of our bylaws – the part which contains the Seven Principles and Six Sources that you will find in the front of our gray hymnal (or via this [link](#)) – *Singing the Living Tradition*. The principles have become a touchstone for many of us, a way to explain to people what Unitarian Universalism is. How can we even think about changing them?

And yet, ours is a living tradition, one that responds to new knowledge and understandings of our world. How could we not consider changing them? After two years of work, the commission has unveiled a [DRAFT of new Article II](#) that looks very different from the current language. Instead of principles, it includes seven values and the covenants which come out of them. The central value is Love which "inspires and powers the passion with which we embody our shared values" of Justice, Generosity, Evolution, Pluralism, Equity, Interdependence. It is really different! The Commission invites us all to read the new language with open hearts and minds, recommending that we "read it using one of the practices [they] have started following in [their] work:

Read it the first time to observe how it makes you *feel*.

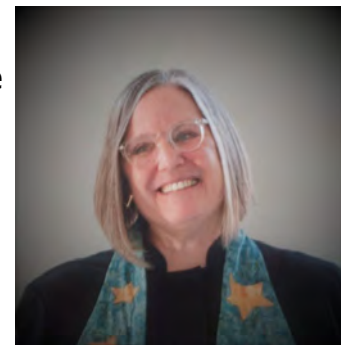
Read a second time, observe what it makes you *think*.

Finally read it a third time *before* thinking about any *suggestions*.

Once we've read them, we can join [feedback sessions](#) to share our ideas with the commission. I've already signed up for a session and encourage all of us who care to do the same.

Even if you don't care about UUA Bylaws, the Commission's practice of exploring change with such deliberation – observing how it makes us feel and what it makes us think before we make judgements about the change – offers practical wisdom. In the month ahead, as we explore Change in our individual and collective lives, let us do so deliberately. Let us keep in mind the words of George Bernard Shaw, "Progress is impossible without change; and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything."

In faith,
Rev. Pam



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Staff Office Hours

Minister:

Hours by appt.

Administrator:

Sundays 10:00-Noon
Other times by appt.

DLFD:

Hours by appt.

If you need access to the building please give 24 hours notice by emailing [Ericka](#)

Message from Our Board

By Nancy Bodenhorn



"Covenants are love letters to Unitarian Universalism." Connie Goodbread, UUA.

In August, our Board met on retreat to establish goals and a covenant. We used a process suggested by the UUA Southern Region. The steps were: 1) Participants shared their hopes for working together in the upcoming year. 2) Participants shared their fears or hesitations for working together in the upcoming year. 3) Discussed these questions about the issues shared: With these as our hopes and fears, what agreements do we want to make for our time together? Knowing what others hope for, what can you offer? Knowing what others fear, how can you provide a safer space? 4) Read the promises. Is there anything missing?

I really enjoyed the process of thinking about my own answers, and especially listening to the responses of the other board members.

I wonder what would happen if all groups and relationships began with this open, honest, and respectful conversation. It reminds me of wedding vows (covenant) discussions with our UU minister. What if senates and legislatures used this process to develop a covenant? Especially, the third part when the consideration is about what each person can be responsible for to uphold the covenant.

This is the covenant that our Board will abide by this year:

We, the UUC Board, seek informed collaboration and clarity in our work of supporting UUC ministries. We interact with respect, trust, deep listening, and curiosity. We affirm one another and maintain fierce dedication to diversity and inclusion in our commitment to the community we serve. We communicate directly and with courageous love. When it arises, we engage in productive conflict. We are focused, accountable, and authentic. We laugh together. We maintain the trust and confidentiality of board members' contributions and speak with one voice regarding board actions.

- We will work together in this fashion to meet the goals we have set:
- *Identify actions necessary to implement the strategic plan recommendations. We will begin by systematically going through the strategic plan recommendations and charging committees to take actions and report back their progress.*
- *Complete the policy revision process and report it to the congregation.*
- *Review and revise the organizational structure of the congregation. Review possible organizational structures and decide which one we want to follow as part of revisioning our own structure.*



Events & Community News

EARTHSPIRIT SISTERS

Samhain Ritual and Social

Tuesday, **November 1** from 6 to 8 p.m. Adults of all genders are welcome to join us for Samhain (pronounced "SOW-en") at the fire circle on the UUC grounds, and for some social time afterwards. Samhain is the Celtic New Year, the day when the walls between the worlds are said to be the thinnest and when wisdom from our ancestors is close at hand. The first part of the evening will be outside around the fire.

