



NEWSLETTER

July 2019

Year 54, Issue 7

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Message from Our Minister Rev. Pam Philips

Summertime, and the living is easy--so goes the song. But as I look ahead to the month of July, I'm not so sure those words ring true. Many of us are blessed to be able to take vacations from work during the summer, and those who don't have vacation do have longer days and summertime activities to enjoy. Yet with the bustle of travel and the need to plan for children who are out of school, summertime can feel anything but easy.

While I will be away from UUC for the month, taking a combination of vacation and study leave, my plans include going to Charlottesville to clean up our house there to prepare it for sale. Once the house is sold, Jamie and I will begin looking in earnest to buy a house in Blacksburg, and those of you who have bought or sold houses here know that this may not be an easy task. (We welcome your tips on houses going onto the market!)



We will also be heading back out west to spend a week with family on a lake in the Columbia River Gorge. This is the place where I most feel at ease, spending time on the water and soaking in the beauty of nature. We especially look forward to being with loved ones because we don't see them often, but also because some are facing health challenges that remind us that our time together is limited. We are never certain when we might have to say goodbye. Facing the realities of life isn't easy.

Even if our own lives *are* feeling easy this summer, we're reminded daily that it is not so for too many in our world. The last week in June we've been painfully reminded of the conditions that our neighbors to the south are enduring as they try to escape violence and poverty in their home countries, only to be met with danger on the journey and family separation and detention once they arrive. Several organizations in Blacksburg are sponsoring one of hundreds of [Lights for Liberty](#) events being held across the country on **July 12** to protest the treatment of migrants. I encourage all who are able to attend. Doing *something* helps to ease the pain and frustration of seeing what is wrong with the world.

Summertime, and the living is easy? Yes, . . . and no. As we look ahead to the month of July, I encourage us all to appreciate those moments of ease when we are blessed to have them, but also to seek them out when we find that our lives are getting too busy and frenetic. Intentionally enjoying moments of quiet in the cool of the morning, walking out to gaze at the stars at night, taking a deep breath and bringing to mind the blessings of our lives—small ways to make our living easier. I'll also be taking advantage of my time off by attending Sunday services. Gathering with this spiritual community (and visiting other UU congregations when we're on the road) provides moments of peace and ease but also strengthens and fortifies us for the challenges of life.

Whatever this summer holds for you, whether you travel far away or stay close to home, I wish you all the blessings of the season. And remember to collect a little water wherever you are to bring back to UUC in August for our ingathering water communion on **August 25**. Whether life is easy or hard, remember, too, that our spiritual community is here for you.

With gratitude,

Rev. Pam



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Staff Office Hours:

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Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays, 9-1
Contact for appointment or use this [link](#) to set one up online.

Administrator:

Mondays & Fridays, 1-4

DLFD:

Contact for appointment.

Message from Our Board

Steve Keighton, President



I write this first newsletter article as Board President fresh from my first ever UUA General Assembly (GA) in beautiful Spokane, WA (with some time spent in the Cascades and Seattle also). In addition to being overwhelmed (in a good way) by the high energy, the powerful messages from sermons, songs, poems, speakers and workshops, and the consistent call for all of us to step up our work for justice. For me personally, it was a rare and wonderful opportunity to make all sorts of connections beyond our local UUC community. To see and hear the commitment and passion of SO many diverse, intelligent, and loving people was further confirmation that I have found the right spiritual home (although it took a while to get used to being in UU "megachurch" in the massive Spoke Convention Center). I also made a great connection with my host family with whom I stayed, and while we live on opposite sides of the country, I hope to remain in touch and see them again.

Other important connections that further energized me included breathing deeply the fresh air and stunning beauty of the northern Cascade Mountains for two short days following GA, and then meeting up with a couple of friends from high school who are now living in Seattle that I hadn't seen in about 30 years. I even had some inspiring conversations with people on airplanes.

I am so grateful for all connections made on this trip ("adventure" or "journey" are probably more accurate words), not only with the environment, but with so many people within and beyond the larger UU community. These powerful social and environmental connections further affirmed the value to me personally of our [1st and 7th principles](#), and I very much look forward to telling you much more from the pulpit in August with Rev. Pam and Jamie. I also would love to hear what kinds of connections you are making on summer adventures.

