



# Newsletter

October 2022

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**What role does courage play in your life?** Are you a daredevil who flirts with danger by skydiving, rock climbing, river kayaking, or any number of physical feats that make your heart race? Or perhaps you take less physical, but no less daunting, risks – speaking up to support a cause, risking rejection by asking someone out, confronting bullying behavior, or asking for help. Hearts race when we go out of our comfort zones, but sometimes it's worth taking risks when it helps us to learn and grow, not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually.



A Message from our Minister  
*Rev. Pam Phillips*

I once had a supervisor who chided me for not taking enough risks, for not trying to do something unless I was certain I would succeed. She had put her finger on a problem common among people raised in our culture – perfectionism. We are afraid to do something unless we know we can do it “right.” And it takes real courage to break that pattern, that cultural norm. Part of the push for perfection comes from our own inner voice. We can judge ourselves harshly when we make mistakes. Have you ever berated yourself in a way you would never speak to a child? But we also fear hearing from others who seem to catch our every little misstep. That supervisor may have encouraged risk-taking, but she also was quick to criticize people when they made mistakes.

A culture of perfectionism encourages identifying what is wrong rather than appreciating all that is right, like pointing out that one misspelled word in a five-page paper. Perfectionism focuses on inadequacies instead of abundance, making us feel like nothing is ever good enough. Worse yet, perfectionism can lead to mistakes being seen as personal, reflecting badly on the person who made them. When we fear being judged for mistakes we make, we have a harder time acknowledging them, and we lose the opportunity to learn from them.

As a congregation committed to inspiring spiritual and ethical growth, we can courageously counter the cultural norm of perfectionism by developing a culture of appreciation. We can express gratitude for what people do rather than criticizing. When we are tempted to criticize someone, or ourselves, for making a mistake, we can show grace instead. We can see mistakes not as moral inadequacies but as chances to learn. We can remember that nobody is perfect, that everybody makes mistakes.

Countering perfectionism also helps us live into the 8th Principle – “dismantling racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institution” – because perfectionism is one of the characteristics of white supremacy culture. [Naming that feels risky to me because I’m afraid some people will misunderstand and stop reading, so please give me the benefit of the doubt and keep reading.] When I say “white supremacy,” I’m not talking about the KKK or the people who came to the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. Instead, I’m acknowledging that our culture – in the US and in our congregation – is grounded on the idea that white people and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions are better than people of color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions.

This month, as we explore traveling a path of courage in our worship and small groups, I invite us all to consider ways perfectionism is holding us back and courageously risk making mistakes.

In faith,  
Rev. Pam

## Contact Information

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**UUC Office Phone:**  
540-552-9716

## 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 Gene Gardener, Secretary



The Board (along with Rev. Pam and Rachel Craine) met on a Saturday in August for a Board retreat to learn more about each other and to discuss issues and opportunities for the year ahead. Also, our Ministerial Intern, Anna Tulou joined us for our September meeting.

I am very grateful to be able to work with this talented and dedicated group on what the Soul Matters worship theme calls, "our complex, challenging, and hoped for future." You can see information on all Board Members on the UUC website [here](#).

In the Members Area you can find all the [Board Meeting Minutes and Reports](#). Each month has the agenda and minutes along with reports from the Minister, the Director of Lifespan Faith Development, and the Administrator. The agenda for the next meeting is posted the week before. The agenda always includes a "Member Forum" slot for input from the congregation.

The Board sometimes asks committees or groups to provide more details about specific issues or activities, but the time is open for any UUC member to speak. To find out more, contact Board President, [Nancy Bodenhorn](#).

If you have any questions or something you want to pass on to the Board, feel free to contact me [here](#) or reach me by phone at 540-597-2309

## UUC's New Memorial Walkway

It started out with one person's curiosity about Unitarian Universalists who have made significant contributions to society over centuries and recent years. The curiosity morphed into a multi-year project to inform us of these Unitarian Universalists, some well-known and many not well-known. George Lally conceived the project and made it a reality. He designed and constructed the block wall, the pathway, and the signage. Susan Baker did the landscaping. George researched the literature and brainstormed with Rev. Pam, Rev. Jamie, and Ellen Plummer to create a list of Unitarian Universalists and their contributions. The list was culled several times to limit the number of names to 40 individuals. Some of the chosen Unitarian Universalists are: Whitney Young (1921-1971, American civil rights leader and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom), Anna Spencer (1851-1931, founder of NAACP), and Kurt Vonnegut (1922-1987, American writer best known for his novel Slaughter House Five, inspired by his capture by the Germans in WWII). The final step was designing the four plaques that are attached to signboards. Each plaque highlights 10 individuals and their contributions. The Memorial Walkway is part of the Meditation Path and provides a lovely additional spot to become informed and to meditate. The walkway is located close to Hardwood Drive.



