

REPORTER

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Akron



Volume 81, Issue 1

January 2021

Ministerial Search Committee

The search for a new settled minister is one of the most important events in the life of our church. Members of the search committee are charged with finding the best candidate to serve our congregation and must be able to put the needs of the larger church membership before their own individual desires. Members of the search committee should be people who have explored their own racial, heteronormative and spiritual biases so those biases are not brought to the process.

The search committee process requires a large commitment of both time and energy for at least a one year time period. More information and an application for consideration can be found on the church website <https://uuakron.org/about-us/our-minister-and-staff/ministerial-search-committee/>

If you have any questions contact Sharon Geffken (leadership@uuakron.org) of the Leadership Development Team.

Applications must be received no later than January 31, 2021.

HAVE A WONDERFUL
2021

As the New Year approaches us
with new hopes,
here is wishing you and your
family a
wonderful year ahead.

Happy New Year!

Join us in an upcoming zoom event, "An Interfaith Meditation: Prayers for the Pandemic" January 17, 2021 at 2pm, at the intersection of World Religion Day and Dr. Martin Luther King Day. Presented by the Akron Area Interfaith Council

CO-SPONSORED BY FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF
AKRON



WORLD RELIGION DAY

1.17.2021

Zoom Register
here: <https://bit.ly/InterfaithMeditation>

hosted by First
Congregational Church of
Akron.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Vigil, Search Committee
- 2 Religious Education
- 3 Kate's Corner
- 4 Board Summary; Stewardship; Banter with Bay

- 5 Hermitage; Food Justice, Anti Racism Audit Team
- 6 President's Column
- 7 President's Column cont. and Stewardship of the Earth
- 8 Sunday Services

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Greetings friends and a Very Happy New Year!

It's hard to imagine that we've finished a year and begun a new one. I'm currently feeling struck by how adaptable 2020 has shown me that I am capable of being and I'm certain that many others can say the same.

With our sudden need to shift away from meeting in person to again meeting solely online, I felt encouraged to see the resilience of children and youth who still wanted to do fun things, even if it meant doing them in front of a computer screen (for now:).

I loved being able to be a part of planning and recording our church's very own "homemade Christmas Eve Pageant" where we got to retell the Nativity story in a whole new way. I felt endlessly encouraged by COYA leadership who efforted to stay connected and took time to encourage each other through hardship and frustration.

I've also felt encouraged by being able to work with a group of teaching staff who've been willing to role with things as they continuously change and our RE program continues to feel like an active experiment as health guidelines and circumstances change. These things bolster me with hope for 2021 and a great desire to keep doing, adapting, and trying.

So, In the spirit of adaptation and trying things out, the UUCA RE would like to announce that beginning January 10th, we would like to begin hosting Sunday morning RE sessions for families of elementary-aged kids attending service! These RE Class sessions are meant to act as brief (only 30 minutes long), multi-aged, children's chapel style classes where kids can connect along a UU centered theme. Elementary-aged kids and their adults are more than welcome to attend! Please take a gander at what's going on below and keep an eye out for more details and announcements in the regular church emails :).

UUCA RE Preschool continues with Teacher David! Children and adult caregivers are invited to join our wonderful David Palomo for Weekly Music time on Wednesdays @ 10:30a and a PJ Dance Party on one Friday per month @ 7:30p on Zoom. Little ones can enjoy musical connection both days as well as a fun start and soothing wind down to their Friday evening :).

The RE program is paying Sunday mornings a visit! Beginning January 10th from 10am to 10:30am before online church service on Zoom, elementary-aged kids are welcomed to join us for Sunday morning Religious Exploration classes! Join our mighty band of adult guides for monthly, theme-centered connection, learning, and FUN! Parents are welcomed to log on with your kids to assist. Please keep an eye out for church emails with joining info and see you soon!

7th - 12th graders are welcome to join COYA's online Zoom meetings on 4th and 1st Sundays at noon. COYA involvement offers youth a great way to connect with others, get creative, develop leadership skills, AND get together for socially distanced outings. Those interested in learning more, please contact Kelly Urbano (kell100@yahoo.com) and Abby L'Bert (dre.uuakron@gmail.com).

