

THE PIONEER

Unitarian Society of Northampton and Florence 2020 Volume 50 No. 9

WORSHIP for MAY All Services at 10 am via Zoom

May 3
Endless Pride

Rev. Janet C. Bush, Jessica Harwood, and Members of the Congregation
We will reflect on and share ways of affirming and valuing ourselves and each other, as we also pay tribute to the tradition of Northampton Pride.

May 10
"To Music" – Musical Sunday
Dana Maiben and Gregory Hayes

Dana and Greg will offer a sonata for harpsichord and violin by J.S. Bach, and soprano Christien Beeuwkes will sing a Schubert song or two, including the beloved "An die Musik" ~ "To Music." The service will be live-streamed on Youtube – see our website for details.

May 17
Resilient

Reverend Janet C. Bush and Lynne Marie Wanamaker
What does resilience look like, and what kinds of practices can help us maintain it?

May 24
Memorial Day

Reverend Janet C. Bush and Dana Maiben
Music, readings and reflections on summer, sabbath, and memory. We will honor the memory of people important to you by reading their names in the service. Please send names to Rev. Janet Bush no later than Thursday, May 21. minister@uunorthampton.org

May 31
"Preemptive Radical Inclusion"
CB Beal, M. Div.

CB will share reflections on the idea of preemptive radical inclusion as an entryway to increase justice and equity among ourselves and in the world, a way to embody beloved community in a time of physical isolation and social connection.



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USNF Covid-19 Links

- ♦ [Community Covid-19 Resources](#)
- ♦ [USNF Community Cares Network](#)
- ♦ [USNF Services on YouTube](#)



NOTES FROM THE MINISTER

We have a particularly pernicious weed in our backyard perennial beds – one that spreads by runners that snake over, under, around and through everything else. A bishop's weed, I think. I have been more determined than usual, this spring, in my battles against it. I've gotten out early, when the invited and welcome plants are still emerging, when it's easier to tell what's weed and what isn't. I've been vigilant, approaching the task methodically, section by section. It's very satisfying when a patch is done. Until a few hours later, or the next day when I look again. How did I miss those?



This has made me think of my husband Booker's cousin Andy. Andy is an African American version of a Southern good ol' boy, who raises chickens for Purdue on what used to be their grandfather's Georgia farm. He loves hunting, fishing, fancy cars, good bourbon and a good story.

"I'm on I-75, heading home," he remembers. "Minding my own business. I see those flashing lights way, way back behind me. Dang! – he better not be after me. I ease up a little, get into the right lane to let him go by. Now he's behind me, turns on the siren. Big white guy in a big white cruiser. I pull over, roll down my window, wait for him to get out and come on over.

'What can I do for you, Officer?' I say. He pulls out his ticket book. Wants to know if I know how fast I was going. I don't. Or if I do I'm not confessing. He starts to write me up, and this Chevy comes flying out of nowhere, whizzing past us nearly blowing him over – had to be going a hundred and twenty. Or more. We both watch it disappear. I say, 'Officer, what about that guy?'

He shakes his head. 'Son,' he says. 'It's like fishin'. You don't get 'em all.'

That's been my mantra, weeding. "You don't get 'em all."

We don't get 'em all. Not all the fish nor all the weeds. Not all the right answers or all the right questions. Andy's story brings a smile and a reminder to be gentle with ourselves. To accept that we and those we love are imperfect, and that what we do is imperfect. To let ourselves fall apart when we need to fall apart, to forgive ourselves when we lose our resolve. What we are going through is hard. And May's theme is observing sabbath. Sabbath time is a time for spaciousness, for letting the fishing line drift, for putting down the trowel and dreaming of what will bloom in days to come.

Spring has arrived. We are apart, and we are here for each other.

I am grateful to be your minister.



TO CONTACT THE MINISTER: Please email or call for an appointment Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays. revjanetbush@gmail.com; 584-1390 x202 (office); 727-8497 (home – before 9 pm for non-emergencies)

REPORTS & ARTICLES

Report From the Board of Trustees

Submitted by Sara Hunt, Trustee

This is a spring like no other, and the board is working hard to respond to new realities, including making a necessary decision to postpone Annual Meeting until Aug. 16.

This postponement will give us time to gather enough information to better understand our financial situation, including whether our application to the Payroll Protection Program will be granted. Treasurer Dave Nelson and Administrator Lisa Britland worked hard to prepare the application after the board unanimously approved submitting one. We are hoping to get funding in the second round.