George Lally, Dick Luke and Bob Stimson attaching a plaque to the sign board.



Mission accomplished!



One of the four plaques highlighting accomplishments of Unitarian Universalists.



The completed Memorial Walkway.



# Events & Community News

## September ½-Plate Donations

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

**September 4:** WVTF, \$310.45

**September 11:** Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry, \$219

**September 18:** Literacy Volunteers, \$211.68

**September 25:** Community Foundations, \$201.28

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

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

**IT'S FUN! IT'S REWARDING** and it's a community of volunteers working together.

Put-It-To-Bed work day on the UUC grounds Saturday, **October 22, 9:30- noon** with pizza afterwards.

It helps us efficiently organize volunteers, equipment and tasks when you sign up in advance of the workday. Use this [link](#) to sign up. Questions?

Contact [Susan Baker](#)



**It's that time!**

## YRUU Book Sale

**October 2-9 in Elarth**

**Proceeds benefit the YRUU trip fund and remaining books will be donated to local organizations.**

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

**Want to get educated on reproductive justice?**

**Thursdays from 7:00-8:30**

**October 6, 20, and 27; November 3 and 17; December 1**

This Reproductive Justice Workshop is a 6-session workshop, adapted from the UUAs 2012-2016 Congregational Study/Action Issue, "Reproductive Justice: Expanding our Social Justice Calling."



**Click [here](#) to register**

## EarthSprit Sisters

### Full Moon Celebration

All women are welcome to join in the Labyrinth on the UUC grounds on Saturday, **October 8th at 6:30 pm** to celebrate the Hunter's Full Moon.

Please bring a folding chair or blanket if needed, and a snack to share. Questions? Contact [Kimberley](#)





# Events & Community News

## October Food Pantry Donations

The Community Service Team is collecting food in the bins located near the accessible entrance to UUC. Suggested food donations to the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry in October are as follows: instant mashed potatoes, canned tuna, and canned fruit.

During the month of August 2022, 603 individuals were served. Volunteers at BIFP appreciate your continued generosity.



## 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](mailto:Pauletta.Copenheaver@uucnr.org) by **November 3** if you can attend and if in person or via Zoom. Need childcare – let Pauletta know by **October 30**.

## September Board Meeting Highlights

- ◇ *The Board made amendments to their goals for this year.*
- ◇ *Two members were selected to perform the annual informal audit.*
- ◇ *Board is currently reviewing UUC organizational structure.*

The next Board meeting will be hold on Thursday, **October 13** 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 [addresstheBoard@uucnr.org](mailto:addresstheBoard@uucnr.org).

Lets try again...

## SECOND SUNDAY POTLUCK

**October 9 at 11:30**

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 – a main dish, side dish, or dessert – large enough to feed double the number in your party.

Please include a small card with the ingredients for those with allergies. Tables will be set up in Elarth or take your plate to our outdoor picnic area.

## 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 (Universal 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](mailto: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 (**October 10**) 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays of each month (**October 11**) 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 (**October 3**) and 3rd Monday (**October 17**) 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 (**October 19**) 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 (**October 6**) from 7-8:30 PM and 3rd Saturdays (**October 15**) 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](mailto:nrvtrans@gmail.com).

The **Families Group** meets on the 4th Tuesday (**October 25**) 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](mailto:nrvtransfamily@gmail.com). To ensure the safety and privacy of families, all interested families must meet with one of the facilitators.

## It's Scary To Be Hungry

Help feed local families with a food donation drive!

It's that time of year again. Time for the Ghoulies and goblins to make their annual visit to scare us in exchange for candy. And while we totally support trick-or-treating, here's an opportunity to turn Halloween fun into something meaningful to others!