UUCA parents and ALL! Our bi-monthly support-centered meetings (hosted by Elizabeth Reilly and Abby L'Bert) are going weekly! Beginning in January, we will be alternating a parent support and check-in space (2nd and 4th Tuesdays) with an all-church morning meditative support session on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. Both styles will be held at 6:30am on Tuesday mornings so please feel free to join us as you are able. As always, please contact Elizabeth Reilly (reilly@uakron.edu) and Abby L'Bert (dre.uuakron@gmail.com) with any questions you may have.

One quick New Year's Reminder. Please make a note of my current, RE-online office hours! Feel free to connect with me by email or text at (dre.uuakron@gmail.com) or (330)701-9839 Tuesdays through Fridays between 10a - 3p. I look forward to connecting with you all, safely and in good health, as we embark upon this NEW year :).

Abby L'Bert



Kate's Corner



Dear Ones,

What would we need to live on Mars? A lot of stored oxygen, some kind of weighted boots to keep from floating into space, spacesuits to protect us from the extreme heat and dust... What would we eat if we lived on the red planet? What would you we do to relax? I'm not suggesting that we all move, this is a metaphor. What would we need to live in extreme conditions that were unlike anything we have experienced before?

I ask because this is a strange and difficult time. A time unlike anything we have lived through before. We are isolated for long periods. Parents are raising children with little external support. Health care systems are overwhelmed. And we are afraid of getting a virus that, if we survive it, has unknown long-term effects on the body. We are deeply weary from the uncertainty and emotional difficulty of pandemic life. So what do we need for this time, when we may as well be living on Mars? Remaining calm and healthy requires different skills and tools than our business-as-usual lives did, back when we lived on Earth. That doesn't mean that we are failing or doing something wrong. No matter how good we were at living on Earth, life on Mars is really odd and hard. And sadly the suicide rates here on Mars are very high. Despair is the (other) pandemic. What can we do to help us survive? In these final months before returning to Earth what do we need to keep going?

Even if you didn't need it on Earth, therapy might help with life on Mars. Online therapy is approved by most health insurance companies and if you are uninsured the Minister's Benevolent Fund would love to help you pay for the sessions. A good place to find a therapist is NAMI, the National Association for Mental Illness. It used to be hard to find a therapist if you have marginalized identity, particularly if you are BIPOC or Trans. Fortunately the internet can help- Queerhealers.com has mental health and alternative health practitioners who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, Transgender, and GLBTQI. TherapyforBlackGirls.com can connect you with Black therapists. InclusiveTherapists.com manages a directory of professionals from historically marginalized communities- queer, poly, BIPOC. [Thank you to Martine Thompson for these resources. She writes for my favorite food site, Healthyish]. Maybe you haven't done therapy before, or maybe you tried it and didn't like it. That's okay- this is a new and unfamiliar planet. Therapy might help you breathe a little easier now. If one-on-one therapy seems too intense, there are plenty of group therapy/support group options. You can find those on the sites above. Also you can come to the Support Group for Being Human, which is open to everyone, and the Parenting Support Group (which is only for kittens. Just kidding, it's for parents).

Another skill you'll need on Mars is to find something new and enjoyable that settles your mind. On Earth you may have been too busy to have a lot of hobbies. Here on Mars taking up knitting, building birdhouses, snowshoeing, or Indian cooking will give your brain time to process all the chaos of the current reality while your hands are busy. This will lead to feeling relaxed and sleeping better. Plus, you'll have new socks/a birdhouse/muscular calves/ good food for dinner. I am knitting tiny stuffed succulents. Why? To relax. What will I do with a pile of tiny succulents? No idea. But it's a relaxing and satisfying way to spend time.