I now feel more energized and better-prepared to serve as your Board President in this new year, which we expect will include embarking on a congregational journey to better connect with our [mission, vision, and covenant](#) and collectively prioritize what our commitments are to supporting justice (social, environmental, etc.) both within our congregation and beyond.

To wrap up on more of a logistical note, I want to remind you who else is serving on your Board for the 2019-20 year: Wayne Neu (President-Elect), Nancy Bodenhorn (Secretary), Sandy Power (Treasurer), Dan Kominsky (At-large), Nancy Norton (At-large), and David Hundley (At-large), and that you can contact us via adresstheboard@uucnrg.org or myself directly via president@uucnrv.org. Similar to last year, we'll each take turns writing the monthly Board newsletter article as a way of your getting to know each of us a little better.

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

Women's Lunch

All women are invited to lunch together on the 1st & 3rd Fridays of the month at 11:30 AM at various restaurants in the area. On **July 5**, we gather at *Yassimmo Italian Grill & Pizzeria* in Blacksburg, and on **July 19**, we gather at *Lefty's*, also in Blacksburg.



EarthSpirit Sisters' Full Moon Celebration

EarthSpirit Sisters welcome all women to celebrate the full moon in this earth-based ritual on Sunday, **July 14** at a members' home in Pulaski. Contact [Susanne](#) for directions.

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 **July 15**. 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 **July 17**.

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 on 2nd Mondays from 6-7 PM 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, **July 8** in room 5. For more info, contact [Katherine](#) or [Lisa](#).

Annual Goods & Services Auction Update



Save the date for UUC's 2019 Service Auction on Saturday, **October 26** at 5 PM.

Join us as we gather to have loads of fun at our 29th annual service auction while raising funds to support our annual budget. The children will have their own fun-filled party expertly planned by Rachel Craine. The [auction website](#) is up so watch for info on when it's time to enter your exciting, community-enhancing offerings. Questions? Want to help? Contact auction co-chairs, Joe and [Linda Powers](#), [Molly McClintock](#) and [Irene Peterson](#) or attend the next short planning meeting following the service on Sunday, **July 21** in the library. Anyone interested in helping with our biggest FUNdraiser of the year is welcome to attend.

Staff Vacations

Rev. Pam is on vacation **all of July through August 7** and will be out of town **July 19-26**. She will respond to emails as time allows. Please respect her time off.

Lisa Evanylo, Administrator, is on vacation **July 12-20** and will respond to emails as time allows. Please send all information for the **July 21** bulletin to [Isabel Berney](#).

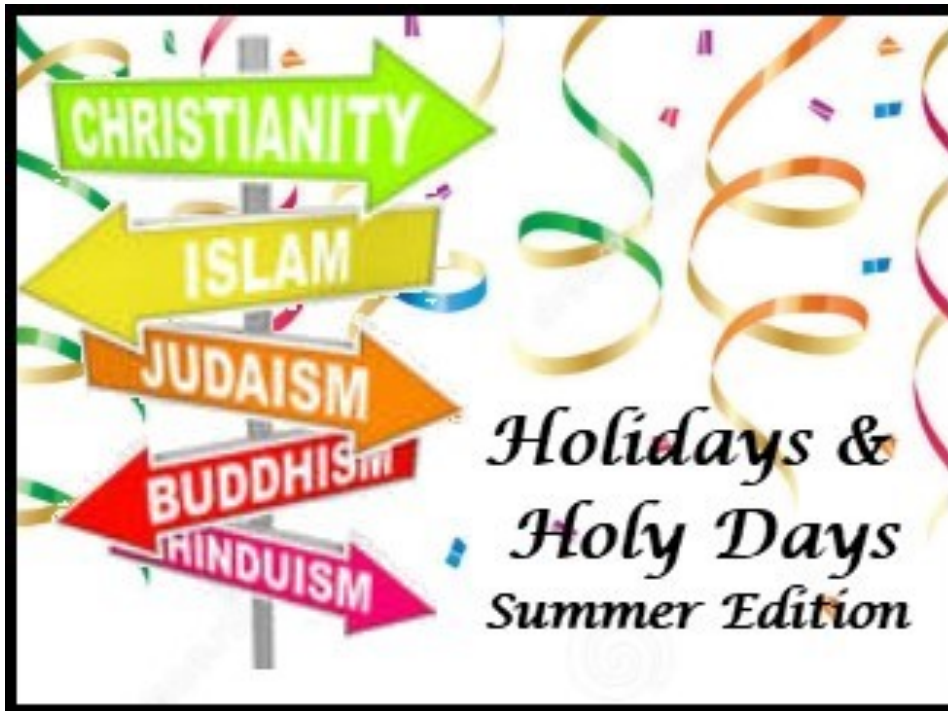
Karen Hager, Director of Lifespan Faith Development, will be taking time off with dates TBD. Watch for more info.