Sunday, October 30 is our annual It's Scary To Be Hungry event. That Sunday, kids should come to church in costume, and adults should bring lots of canned goods and other non-perishable food. During *For All Ages*, the kids will trick or treat for the food!

After church, LFD will be running a donation drive at the S. Main Kroger from 12:00-4:00 p.m. This is an ideal social action project for the whole family! Cute kids in costume get big donations! Sign up for a 1-hour shift online at <https://signup.com/go/XVEDATc>

Those interested can also go to the Interfaith Food Pantry after the event to help stock the warehouse shelves.

All donations help support the Interfaith Food Pantry, an all-volunteer organization which helps provide food to those in need in our community, serving over 550 families per month.

Learn more about IFP at <http://interfaithfoodpantry.acciai.us/>.



**Our Children's Offering also benefits the Interfaith Food Pantry. Offerings of canned goods or small cash donations will be collected weekly.**

### MSYG

**Friday, October 21, 6:00-8:00 p.m.**

Middle School Youth Group meets this month at Sinkland Farms for a hayride and after-dark corn maze. Youth in grades 6-8 are invited to come join the fun. Parents, watch your email for more information.

[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 [dlfd@uucnrva.org](mailto:dlfd@uucnrva.org) to learn more.

[Register online.](#)

# Reproductive Justice Class

This 6-session workshop is adapted from the UUA's 2012-2016 Congregational Study/Action Issue, "Reproductive Justice: Expanding our Social Justice Calling. Rooting us in our religious history and theological callings, the curriculum outlines the distinctions between reproductive "health," "rights," and "justice"; opens awareness of reproductive oppressions; offers opportunities to learn about ourselves and each other as sexual and reproductive beings; and equips us to move forward, out into the world, with integrity and vision. Meeting Fall of 2022.

Register online at <https://forms.gle/mRC4YZHh55SFKcmz5>.



## The Buddy Project Returns!

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to become buddies with a member of another generation! Registered children and adults will be paired and will exchange short notes and small gifts, without knowing each other's names. On December 18, they will meet in person at our Holiday Multi-generational Service! Perhaps everyone in your family can make a new Buddy!

You must register by **October 30** to participate, so don't delay! Register [here](#).



## Social Justice Film Series

Friday, October 7— 6:30 pm

### Who we Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America

Interweaving lecture, personal anecdotes, interviews, and shocking revelations, in WHO WE ARE: A Chronicle of Racism in America, criminal defense/civil rights lawyer Jeffery Robinson draws a stark timeline of anti-Black racism in the United States, from slavery to the modern myth of a post-racial America.

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





# Family Movie Night—Coco

**Friday, October 28, 6:30 PM**

Accompanied by a charming trickster, a young musician embarks on an extraordinary journey through the colorful Land of the Dead. All ages welcome! Popcorn provided. Pizza available for purchase.



## On-Going Adult RE Programs

### Sunday Circle

*Meets Sunday 8:30-9:30 AM.*

**October 16:** Mark Benson will discuss "The ideology of christian-nationalism: The teachings of Jesus, religious pluralism, and world peace." What specifically is the ideology of christian-nationalism? What explains its rising appeal? How do the teachings of Jesus relate to the ideology? What themes in the gospels shed light on issues of greed, power, and change? Beyond its unfounded theology, how does christian-nationalism contradict democratic ideals, undermine individual sovereignty, promote state control, and threaten peace around the world. Who are the people of influence that can counteract the ideology of christian-nationalism? What strategies can UUs use to promote religious pluralism and activate faith leaders toward goals based in equality and inclusion to make a better world?

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### 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@uucnrv.org](mailto:dlfd@uucnrv.org) to join the listserv to receive links to the discussion articles. [Zoom link](#).

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### Meditation Group

*Meets Tuesday 5:00-6:00 PM*

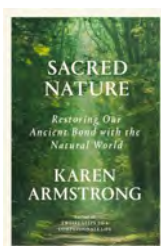
Our meditation group meets weekly for those interested in starting or deepening their meditation practice. Our format is drop-in, so you need not attend all sessions. Open with centering words and basic instruction, followed by sitting practice. Meditators from all traditions and all levels of experience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



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### 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.