Finally, here on Mars we have to be willing to ask for help. I know we are Midwesterners and therefore not up to getting all emotionally gooey with our neighbors. That's okay, just think of a handful of people you can reach out to if you want to talk or need support. Last weekend a friend who lives far away asked if I could have a Zoom chat with her daughter, so she could have a half-hour to do other things. Fun for me and she got a break! Think of ways you can get help even while socially distanced. If you are lonely and need a friendly voice reach out- loneliness is at epic levels so odds are they will be glad to hear from you.

The next months may be difficult but we will get through them together. If it gets to be too much and you are thinking about hurting yourself, please call me and/or the suicide hotline (800-273-8255). Things are going to improve- I promise- and I don't want your to miss the fun we are going to have post-pandemic. We need you. Reach out. You are worth it.

I love you fellow Martians,
Rev Kate

Board of Trustee Meeting Summary for December

This month's board meeting was on December 16 to get it done before the holiday season. This month, we moved the Minister's Benevolent Fund to a new account, so that Kate can write checks without having Sue or Steve see who they're going to -- something they never wanted to do, but had to for legal reasons. There's still going to be oversight via online banking if there is any need to audit where the money went. We also discussed adding some members to the Leadership Development Team, which is now too small to be in compliance without bylaws; they choose some members of the Ministerial Search Committee, so it's important to ensure there's enough people on the committee. We finalized the application for said Search Committee, which will be digitized by the end of the month and sent out at the beginning of January. And finally, we voted to formally appoint the existing members of the Stewardship Committee so that they have a set term and Board oversight, given that they have access to member pledge information, which is sensitive. We didn't change the membership any, since they're doing a great job, we just wanted to figure out when their terms should be up for re-evaluation. As always, the minutes will be posted next month when they are approved, and all are welcome to join us at the board meeting if you like. If there's anything you think the board should be handling, please reach out to Hallie Bowie and get it on our agenda.

CAN'T STOP THE FEELING! – 2021 Annual Pledge Campaign...THANK YOU!!!

We are nearly complete with our 2021 Annual Pledge Campaign. We are grateful to all of you who have completed pledges to support our church ministries in 2021. We have received 146 pledges totaling \$246,000. **THANKS SO MUCH FOR MAKING YOUR PLEDGE!!!**

We need about 20 more pledges. In early January we will be reaching out for these remaining pledges.

PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR PLEDGE NOW! Put your pledge in the mail or pledge online at <http://tinyurl.com/UUCA2021> today. Do your best to submit your pledge right now.

The pandemic has changed so much. If you are unable to pledge, we understand. To be excused and maintain your status as a voting member, please contact Rev. Kate Landis.

Greetings, friends! For 2021 I'm trying something new: I'm going to be bringing you some LGBT+ fun facts and historical information every month. As I said in my sermon for queer history month, a lot of our history has been hidden from us or otherwise destroyed; in addition, there are many small holidays that provide the chance to talk about aspects of the queer experience that don't get a lot of screen time.

This month, on January 27, we have Holocaust Remembrance Day. The holocaust is of course important to speak about in the context of Jewish history and religious liberty, but it's also important to recognise that many of those killed in concentration camps were locked up for being LGBT. Between 1933 and 1945, an estimated 100,000 men were arrested in Nazi Germany as 'homosexuals', of whom 50,000 were sentenced, and between 5,000 and 15,000 were sent to concentration camps. Lesbians, bi women and trans people, whose experiences remain under-researched, were also targeted. It is unclear how many LGBT people perished in these camps.

They also did what they could to destroy our history and our culture. On May 6, 1933, students led by Storm Troopers (Sturmabteilung; SA) broke into the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin and confiscated its unique library. Four days later, most of this collection of over 12,000 books and 35,000 irreplaceable pictures was destroyed along with thousands of other "degenerate" works of literature in the book burning in Berlin's city center. The remaining materials were never recovered. In addition, they closed down all gay bars, ceased all gay publications, and generally destroyed whatever vestiges of culture they could.