Please bring a camp chair if you find the benches uncomfortable, and also bring an autumn offering such as an apple or acorn. We will be smudging with sage, so please let us know if you are sensitive to sage or wood smoke. After the ritual, we will move indoors for some social time. A snack to share is welcome, but not essential. We always have plenty. Contact [Kimberley](#) with questions or if you'd like to help.

Second Sunday Potluck

November 13 at 11:30 AM

Everyone is invited to stay following the service on Sunday, if Montgomery County is not in the red zone for Covid, to enjoy a delicious meal together plus meet and greet old and new friends.

Bring the family, bring your friends – and also bring a dish to share. Please include a small card with the ingredients for those with allergies.

UUC will again partner with WRC for Christmas



In 2021 our UUC community was very generous when members and friends joined together to participate in the Women's Resource Center Support a Family at Christmas program. The response from our congregation was so amazing that we were able to support two families!

The UUC has not yet received an assigned family. However, when the Community Service Team receives that information, it will be shared with everyone in our UUC bi weekly email announcements.

Lisa Evanylo offered to prepare a Sign-up Genius which will include the ages and wishes of the family members. Specific information, such as deadlines and a UUC gift drop off location will be included in the email announcements. If there are questions, contact Pauletta Copenheaver at copenheaver@hotmail.com

November Food Pantry Donations



The Community Service Team is collecting food in the bins located under the coat hanging area in the foyer. Suggested food donations to the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry in November are as follows: spaghetti sauce, pasta, and canned fruit.

Check Covid Community levels before outing [here.](#)

Events & Community News

October ½-Plate Donations

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

October 2: NAACP, \$190.72

October 10: UU Disaster Relief, \$211.00

October 16: Breast Cancer Awareness of VA, 260.57

October 23: NAMI NRV, \$236.23

October 30: Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry, \$324.48

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

October Board Meeting Highlights

- *Chair of the Building Committee, Liz Craine has been conducting an inventory of all capital equipment and identifying projected lifetimes, future projects, and estimated costs*
- *The Board approved the serving of coffee after the service even when the CDC Community Level is RED, provided the coffee is consumed outside.*
- *Board approve establishment of a Memorial Fund for our former minister Rev. Helen Christine Brownlie Flack.*

The next Board meeting will be hold on Thursday, **November 10** at 7 PM. The [minutes and reports](#) of meetings for the past two calendar years are available.

Questions, Ideas, Complaints for the Board: Send an email to adresstheBoard@uucnrv.org.

Anti-Racism at UUC

The Anti-Racism group, along with the Legislative Advocacy group, has been active in September and October, implementing postcard writing sessions after Sunday services, at other group meetings, and among individuals. The postcards encouraged voting among people who are in danger of being removed from the voting rolls. Altogether, we sent 594 postcards to voters living in Roanoke and Prince William counties in Virginia, and in Wilson, NC. The addresses were provided by the [Center for Common Ground](#), a non-partisan voting rights group led by people of color. [UUs for Social Justice](#) have been collaborating with that group as part of UU the Vote.

Please join us on **December 11** at 1:00 when Anti-Racism group meetings via zoom will resume. You do not need to have participated before to join us. Katherine Allen and Annette Burr will co-facilitate discussion of the award-winning book, *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*, edited by Nikole Hannah-Jones, et al. (published in 2021 by One World).

We'll begin by talking about the Preface and Chapter One and decide during our meeting how to proceed with the remaining chapters. A challenging and comprehensive account, the book is dedicated "To the more than thirty million descendants of American slavery." We hope you will join us in discussing this important book.

WEEKLY GATHERINGS

Women's Lunch

All women are welcome to join together for lunch on Fridays at 11:30 AM at local restaurants or noon at UUC. Check [online calendar](#) for locations and times for the following weeks.

UUYAs

If you're between the ages of 18 and 25, the UUYAs (Universalist Unitarian Young Adults) meets every Tuesday in Elarth Hall from 7:00 to 9:00 PM to play games, engage with the community, and support our congregation. Once a month they hope to have an event away from UUC. For more information, contact uuya@uucnr.org.

Women's & Men's Breakfasts

All women and men are invited each Monday at UUC for coffee, breakfast (bring your own), and conversation with the men gathering from 7-9 AM and women from 7:30-9:30 AM. The two groups meet separately. Join in when you are able.

Sages

Join us on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 2 PM at UUC for stimulating conversation on topics that affect older adults and more. All ages welcome.

Yoga

Join this free weekly group at UUC on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. Bring a mat if you have one. To get on the email list for the weekly status of class, contact [Lori](#).