Second-Sunday Potluck

Everyone is invited to enjoy lunch together following the service on **July 14**. This month, if your last name begins with **Sih-V**, bring a beverage; **A-Lam** bring a main dish; **Lan-Sig** and **W-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.

Lifespan Faith Development



JULY	
7	Ivan Kupala Day
14	The Heracleia
21	Pi Approximation Day
28	Picnic Day

Summer RE on Sundays at 10 AM—Grades K-5

Celebrate a different holiday or holy day each Sunday this summer!

Please note that children do not go into the sanctuary first during the summer.

PreK Sunday Funday

Preschoolers have their own RE program each Sunday morning. Bring a toy to share as we play together and enjoy a story. Ages 3 - rising kindergarteners.

Those moving to the PreK room this fall are invited to join Sunday Funday this summer to begin the transition. Parents are welcome to stay as needed to help with the transition.



[Register for Fall Children's & Youth Programs](#)



Join our first conversation on Sunday, July 28!

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

Join us **July 28** in the Library after the service for our first conversation: "The America We Want to Be".

When the Declaration of Independence was written, not everyone was included in the famous statement about "pursuit of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." And while the aspirations expressed in our founding documents resonate for some more than others, there are many views regarding the degree to which we have advanced these aspirations for everyone. Some focus more on the great strides we have made; others point to how far we still need to go. Some believe that focusing on the past prevents forward progress; others think we still need to come to terms with our shadow side.

Summer Tai Chi Class

Temple Style Tai Chi is held Tuesdays and Thursdays through **August 1** from 10-11 AM in Elarth Hall. The class is free and open to all ages and all skill levels and is taught by Bruce Cantrell.



On-Going Adult RE Programs

Anti-Racism Discussion Group

Meets 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. [Email Karen Hager](mailto:karen.hager@unitarian.org) to join the listserv to 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 your lunch and join our conversation as we read our current book, *The Second Mountain* by David 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 [Tim Pickering](mailto:tim.pickering@unitarian.org).

UUC Community News

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 2: Otharkarhaka, \$286

June 9: UURISE.org, \$276

June 16: Black Father Family, \$166

June 23: VT Vet School Compassionate Care Fund, \$182

June 30: Blacksburg Farmers' Market SNAP Double Value Program, \$222

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 [Lisa](#).

About Our Paraments



Those decorative pieces one sees on Sundays on the front of the podium and candle table are called "paraments" (or paramentum to be precise). Each has been lovingly sewn by a congregant and given as a gift to the congregation to brighten and enhance our sanctuary.

Some months ago, the idea was hatched to form a group of sewers, quilters and artists to design and sew some new sets. Assembling the parts of a quilt is called "piecing", and so we have named ourselves "The Piecemakers". The first set is nearly complete and will be presented in the early fall.

Our next project will honor our children and will include special small pieces of cloth from our children's outgrown wardrobes or another source which has significance to the donor. It can be any kind of fabric with the ideal size being about 5" X 8". Collection boxes are available at UUC. We will have a table in Elarth Hall after several services with a sample of what the quilt block will look like.

Questions about this project or to learn more about the Piecemakers - contact [Polly Stimson](#) or [Marilyn DuPont](#).