And there was a lot to destroy. In the 1920s, gay culture had flourished in Prussia, especially Berlin, which was known as the "homosexual capital of Europe". Germany under the Weimar Republic was characterized by a sort of cultural war between the traditional culture and the avant-garde Weimar culture, and the tolerance shown to homosexuals in Prussia was often used by traditionalists as an example of the "depravity" and "un-German" nature of Weimar culture. It was a lot like our modern day culture wars between the progressive, lgbt-friendly, "love is love" culture and the regressive, Church-led, "homosexuality is a sin" culture. In the short term, the nazis won that war, setting back gay rights in Germany several decades. If we're not careful, the religious Right could win this culture war, doing the same here in America: driving people back into the closet, burning books, destroying gay publications, and closing down gay bars for good.

This January, remember the Holocaust, which we have all sworn to never forget and never let repeat. But remember that it was more than just religious intolerance that drove the events of the 1940s: it was a full-on culture war, a tolerance for extremist sentiment, and a hatred of the "new" and "different" culture that LGBT people being open about their sexuality represented.

~ Bay Gaillard (They/Them)

Anti-Racism Audit Team

Your experience and input is needed!

As our congregation seeks to live into our 8th principle and grow beloved community, the newly-named Anti-Racism Audit Team is gathering information about our congregation's past. We want to learn more about the ways that our congregation has been welcoming and inclusive, as well as the ways we have (knowingly or not) harmed, challenged, or excluded folks, particularly Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color.

Members of our team will be reaching out to various members of the congregation to set up interviews. In the meantime, if you have any questions, or if you have any information or experiences you'd like to share with us, please reach out to our team at taskforce@uuakron.org!

Wishing you good health and meaningful growth in the new year!

The Anti-Racism Audit Team

Sarah Culver (facilitator), Akrista L'Bert, Cir L'Bert (Sr), Alease Vaughn, Russell Kunz, Vicki Sue Algea, and Samuel Prince

HERMITAGE OF THE HEART

Thursday, January 7th & 21st

These are times in which the world can indeed be "too much with us." The mounting tolls of disease and racism and polarization can threaten to overwhelm us, breaking not only our hearts but our spirits.

Hermitage of the Heart provides us with a space and time for renewal, stillness and peace amid the craziness of these times, so we are able to emerge ready for life. Now, now is when you need to seek respite, to find ways to renew your spirit, to rest in an oasis of peace.

Come join our community, seeking wholeness of body, spirit and mind. We experience light and darkness, silence and song, inspiring words and sustained time for reflection and meditation as sources of hope and courage. Take the time to nurture yourself. Music starts at 6:45 AND SERVICE IS AT 7 P.M.

Volunteering during Covid-19 Whole Foods/Caring Cupboard Food Distribution By Deb Johnson

As many of you know, the UUCA started the Caring Cupboard several years ago. The Caring Cupboard was in the McKeeman kitchen and was stocked by donations of food brought in by the congregation when we met for services each week. Over the years many people have benefited from the food that was provided there. A year or 2 ago, a member of the congregation discovered that Whole Foods 365 donated expiring perishable food to local charities and got us on the list to receive the food on Sunday mornings. A team of young adults launched this effort, organized and maintained by Abby L'Bert, to rotate pickups and bring the food to church for distribution. I got involved with taking leftovers to local shelters, along with a few other people.

Since the start of the Covid-19 epidemic, things obviously had to change. By mid-March we started setting up tables outside the building under the covered walkway where we would then put the donated food from Whole Foods. We also loaded food from the Caring Cupboard onto carts and rolled them outside. These carts are filled with non-perishable items such as pasta, pasta sauce, cereal, canned green beans, corn and mixed vegetables, as well as canned beans (kidney, black and pinto), and an assortment of soups. We try to keep toilet paper in stock and put some out each week.

As unemployment skyrocketed, we went from having a couple of families using the Caring Cupboard, to an average of 15 families weekly, including food deliveries to people without transportation by the Immigration Committee. We applied for and received a grant from the Charlie and Marty Wilson fund, and we will be able to apply for another grant in 2021. This money has allowed us to keep the Caring Cupboard well stocked.