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 (**November 14**) from 6-7 PM to help one another on our journeys. For more info and the Zoom link, contact [Katherine](#) or [Lisa](#).

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 (**November 14**) from 7-8:30 PM via this [Zoom link](#). Questions or concerns - contact [Rev. Pam](#).

NAMI Support

Connections Support: Persons living with a mental illness are welcome to join this NAMI support group on the 1st (**November 7**) and 3rd Monday (**November 21**) of each month from 6-7:30 PM. 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 (**November 16**) from 6-7:30 PM. Contact [Kristine](#) for the Zoom link or for more info.

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 supportive, anonymous and affirming environment. To learn more, visit their [website](#). Two support groups meet monthly, and both groups are sponsored by UUC.

The **NRV Trans Adult Group** meets on 1st Thursdays (**November 3**) from 7-8:30 PM and 3rd Saturdays (**November 19**) from 1-2:30 PM and welcomes all adults who identify under the trans umbrella or are questioning their gender. For more information about these meetings, contact nrvtrans@gmail.com.

The **Families Group** meets on the 4th Tuesday (**November 22**) from 6:30-8 PM and is for parents and/or caregivers who have trans or gender non-conforming children. The group is also for anyone under 18 who identifies under the trans umbrella or who is questioning their gender. Parents are welcome with or without their children, but children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver. The group provides resources, advice, and support for families. For more information about these meetings, contact nrvtransfamily@gmail.com. To ensure the safety and privacy of families, all interested families must meet with one of the facilitators.

Lifespan Faith Development



Mitten Tree



November 1st–20th

Kick off the holiday season with a fun social action project for the whole family! Come experience the real meaning of the holidays by giving to others and help keep our neighbors in the NRV warm this winter.

Donate new mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves to be donated to the Montgomery County Christmas Store. Hang your donations on our Mitten Tree in the lower level as you attend RE classes or the service. A collection box will be outside of UUC as well. Leave your donations any time, and we'll put them on the tree. Gently used winter coats are also appreciated!



Learn more about the Montgomery County Christmas Store at <http://www.mcchristmasstore.org/>.

Children's RE continues to meet for children in Preschool through middle school. Children spend the first 15 minutes in the service and then are sung down to their classes.

[Register Here](#)

[There will be no religious education or YRUU on November 27](#)

MSYG

Friday, November 18, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group meets this month at the UUC for a Friendsgiving celebration. They will also make no-sew scarves for our mitten tree.

[Register online.](#)



YRUU

Sundays, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Our high school youth group, YRUU, meets on Sunday evenings, 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 [dlfw@uucnr](mailto:dlfw@uucnr.org) to learn more.

[Register online.](#)

Social Justice Film Series at UUC

2040: Friday, November 4— 6:30 pm

Practical solutions to environmental concerns are addressed with the hope that the filmmaker's daughter, 21 years old in the year 2040, will face a hopeful future.

The community is welcome—spread the word and bring a friend!



The Buddy Project Kicks Off!

All month big and little buddies exchange messages and small gifts in the mailboxes set up in the social hall. Drop off before the service and check your box after the service! If you registered last month, don't forget your buddy!



Help Wanted: The Sunday Circle Program is looking for a new coordinator for the 2023-24 year. Interested? Contact Rachel Craine at dlfd@uucnr.org

Our Whole Lives

This spring, OWL classes will be offered for children in grades K-1 and Grades 4-5. A parent information session will be held in November for families who are interested.

For more information, email dlfd@uucnr.org



There will be no Family Movie Night in November, but mark your Calendar for a special Family Holiday Movie Night December 16!

Social Action Projects

In September, the 4th and 5th grade (Dumbledore's Army) helped publicize our book drive. The YRUU ran the October book sale, raising \$676.67 for the YRUU trip fund. We were also able to donate over 1,300 books to local organizations.

On October 30, our annual "It's Scary to be Hungry" food drive raised **\$3518.78** in food and cash donations for the Interfaith Food Pantry. Our young people had a great time dressing up to collect food from the congregation and the community, and then helping stock the shelves at the food pantry.

This month, bring mittens, hats and scarves to help decorate our Mitten Tree!

On-Going Adult RE Programs

Sunday Circle

Meets Sunday 8:30-9:30 AM. In Library and on Zoom

Nov 6th - Dan Thorp - "Citizens, States, and the Nation"

The United States' Constitution was written to balance the rights and the authority of three different constituencies - individual citizens, state governments, and the national government. This discussion will focus on how the Founders intended that balance to work and how the balance has shifted over the years since the Constitution was written. This will be a hybrid meeting in the UUC library and on Zoom.