Our new budget year begins in September, so postponing the meeting will give us time to prepare a budget that reflects a more real-time forecast while also meeting the requirements of our bylaws. Another benefit to postponing is that it increases the possibility we could gather in person. However, if conditions make that impossible, we'll go with the Zoom format, which hopefully has become more familiar to folks now that we've used it for our services. Stay tuned.

Annual Meeting is also when board membership changes. This year we are saying good-bye and a big thank you to Joan O'Brien and Laurie Loisel, whose terms end in May. In keeping with our bylaws, we'll fill those seats by appointing two excellent candidates the Nominating Committee recruited, Molly Hale and Judy Hyde.

Those appointments, and that of Jane Simonds, who accepted the call to be vice president, as well as additions to the Nominating Committee and Coordinating Council will come before the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting. Board members will offer a Zoom forum to discuss the budget, the new slate, and related topics after the service May 17' which would have been our Annual Meeting date.

Meanwhile, the Worship Committee is discussing summer services and how the pandemic might affect them. We hope people will volunteer to ensure they can happen. If you are interested in helping, contact Beth Ann Jedziniak or Rev. Janet Bush, or send a message to office@uunorthampton.org.

Our USNF staff are working longer hours and in ways never anticipated to serve our congregation. Together, Janet and Jessica have tirelessly and creatively reimaged Sunday services and offered new programming to keep us connected as a caring community. In recognition of the additional work Jessica has taken on, trustees voted unanimously to increase her hours from 75 percent time to full-time for the period of March 9-June 28

We appreciate every member of the USNF staff, as well as members and friends, who are finding new ways to be here for each other when we need it. We are in this together.

REPORTS & ARTICLES

USNF Community Care Network

In the month since the USNF Community Care Network started, it has received an outpouring of support from volunteers and has fulfilled requests, large and small, from members of the USNF community. Emails from volunteers are filled with sentiments like this: "Please let me know how I can help," "I'm 19, healthy, and ready to run errands or help however I can," and "It feels good to be able to help in some way." One grateful recipient of help, whose volunteer had done a little grocery shopping, wrote, "Thank you for your kindness and compassion. I love to have my first cup of coffee, with milk and sugar, as I watch the sunrise in the morning. That's when I say, 'Life is good!'"

Thanks, everyone! Let's keep the momentum going until we are past this challenging time. To volunteer, or to request help, either email usnfcares@uunorthampton.org or call the office (413-584-1390 x 201) and leave a message for the Community Care team, including your name, contact information, and location. The network can help with things like:

- Shopping and delivery of food
- Pharmacy pick-up and delivery
- A specific essential item (thermometer, radio, old laptop, etc.)
- Technical assistance (by phone) with Zoom
- Financial help (Please contact Janet directly)

Use the following link to donate money to the Minister's help fund and local community COVID-19 relief: [Donate](#)

Janet; minister@uunorthampton.org, 413 584-1390 x202

Office; office@uunorthampton.org, 413 584-1390 x201

Help Make Summer Services Happen

Summer services are a very important way for people to connect and nourish themselves spiritually when our regular services go on hiatus. Can we make them happen this summer?

The worship committee is discussing ways to simplify what we do. And - we need you! Please consider leading a service or volunteering to provide technical support. You do not need to start from scratch. Readings, reflections and musical suggestions on many themes are in our library.

Please send a message through Janet (minister@uunorthampton.org) or let Beth Ann know directly if and how you might like to help out.

REPORTS & ARTICLES

USNF the Vote & MVP

Submitted by Susie Macrae

In these uncertain times it is hard to know what this country will look like come the November elections. Two weeks ago we watched what happened in Wisconsin. People should never have to risk their lives in order to vote, but they did. Heroic efforts were made throughout Wisconsin to shift strategies to register voters and get out the vote. Much of this work was accomplished by grassroots organizations supported by the Movement Voter Project.

Movement Voter Project is a national organization based in Northampton that has been working for progressive change since 2014. Sometimes very simple ideas are the most brilliant ones. The idea behind MVP is to connect the dots between grass roots activism and electoral politics. MVP does what no other group does. It seeks out, vets, and supports progressive community-based organizations around the country, particularly in communities that are most affected by economic and racial injustice. These groups know their neighbors and know the issues people care about. And they are successful in engaging people to make real change in their communities year round. At election time they turn out votes up and down the ticket. Having raised more than thirty million dollars in 2019, MVP is supporting almost 400 groups that get out the vote, and organize communities for long term progressive change.