Along the way, church members made masks and brought them to us, for both the volunteers and the guests. Since the lockdown was lifted people have begun stopping by to give us donations of food, toilet paper and personal care items. That is also appreciated and an ongoing need.

Now that the weather is getting colder, we will be moving into Hannah hall when the weather is poor. We need to take people's temperatures and gather contact information. We limit the number of "pods" inside at a time, and we separate the items on different tables, spread out for appropriate social distancing. We usually have a station for bread, dairy, meat, fruits and vegetables and the non-perishables and personal care items.

As the holidays have approached, we joined with the Social Action/Immigration committee to organize a drive to provide holiday boxes for families who depend on our food distributions. We have had a wonderful outpouring of contributions, both food and financial. We will be providing 21 Thanksgiving boxes to families who regularly get help here at the Church or from the volunteers who deliver food to people who do not have transportation. There should be enough, along with the financial contributions to provide boxes at the Christmas holiday as well.

Due to recent donations, our financial situation is good. However, to help us stretch that money, donations of the following items are still very much appreciated: Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Cold Cereal, Oatmeal, Dry Black Beans, Dry Pinto Beans, Rice, soup, canned corn, green beans and mixed vegetables, as well as canned kidney, black and pinto beans. Toothpaste and toothbrushes, laundry soap, dish soap, etc. are also appreciated. The best time to drop items off is Sunday morning between 9 and 10 AM during the food distribution.

A quick shout out to the people supporting this ministry. Sarah Culver-organizer, Cir L'Bert Jr, Matt Dudas and sons and Ron Scott do the pickups. Heather and Carol Randolph are there most weeks along with Deb Lemire or Russell Kunz. Recently Mike Setzer has also been coming to help. At the end of the distribution Tom Crain comes to take any perishables to Shanti, a non-profit which benefits new American immigrants.

President's Report Presented at the Fall Congregational Meeting

December 6, 2020

Hallie Bowie, President of the Board of Trustees (she/her)

First, I'd like to take a minute to recognize the dedication of our Board members. We started off this Board by having **two** meetings in June for all the time sensitive tasks on our to-do list. They have kept up the great work since then, providing reports, attending trainings, reading and responding to emails, and providing thoughtful decisions. To Cir Jr, Steve, Bay, Dan, Kyle, Alease, Deb, and Laurel, on behalf of the congregation, thank you!

As voting members, you should all know that the Board has been creating better documentation and sharing of the documentation we have. We now have a Google Drive folder that includes copies of our Bylaws, Strategic Plans, Annual Reports, a list of all our committees and ministries, meeting minutes and more. This is available to all church members. Contact Carolyn or myself if you would like to have access to this great resource.

Looking back over the past few months:

In June we renewed Abby's contract as interim DRE. Abby and our assistant DRE Carolyn have showed a great deal of creativity in finding ways to continue religious education for our children despite the pandemic. Recognizing that our RE classes needed to be held on week-days rather than at the same time as our Sunday service was brilliant!

At our second June meeting, we created the Transition Team, which includes Wayne Poteete, Lauren Folk, Becky Dempster, Allan Michelson, and Scott Piepho as chair. This group takes the place of the Committee on Ministries during our transition period and has been working with Rev. Kate.

The Board has been mindful of how well we are keeping all our members engaged while we are not meeting physically at the church. Our Loving Community Trustee Kyle Josza, Carolyn and the Pastoral Care Associates headed by Linda Marx, have all worked to identify those who were not attending the Zoom services. We've provided technical assistance where needed and worked to stay in touch with those who are not comfortable with the computer-based format. We have not conquered these challenges completely. In particular, many of our immigrant community members have not been attending since March, and we regret that. We will continue to work to stay connected in other ways with those we don't see on Zoom.

In July, we made the decision to support the Fairlawn Village Preschool through the pandemic by reducing their rent. The Preschool was required by the state to reduce their number of students by 50% which of course reduced their income. Based on our long relationship with the Preschool as well as our desire to provide as much normalcy and availability of early education to the children of the area, we provided a rent reduction- which is reflected in the budget we will be voting on shortly.