# 'Round the Grounds

By Susan Baker

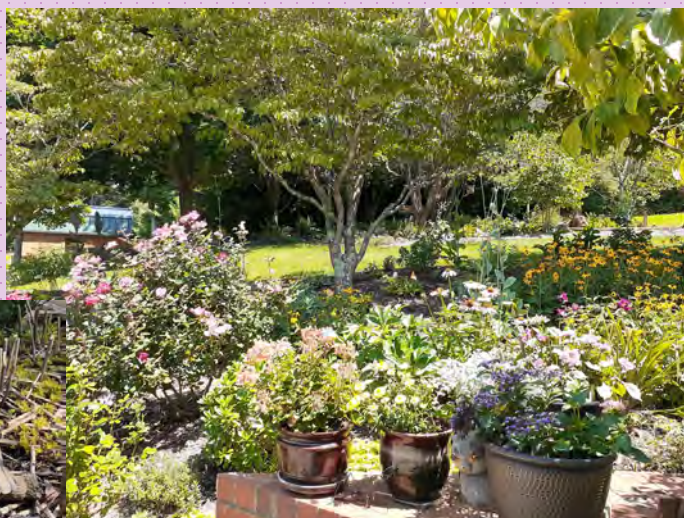
We are close to hitting the jack-pot! There are six geographical zones on the UUC property (a sixth zone has been added). Yes, it's true – five of the six zones have been claimed! The new zone stewards are Ashley Dugan, Josh Dugan, Susan Baker, George Lally, and Denise Martin.

The really cool thing is that the stewards are gung-ho, love the grounds, and represent the gamut of ages. A sixth steward is needed to step forward and join this amazing team of committed zone stewards. [Jim Flowers](#) will gladly provide details for the tasks involved in the sixth zone. The zone stewards will be recruiting people to work with them in their particular zone – please be responsive if they contact you.

Hats off to the “water angels” who have kept the potted flowers watered and healthy during the spring, summer and fall months. These special people are Judy Furr, Jane Mahone, Brigitte Flowers, and Jill Kiecolt. Sharon Day helped with removing the spent blossoms on the roses and potted flowers.

These two rocking chairs are a perfect place for relaxed viewing of the crescent flower garden and the insects and birds that come and go in the garden. The chairs and other garden/lawn equipment were donated by Bonnie and David Lievsay who are downsizing before their upcoming move.

If you are downsizing or just getting rid of garden/lawn equipment (e.g. rakes, hoses, pails, wheelbarrows, etc.), please consider offering them to the UUC Grounds Ministry where they will have a good home. We are most grateful for other congregants who have made recent significant donations: Joe and Linda Powers, a self-propel lawn mower; Jim and Brigitte Flowers, a very stable two wheeled wheelbarrow. Muchas gracias for the many donations we have received over the years! We couldn't do what we do without the donors of equipment and plants



## Unitarian Universalist Congregation

### Sunday Services October 2022

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

**October 2:** *Collective Courage*, Rev. Pam Philips with Worship Associate, Victoria Taylor. We'll begin our month with the theme of Walking the Path of Courage by considering how we might walk with courage as a community. How do we acknowledge our communal strengths as well as repent of our shortcomings so that we may move forward together without them.

**October 9:** Are You Afraid of the Dark? Ministerial Intern, Anna Tulou with Worship Associate Heather Nicholson. As we move into the darker half of the year, it is fitting that we explore our feelings about darkness, within and without, and the fears it stirs within us. Why is the dark so often stigmatized? Can we learn to see the dark in new ways? Can we move past fear and venture courageously into the dark?

**October 16:** Courageous Love. Rev. Pam with Worship Associate, Ellen Plummer. Our mission says we aspire to "Transform our community and the world through courageous love" -- but what is courageous about our love?

**October 23:** Courageous Communication. Rev. Pam with Worship Associate, Cynthia Baute. Dangerous physical feats certainly require courage, but perhaps more daunting and commonplace are the times we need courage to speak up, to tell uncomfortable truths, to address conflicts rather than pretend they don't exist.

**October 30:** Celebrating the Courage of our Ancestors. Rev. Pam with Ministerial Intern, Anna Tulou. On the eve of Halloween, we'll explore how those who came before us walked the path of courage. We'll also celebrate our annual tradition - "It's Scary to Be Hungry" - our children wearing their costumes and collecting canned goods for the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry before they go to their classes.



#### 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.