Please join our virtual house party on May 14 at 7 pm to learn more about MVP. Be on the lookout for a Zoom invitation. For more information please contact Susie Macrae; susie_macrae@icloud.com.

Community Offerings

USNF Connection Circle Offering

We currently have 36 people involved in Connection Circles! During this time of social distancing, these circles offer an opportunity for mutual support, reflection, sharing, and connection, and are facilitated by members of our congregation. Connection Circles happen online over Zoom. There are still spots available in our Monday 10 am group, which is meeting each week for 90 minutes. Sign up here: [Connection Circle Registration Form](#). Email dre@uunorthampton.org with questions.

Learning Buddies

We are hoping to pair people in the community to learn together during this time! For families, that could be an adult to work with your child and give you a break. For anyone, this might be your chance to learn how to knit or crochet. We're looking for people that would be interested in having a buddy for 30 minutes to 1 hour over Zoom. With kids, you might help with school work, read a story, listen to them read a story, play a game, etc. Interested? email dre@uunorthampton.org.

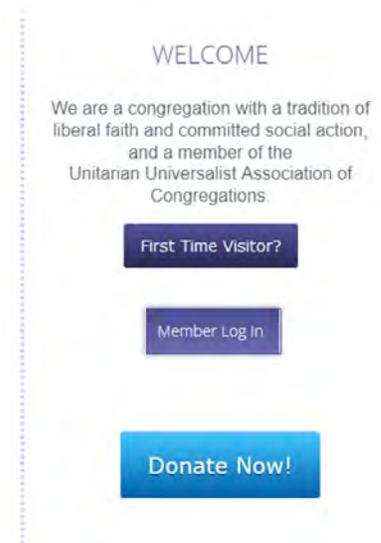
REPORTS & ARTICLES

Donate Button Now on Our Website

Visitors to our website may have noticed that a donation button has now been added to our website. The donation page has been updated and now includes:

- ◆ Several options for where you would like your donation to go
- ◆ Option to donate in honor or in memory of someone
- ◆ Option to make recurring payments
- ◆ [Mobile app link](#). Click on the link to check it out. Questions? View the mobile app [How-to User Guide](#).

We also have a text option for folks to use. Our dedicated GivePlus text phone number is 833-643-0604. Just text the amount you would like to donate. View the text giving [How-to User Guide](#) to see how easy it is to make your text donation.



Covid-19 Relief Donations

Since our first Zoom service on March 15, all plate donations have been designated to go to local community covid-19 relief efforts. With the generous donations that have come in so far, we're been able to send \$2500 to both the Holyoke Boys & Girls Club and the Alden Baptist Church in Springfield. Both organizations are using the donations to provide immediate help to those in the community who are being affected the most by the shut down caused by the pandemic. A thank you letter from the Holyoke Boys & Girls Club says it best, "This support validates our work and reinforces our commitment to the community." (You can read the letter here: [Thank You Letter](#))



REPORTS & ARTICLES

Community Outreach

Submitted by Molly Hale

Jewish Activists for Immigration Justice (JAIJ) of Western MA is calling on all members of our communities to do everything possible to help get people out of ICE detention in the Bristol County jail in North Dartmouth, MA before COVID-19 spreads throughout the facility. Detainees who live 50 to a room, eat together, and sleep 3 feet apart are not able to protect themselves from COVID-19. Those inside, many of whom have participated recently in hunger strikes and other protests, are asking for community support to help change the minds of those who can release them, so that detainees don't die in ICE detention.

Here's how you can help:

1. Call on elected leaders and other officials to demand immediate humanitarian release of detained migrants and ask if they will use their position to pressure the ICE and Bristol County jail officials. Also ask if they will:

- Investigate the conditions at the Bristol County ICE detention facility;
- Make public statements about the danger of the COVID-19 virus for detainees, staff, their families, and the surrounding community;
- Ensure that detainees in Bristol County are released on a rolling basis (50 cases to be considered per week), as ordered by U.S. District Court Judge William Young.
- Use their influence to exert pressure on those who have the power to release the detained migrants, specifically Sheriff Hodgson of Bristol County Jail and Todd Lyons, Regional Director of ICE.
- Use their power to seek a strong public statement from Governor Baker to say, "We won't stand by and watch people die. Not in our state."