In September we held a Board retreat where we got to know each other better and created a Board Covenant. One important aspect of this covenant is the fact that we have agreed to make our decisions based on consensus rather than a vote of the majority. The Board hopes to move our congregation towards Dynamic Governance, also known as Sociocracy, over the next few years as we all become more educated on this system.

We created a Music Committee to provide input for our Music Director Brian. Its members include Bev Hurd, Libby Archinal, Elizabeth Reilly, and Cir L'Bert Sr. The pandemic has been especially challenging for music programs and organizations everywhere. This committee will continue to work with Brian on our music through the pandemic, and to envision what our music program can be when we resume services in person.

At the end of October, we hired our new Communications Coordinator. With the pandemic, the importance of digital communications is more important than ever. Bree has already started assisting with the slides and watching for Zoom bombers on Sunday mornings. And the Media committee, including Bay Gaillard, Kyle Josza, Barret Bills, Lauren Folk, and Cir Jr. has put together a fabulous Social Media Guide with clear information on what Bree can and should share on our Facebook and Twitter accounts to clearly reflect our values and who we are as a congregation.

Dan Marksz has been doing great work as Building and Grounds Trustee. Dan has been working with Brittney to create a schedule for building maintenance and has been organizing documents such as equipment manuals and the drawings of the church building. In November, the Board approved the purchase and installation of air cleaning equipment for the mechanical system that serves the Hannah Hall and Offices. This will use funds from the Capital account, which is unrelated to the budget we will be voting on today. This cleaning system has been proven to kill the virus that causes Covid-19 both in the air and on surfaces. It will help to keep our members safe after the virus is brought under control but has not been eradicated entirely. Unfortunately, the Sanctuary does not have a system that delivers fresh air, and more extensive work will be needed to provide such a system there.

President's Report Continued

This fall we renewed the charge for the Taskforce for Dismantling White Institutional Dominance and Habits of White Supremacy and gave it a new shorter name. Though I have to say I think I have grown as a result of learning the long name. It is now the Anti-racism Audit Team, and will be reviewing our policies, procedures, and informal processes to see how they perpetuate racist habits, and how they should be changed so we can live out our 8th Principle. In November we also adopted a Resolution on Anti-Racism and Support of the Proposed 8th Principle, which was presented to the Membership at the December 6th meeting as well.

Turning our attention to the upcoming months:

Regarding the **Ministerial Search**: We will have applications available for those interested in being on the Search Committee by January 1st, with applications due by January 31st. The Leadership Development Team, led by Sharon Geffken, and the Board will both review those applications and make recommendations for the congregation to elect the Search Committee members at a special congregational meeting on March 28th.

We will be starting Appreciative Inquiry Zoom conversations soon which will help us define who we are as a congregation so we can communicate that clearly to potential new ministers. Please plan to make some time in the next few months to participate in these conversations.

We will be offering more Adult Religious Education in the future as well. Our trustee Alease Vaughn has been reviewing what we have done with adult RE in the past and what we would like it to look like going forward. Please be sure to share your interests and ideas in the survey if you haven't done so yet.

The Stewardship of the Earth committee, led by trustee Laurel Winters, has been working on making our own grounds a better reflection of our values by planting pollinator gardens and the lasagna garden, preparing for more plantings in the spring. With the election behind us, we need to channel more of our attention to living out our 7th Principle. Humanity needs to make major changes within the next decade to minimize climate impacts on marginalized communities around the world. As many as 1.2 billion people may be displaced by 2050 because of climate change. Natural disasters kill seven times more people in the least developed nations than in highly developed ones, because they are less able to handle the shock. **Eliminating** our use of fossil fuels is key to minimizing climate change and the impacts it will have on those who benefited the least from it and have done the least to contribute to it. We have created a framework for transforming our congregation into an anti-racist one, work that is long overdue. Now we need to create a similar framework for looking at every aspect of church life as it relates to climate justice. We need to use the skills we are developing around the 8th Principle to listen to the needs of marginalized communities around the world need to keep their homes habitable and their food supplies stable.