June Board Mtg. Highlights

- ◆ During the member forum, Susan Baker spoke out in favor of equal pay for the pianist and choir director and gave an update on the Garden Tour at UUC on **July 6**. Isabel Berney spoke in favor of the installation of a permanent screen in the sanctuary.
- ◆ The Board discussed staff salary issues, gift donations to UUC, and purchase of a screen for the sanctuary.
- ◆ The budget will be revisited when the year-end fiscal numbers are in, likely in August.
- ◆ Nancy Norton gave a review of the Board's input about our strategy for long range planning/strategic planning. A discussion followed. This issue will be discussed further in July.
- ◆ The Board discussed options for the Board retreat, most likely to be held in August.

The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, **July 11 at 5:30 PM** and will include our newly elected Board members. The [minutes and reports](#) of meetings for the past two calendar years are available.

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

SUUSI: Southern UU Summer Institute



Every summer, for one week in July, UUs travel from all over to gather in the mountains of North Carolina to play, learn, worship, laugh, rest, restore and commune. Join the adventure **July 14–20**. This year's theme is *Sacred Spaces*. Check out more about SUUSI, including the catalog, via this [link](#).





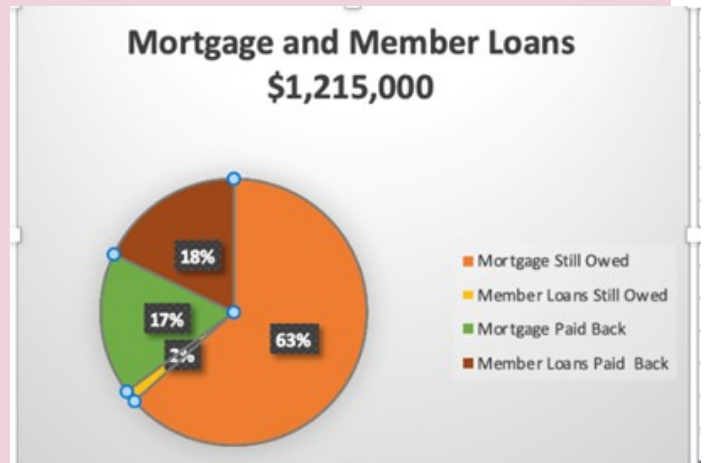
UUC Mortgage Information

\$ In 2009 the Congregation took out a 30-year mortgage for \$980,000 and member loans for \$235,000 in order to pay the construction costs of expanding our building. We have been working now for 10 years to pay down these debt obligations. Our mortgage is now down to \$770,000, and member loans are now down to \$18,000.

\$\$ Our mortgage payment is a large item in our annual budget. We currently are paying \$4,821.62 per month (or \$57,859.44 per year) towards the mortgage. Each time we pay, a larger proportion of our payment goes towards paying back principle, and a smaller proportion goes towards paying interest.

\$\$\$ Over the next 20 years it is projected that we will pay an additional \$1,152,000 of which \$770,000 will be for principle and \$382,000 will be for interest.

\$\$\$\$ It is possible to pay less money in interest and to pay off the mortgage sooner by making early extra payments. For example, paying an extra 2 months' worth of payments early would save \$9,700 in projected interest payments and shorten the length of the mortgage by 4½ months! Even a small donation designated to paying down the mortgage can result in big savings as it reduces the projected interest payments by an amount nearly equal to the donation itself!!



—CREATE— CLIMATE JUSTICE

Create Climate Justice with Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, President of the UUA, delivers a compelling message about what Unitarian Universalists are doing to create climate justice. The UUA and UUs advocate for climate justice following the leadership of most impacted communities doing frontline

climate justice work. *Create Climate Justice* is a community organizing hub for UU Climate Activists. *Create Climate Justice Net* was created to give UU climate and environmental justice activists and coalition partners a valuable tool for education, collaboration, and organizing. It is a joint initiative of the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, Unitarian Universalist Association Green Sanctuary Program, and UU-United Nations Office.

Watch the video and message from Rev. Frederick Gray via this [link](#) (scroll down page for video). Join the Climate Justice community via this [link](#) and see what you can do.



Unitarian Universalist Congregation Sunday Services July 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.