2. Donate to the bond fund organized and paid for by the Boston-area Immigrant Justice and Accompaniment Network (BIJAN). The fiscal sponsor for BIJAN is the Episcopal City Mission, a 501c3 organization. Here are 2 ways you can donate to this fund:

- Donate online at www.episcopalcitymission.org/donate. Select "Beyond Bond & Legal Defense Fund" when asked about donation type. Gifts are tax deductible.
- Write checks to Episcopal City Mission with "Beyond Bond Fund" in the memo line and mail them to: Episcopal City Mission, 138 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02111

The situation for detainees changes rapidly. For updates, check out the JAIJ Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/JAIJWM/> or join our mailing list by writing to us at: jewishimmigrationjustice@gmail.org

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

RE at Home - Sabbath

I had an idea early this morning to have a technology sabbath from sundown on Friday night through sundown on Saturday. Then I remembered my Zoom social commitments. Well, at least I have the intention of avoiding my computer for a day!

On Friday nights in Jewish homes around the world, families come together to light candles, say prayers, and share a meal. For the next 25 hours, the sabbath or Shabbat, is a time to rest. It is a special time set aside from the rest of the week to *not work*. *I have relatives who don't drive their cars or even turn the lights on and off during this time. They walk to synagogue for worship and have special timers on their lamps. The sabbath is intentional time spent together in presence and stillness.*

In some ways, this time of pandemic feels like a prolonged sabbath. Everything has come to rest. It can feel like a quiet, relaxing break. And, it can also feel stressful, anxiety-provoking and relentless. For many families, there isn't a clear distinction between work, homeschool, and rest.

Carving out time for sabbath -- intentional rest, both together as a family and alone, can feel really restorative. There are ideas and resources below for how to do this, including creating an altar, making a chalice, and practicing mindfulness together. Just like getting dressed in the morning is pretty critical at this time, having intentional time to rest and to be together is also vital.

Let me know how your family is finding time for sabbath, ritual, covenant, and self care. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me to talk and connect: Jessica Harwood, dre@uunorthampton.org, 584-1390 x 203.

Family Ritual Resources

- [Creating Sabbath Space](#)
- [Make Your Own Chalice](#)
- [Family Covenants](#)
- [Family Mindfulness](#)



Jane Simonds photo

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

May: Weekly Schedule



Monday through Thursday at 4 pm: Story Time with Jessica

Come together with other kids and families to check in and connect. Jessica will share a story and invite reflection on the themes and ideas. Here is the link to join: <https://zoom.us/j/880344797>

Daily Challenges

[Daily challenges](#) allow you and your family to connect with each other and the 7 Principles and the 6 Sources of UUism. They are posted on our [RE Facebook page](#).

Sunday RE

We are hoping that families will tune into our online Sunday services. We are working on incorporating various elements to engage the whole family. For our 4th through 8th grade class, we will offer a class and check in from 11:15-12:15 every Sunday after the service. The Zoom link for that class will be sent by email. The COA class will continue online every other Sunday.

Parent and caregiver groups

Parents and caregivers deserve a break right now! We invite you to come together for some reflection, sharing, mutual support, and grounding. Join us on Sundays, 11:30 am - 12:15 pm - <https://zoom.us/j/631712325>

Jessica's Office Hours

Join me on Wednesdays from 4:30-6:30 pm to check in, say hi, and connect: <https://zoom.us/j/254449462>

Young Adult Group

Annie Doran

The Young Adult Group held a remote check-in early on in this lock-down period. We are checking in again with all young folks to see how everyone is doing and what kind of support is needed. Although the young USNF friends and members are spread from California to Maine, we are trying to weave together in solidarity as we move through our challenges and stay open to the light of transformation.

If you are between the ages of 18 and 40 and want to be in touch with other young USNF folks, please get in touch with Annie (youthfulUSNF@gmail.com).

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Youth Group

Annie Doran

Youth Group continues to have super sweet and cozy online hangs twice weekly. We even have a brave new member as of a few weeks ago! Although it's hard not to meet in person, it's quite wonderful to get a glimpse of everyone's home life, special objects in their rooms-- we even had a one person fashion show!

Youth have decided to continue planning and preparing for their Downtown Composting pilot project, imagining a ribbon cutting ceremony and celebration in the Fall. We are also having fun and getting creative about how to deliver our Worship Service on June 14.

When the world feels chaotic, it's best to reconnect with our roots. And so, there will be a Youth Group reunion (via Zoom) soon! If you are a former youth and want to participate, please reach out to Annie (youthfulUSNF@gmail.com) for more info.

Welcome to Emma Gaudreau, Our New Early Childhood Teacher!