Our work together at UUCA has helped to make 2020 a little brighter than it would have been without our efforts. I'm looking forward to all we will accomplish together in 2021!

For the beginning of the new year, it seems appropriate to think about these ten actions from “**The Future We Choose – Surviving the Climate Crisis**” by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac, Architects of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Their recommended **TEN ACTIONS** are:

Let Go of the Old World – Honor it and let it go; focus on where you are going, not where you have been; burst out of your bubble; let go of the past; walk toward the future with confidence

Face your Grief, but hold a Vision of the Future – Having a vision is essential, but we have to be open to doing things in new ways; Imagination is essential; keep your eyes on what is to come

Defend the Truth - Free Your Mind: learn to distinguish between real science and pseudoscience; don't give up on climate deniers

See yourself as a Citizen, not a Consumer - Reclaim your idea of a good life; become a better consumer & vote with your money; dematerialize

Move beyond Fossil Fuels - Stand up for 100 percent renewable energy (Do not take airplanes!)

Reforest the Earth - Plant trees; let nature flourish (Rewilding); go plant based; boycott products contributing to deforestation

Invest in a Clean Economy - Put your money where it matters

Use Technology Responsibly - Immigration is not taking away jobs; AI (artificial intelligence) is! – help work to eliminate it

Build Gender Equality

Engage in Politics - “It always seems impossible until it is done.” Nelson Mandela

Conclusion - We want you to know two things:

First, we still have a choice about our future and therefore **every action** we take from this moment forward counts.

Second, we are capable of making the right choices about our own destiny. We are not doomed if we act.

In the future, when our children ask “what did you do?”, our answer cannot just be that we did everything we could. It has to be: **We did everything that was necessary.**

The Stewardship of the Earth Committee invites you to watch the film “Paris to Pittsburgh” over zoom on Friday, February 19. There will be on-line discussion afterwards. For more information, you can check out www.ParistoPittsburgh.com. (This was scheduled for April 2020, but then covid happened.)



SUNDAY SERVICES & HAPPENINGS

January 3, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. Yearning Elizabeth Reilly

Yearning -- The holiday season has a way of evoking yearning -- and we may often, or at least sometimes, feel an equally deep sense of unrequited hope when the season winds down. Could it be that we are asking Christmas (et al) to be something it's not? How might we use this time and our yearning in ways that build and requite our hope?

January 10, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. For Our Children's Children Rev. Kate Landis & David Palomo

Today's service will be about considering the next 7 generations in our personal and global decision-making.



Imbolc ~ A Sacred Circle Service Ritual 2/1/21 at 7pm

Historically the month of February bears a special significance to the people in the North. This is evident through various traditions and rites prevalent in this part of the world for thousands of years.

In Ireland, this time begins with the Holy day of Imbolc and begins at sunset on February 1 continuing through sunset February 2nd. There are a few derivations offered for the name Imbolc; Ol-melc (ewe's milk) because the ewes are lactating at this time; Oi-melg, meaning "butter bag" and also referencing the lactating ewe, and Imbolg (around the belly) in honor of the swelling belly of the earth goddess,

The ancient civilizations would greet this time of the year by performing rites to the rising power of the springtime sun. And these rites were agricultural in nature and performed mostly by the farmers.

When Ireland was Christianized, veneration of the Pagan Goddess Brigid, on February 1st was transformed into that of St. Brigit, said to be the human daughter of a Druid. St. Brigit became a saint after her "death" and was supposedly converted and baptized by St. Patrick.

Join Rev. Rebekah Benner via zoom for an Imbolc ritual on Monday evening, February 1 at 7:00pm.

This is a time to bless the sacred candles we will be using throughout the Wheel of the Year.

Please have one candle available to light, and if you like, 12 candles to bless for use in the months to come.