July 7: Kimberley Homer with Worship Associate Jim Kern, *What Is Your American dream?* If you are not Tutelo or Monacan people, you came here from elsewhere. When you or your ancestors left this elsewhere, what did you give up to come here? What did you bring? How do those gifts and sacrifices meld into who we are now? We will share our American Dream stories and sing American tunes, accompanied by Jim Kern and Brian Peters.

July 14: Rev. Jamie McReynolds with Worship Associate Earle Irwin, *Us and Them*. Each Sunday we affirm our covenant to build a "spiritual community based on reason and courageous love." What if we were to practice courageous love both within and beyond our walls with people with whom we strongly disagree, going beyond "us and them?"

All are invited to our monthly potluck following the service.

July 21: Rev. Monica Jacobson-Tennessee and Worship Associate Victoria Taylor, *To Grow a Soul*. Unitarian minister A. Powell Davies said, "Life is just a chance to grow a soul." The times we are living in now surely call for soul growth. We'll examine what that means in this service, drawing on literature, spiritual practice, humor, and music, and including the question, "What is a soul anyway?"

Rev. Monica Jacobson-Tennessee is an Oregonian UU minister currently serving the First Parish Church of Kingston, MA. She shares her life with her husband, daughter, and two rambunctious Siamese cats, so things are never dull in her house. She is delighted to be visiting Blacksburg on her way back from attending her first SUUSI!

July 28: Laura Beth Weaver and Worship Associate Hayden Catlett, *Birthday Cake and Beyond*. How can we help create a community in which sexual and domestic violence don't happen? We'll consider the value of community partners in working to address the needs of sexual and domestic violence victims (including members of UUC) and how the Women's Resource Center and their partners do this work together each day and in unexpected ways.

Laura Beth Weaver grew up in the Shenandoah Valley, the daughter of strong Mennonite women for generations. Laura Beth earned a B.A. in Public Policy & Community Service and an M.A. in Community & Organizational Leadership, both from Emory & Henry College. Since moving to the NRV in 2011, Laura Beth has held multiple positions at the Women's Resource Center and is currently the Assistant Director. She has held a variety of volunteer and board appointments over the years, always with an eye toward social justice and especially the rights and safety of women and children. She lives on a family farm with her husband and two obviously beautiful and perfect children...and a confusion of guinea fowl.

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

CALENDAR: July 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

⌘ 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	(All Mondays) 7:00 AM Women's Breakfast & Men's Breakfast at <i>Panera Bread</i> (Bburg)	(All Tuesdays) ⌘ 10:00 AM Introduction to Temple Style Tai Chi ⌘ 7:00 Meditation	(All Wednesdays) ⌘ Noon Conversations on Our Faith	(All Thursdays) ⌘ 10:00 AM Introduction to Temple Style Tai Chi		
	1	2 2:00 Sages	3 1:15 Memorial Committee meeting 5:30 Yoga 6:00 Connection Committee	4	5 ⌘ 11:30 AM Women's Lunch Bunch: <i>Yassimmo</i> (Bburg)	6
7	8 ⌘ 6:00 Parent Bereavement support group	9 4:00 Committee on Ministry meeting	10 5:45 Finance Comm	11 4:30 Green Sanctuary Team (EJT) meeting 7:00 Board meeting	12	13
14 ⌘ 8:30 AM Anti-Racism discussion group ⌘ 11:15 Second-Sunday potluck ⌘ 6:30 EarthSpirit Sisters: Full-Moon Ritual (off-site)	15 ⌘ 6:00 National Alliance on Mental Illness Connections support group	16 2:00 Sages 5:30 National Alliance on Mental Illness NRV steering committee	17 ⌘ 6:00 NAMI Family and Friends Support group	18	19 ⌘ 11:30 AM Women's Lunch Bunch: <i>Lefty's</i> (Bburg)	20
21 11:30 AM Auction committee	22	23	24	25 4:30 Environmental Justice Team mtg 9:00 August Newsletter Deadline	26	27
28 ⌘ 8:30 AM Anti-Racism discussion group ⌘ 11:30 Adult RE: Community Coversations	29	30	31			

Staff vacations: Minister (all of July through August 7, out of town July 19-26);
 Administrator (July 12-20);
 Director LFD (TBD)