Hi everyone! I'm very much looking forward to becoming part of your UU community here in Northampton as your Early Childhood Educator! Working with young children is a strong passion of mine and I feel joy knowing I will be getting the opportunity to get to know the children and families of your congregation. I grew up in Wilmington MA, just north of Boston, and fell in love with Western MA when I attended Westfield State to study education. Currently, I live in Chicopee and am teaching preschool in Westfield. I want to share a little bit about my journey growing up a Unitarian Universalist. When I was young, my Mom wanted my brother and I to be involved in a nourishing and welcoming community that would provide us with a sense of family, growth and love. She found the Unitarian Universalist Church of Reading MA and that is where we stayed for over 11 years. My fondest childhood memories are from that church. From the plays and performances that my youth group would put on during service, singing at the Christmas Eve service by candle light, going through the O.W.L program, and getting the chance to read at the altar with my peers about love, death and life. When I am not teaching I love to hike (one of the reasons I fell in love with Western MA, all the mountains!), play with my adorable cat, visit the ocean and cook! Despite our current crisis I feel hopeful that soon enough I will be able to meet you all.



Sending peace,

Emma Gaudreau

SAVE THE DATES

Weekly Meditations with Janet

Thursdays, 6 - 6:30 PM. [Meditation Circle](#). Readings, simple singing, and silence.

May 8, Movie Night: *Trail Of Tears*, (a PBS documentary about the removal of the Cherokee), 7-9 PM. This film is part one of the PBS documentary film series on Native Americans called "*We Shall Remain*" which looks at the Native Americans' role in American history (if there is continued interest after the *Trail of Tears* film, we can watch another film in the PBS series each month). On movie night, everyone will come together over Zoom at 7 pm for an introduction, then watch the film on their own (YouTube link to be provided), then reconvene on Zoom after watching the movie to discuss it. Note: this film is great for adults and youth! Here's the [zoom link for Friday, May 8 at 7pm](#). Please RSVP to Carol Gray if you plan to attend: carol-gray_2000@yahoo.com. Phone: 413-297-1075. See you at the movies!

May 13, Introduction to Zen Meditation, 7- 8 PM. Join David Caruso, Zen Priest, to learn about Zen Meditation and have an opportunity to practice it. RSVP to dre@uunorthampton.org for the Zoom link.

May 15, Older Adult Our Whole Lives (OWL) Class: 1:30 - 3:30 PM. This class is open to people who are 50+ (you do not need to have attended the April class). It will focus on Family Matters. The class will provide tools for how to foster multigenerational communication about sexuality and sexual values. It will provide tools for setting and respecting boundaries, while affirming the role of grandparents and other older adults as sexuality educators. Please RSVP to dre@uunorthampton.org to sign up for the class and to receive the Zoom link.

May 16, Movie Night: *Smoke of the Sea*, 7 - 8:30 PM. Sam Simonds (Jane Simonds' and Nancy Sardeson's son) produced an award-winning narrative short film in Taiwan, *Smoke of the Sea*. We will come together over Zoom to watch the movie and then participate in a discussion with Sam. The film is in Mandarin with English subtitles (20+ mins). The film's based on personal stories and accounts from Dulan, Taiwan's indigenous Amis community—many of whom are the stars and crew of the film. Set in Taiwan, *Smoke of the Sea*, is the story of a young girl who is dying from a mysterious sickness and must journey into the world of her Amis ancestors to rediscover her connection with herself, the land, and her culture to find a cure. RSVP to dre@uunorthampton.org for the Zoom link.

May 27, Racial Justice Learning Circle, 6:30 - 8:30 PM. In this learning circle, we will explore what it means to be an ally to People of Color. RSVP to dre@uunorthampton.org for Zoom information.

May 23, Talent Show, 6:30 - 8 PM. Everyone is invited to a Zoom talent show! If you want to perform, plan a 1-2 minute talent or no-talent that you want to share. We are not looking for perfection -- share a hidden skill that you have, a poem you want to recite, a song you are practicing, a puppet show, your favorite recipe, your mime act, a joke, etc. RSVP to dre@uunorthampton.org.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

THE PIONEER
THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF NORTHAMPTON AND FLORENCE

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JUNE PIONEER DATES

Deadline: May 21

Publication: May 28

*Articles should be 350 words or less.
Send submissions to pioneer@uunorthampton.org.
Include the word "PIONEER" in the subject line.*

Office hours: Tuesday through Thursday 9:00-3:00
Contact the Society at 584-1390. Visit us online at www.uunorthampton.org.