Nov 20th - Carol Davis - "Aging in Place"

Carol Davis, Sustainability Manager for the Town of Blacksburg, will be sharing a suite of Aging in Place resources that Blacksburg and its partners on the New River Valley Aging in Community Leadership Team developed - which has recently garnered Blacksburg an Innovation Award from the Virginia Municipal League. Carol will walk through how to access these resources and provide guidance on how you can use them on your own. Or if you're inspired - convene an aging in place workshop for a group of friends or neighbors!

Anti-Racism Discussion Groups

Meets the second and fourth Sunday 1:00-2:00 p.m.

All are welcome to join our ongoing discussion group on white privilege and racism. Topics are announced via email. Email dlfd@uucnr.org to join the listserv to receive links to the discussion articles. [Zoom link](#).

Meditation Group

Meets Tuesday 5:00-6:00 PM

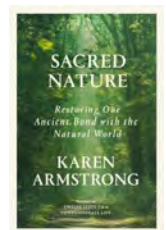
Our meditation group meets weekly for those interested in starting or deepening their meditation practice. Our format is drop-in, so you need not attend all sessions. Open with centering words and basic instruction, followed by sitting practice. Meditators from all traditions and all levels of experience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



Conversations on Our Faith

Meets Wednesdays 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Join our conversation as we read the book, *Sacred Nature: Restoring Our Ancient Bond with the Natural World*, 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.



Reproductive Justice Workshop

November 3 & 17—7:00-8:30pm

This six-session workshop continues in November. For more information, email dlfd@uucnr.org.

'Round the Grounds

By Jim Flowers



Our largest workday group ever gathered to put our beautiful Grounds to bed for the winter. All age groups were fully represented, and their clippers, rakes, wheelbarrows, shovels, and pickup trucks made short, happy work of all the winterizing tasks. Our tireless leader, Susan Baker, had it all carefully organized as usual, so there were no serious glitches of any kind. Tada!



Early-birds enjoyed coffee and doughnuts. A handful of later arrivals missed the group picture, darn it; but most of them are in other photos. And when the crew finished up about noon, they all enjoyed a pizza lunch.



Over the next couple of months we will be preparing for the spring thaw, with our new group of Area Stewards planning for the needs of their parcels of the 6 acre Grounds. Part of that planning will include forming teams of helpers for each Area. Watch for announcements. You'll be able to pitch in - a little or a lot - alone or with friends. OR you can jump the gun and latch on to your favorite parts of the Grounds, or to your favorite Steward.

And the Stewards are:

Tending our **Open Door** - Ashley Spinks
Cultivating our **Gardens** - Susan Baker
Laughing on our **Lawn** - Rachel Craine
Nurturing our **Glades** - Denise Martin
Preserving our **Meadow** - Josh Dugan
Enriching our **Pathway** - George Lally



Meanwhile, please stroll the Grounds soon. Or join in a guided tour after services on the first Sunday of each month, beginning on November 6.



Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Sunday Services November 2022

Services are now in person at UUC and virtual via [Zoom](#) each Sunday at 10 AM.
We welcome you to join us.



November 6: *Preparing for Change*, Rev. Pam and Worship Associate, Earle Irwin.

We begin our month-long exploration of the theme of Change. If we know that change is inevitable, what can we do to ready ourselves for what lies ahead?

November 13: *Nuanced Noticing*, Rev. Pam and Worship Associate, Heather Nicholson. While we easily recognize the major changes in our lives, change is an ongoing process. How might becoming more attuned to those more subtle differences

change the way we live our lives?

November 20: *Our Lives in Transition*, Unitarian Universalist Young Adults (UUYA). UUYA will discuss the role of transitions throughout our lives: both passive and active, expected and unexpected, gradual and sudden. They will share stories of how they have embraced change.

November 27: *Becoming Agents of Change* Rev. Pam and Worship Associate, Cynthia Baute. From protestors in Iran to baristas unionizing, we see groups of people banding together to make changes to their lives. What can we learn and how can we be inspired by them?

Newcomers' Orientation

New or not so new to UUC and interested in learning more about our congregation and Unitarian Universalism in general? Want to meet other newcomers? Come to our Newcomers' Orientation on Saturday, **November 5** at 9:30 AM for conversation, coffee and refreshments followed by the orientation from 10 – 11:30 AM and get your questions answered. Members of our Connections Committee and Rev. Pam will be there with much information and fun activities. If unable to attend in person, we will have a Zoom option.

Email [Pauletta Copenheaver](#) by **November 3** if you can attend and if in person or via Zoom. Need childcare

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.