CARING CORNER



PASTORAL CARE:

Pastoral Associates:
Linda Marx, Coordinator
lmarx0605@att.net

MaryAnn Ballinger jballinger@neo.rr.com

Lynn Hawkins hawklynn@ymail.com

Pam Garn Nunn garnnunn@sbcglobal.net

Mary Petrich marypetrich18@yahoo.com

Linda Rush Ryder lryder326@gmail.com

Jan Schrader janzst@yahoo.com

Ron Johnson pa.rjohnson.uuca@gmail.com

CARING COMMITTEE:

Meals:

Contact the church office. It will be set up through
Takethemameal.com

Ride Share:

Contact the church office

Cards Chair:

Susan Shah at susanshah353@gmail.com



DECEMBER MEETINGS

WHOLE FOODS DISTRIBUTION

Food distribution (from Whole Foods and our caring cupboard) continues to take place on Sunday mornings from about 8:45am until 10am.

QUEER SUPPORT GROUP

This group is a sacred space where you can get help for whatever's on your mind, whether it be issues around your particular brand of queerness or just life in general. We meet the fourth Tuesday day of each month. This group is geared at ages 14+, including adults and seniors. Questioners welcome, but allies please skip this one.

Check your emails for the zoom link.



What is our Church's New Year's Resolution?

It's a New Year filled with hope and change. What does that look like for our Church? Starting January 10th 2021, we will introduce questions to consider and discuss during (Sunday) coffee hour. There are no right or wrong answers as we explore what we want to manifest for 2021.

UUWA January 15th Meeting via Zoom

The fastest growing crime in the US is Human Trafficking. Ohio is ranked number 5 in this crime with over 1000 youth trafficked each year. While law enforcement personnel are at work to rescue the victims, and social service agencies provide counselling, the survivors may return to "normal" life, but they carry the wounds of being trafficked. Our speaker for this meeting is Cindy Chesnick, who is an esthetician and a trained volunteer, has worked with these women at a healing retreat, helping them in the healing process by pampering them by giving facials as others gave manicures, massages, etc. Her program is an uplifting one that deals with the healing that takes place at the retreat. You will both laugh and cry as you hear Cindy tell of her experiences. Join us on Zoom as we consider what is being done to help these survivors, also known as thrivers. We may also explore ways we can help the volunteers with their work in the healing process. Watch for the Zoom link on the Midweek Reminder.

January 11 is Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Wear Blue to show your support.



REPORTER

Published monthly Deadline: the 15th of every month

Articles for submission may be sent to the church,
faxed to 330-836-3106 or emailed to admin@uuakron.org

Minister
Director of Religious Education
Church Administrator
Sexton
Director of Music
RE Assistant
Bookkeeper
Digital Communications

Rev. Kate Landis
Abby L'Bert
Carolyn Stevens
Brittney Gustavel
Brian Laakso
Carolyn Stevens
Sue Michael
Bree Chambers

Due to the pandemic, the Church is closed. Please email
uuakronoffice@gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

PRESIDENT
Hallie Bowie

SECRETARY
Bay Gaillard

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Cir L'Bert Jr.

TREASURER
Steve Wagner

BOARD MEMBERS

Laurel Winters
Kyle Jozsa
Deb Lemire
Daniel Marksz
Alease Vaughn



*The UUCA is a
“Welcoming Congregation”
that warmly and openly encourages
the full participation of gay, lesbian,
bisexual and transgender people
in the life of the congregation.*

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH
3300 MOREWOOD RD.
AKRON, OH 44333
Phone: (330) 836-2206 Fax: (330) 836-3106
Email: uuakronoffice@gmail.com
Website: www.uuakron.org

MISSION OF THE UU CHURCH OF AKRON

MISSION OF THE UU CHURCH OF AKRON

We are a sanctuary of love and welcome for all,
dedicated to lifelong intellectual and spiritual
exploration, and committed to leading, acting,
and speaking for social justice and stewardship
of the earth.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER, CHECK HERE ____
DETACH, APPLY CORRECT POSTAGE, AND RETURN.