



THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY OF MIDDLEBOROUGH

25 South Main Street, Middleborough, MA 02346

www.uumiddleboro.org

508-947-1935

May 2021

We are offering virtual worship services at 10:30 a.m. The link to each service will be posted on our website every week.

Sunday, May 2

Led by our local chapter of the

Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPs)

Abundant Life: The Meaning of Beltane

The pagan holiday of Beltane is a celebration of new life emerging from its slumber and the recognition of having survived the harshness of winter. This year we are all emerging not only from the cold, but from the further darkness that a tiny virus brought to our entire world and changed it forever. Today we gather to rejoice in our resilience and join with the natural world in welcoming the season of abundance and greater warmth and light that is upon us.

Sunday, May 9

Rev. Sarah Person preaching

Dreaming of the Day

One of the hardest challenges of parenting is letting go of expectations. Yet one of the joys is the room that makes for love. Explore with us the ways in which we find paths to the future with an open heart.

Sunday, May 16

Rev. Sarah Person preaching

What Were They Thinking?

Despite their differences, or perhaps because of their diversity, the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Church of America merged on May 12, 1961. Together they created a single path for an adventurous faith. Spend your morning with a little history and a lot of music.

Sunday, May 23

Rev. Sarah Person preaching

Speaking the Language

On this day, many Christians observe Pentecost, or the gift of tongues and the miracle of comprehension. Suddenly on that day, no matter what their language, people could understand one another. If there were ever a time when we wished we could have perfect comprehension across differences, the time would be now.

Sunday, May 30

Rev. Sarah Person preaching

Growing Memories

A garden reflects the essential balance that all life needs in order to thrive. Its very nature expresses what it takes to nurture and sustain the arc of our existence. Those requirements acknowledge that death and life coexist, and neither has dominion over our memories and dreams. Join us in our virtual Memorial Garden, with thanks to our volunteers who, every year, nurture it to bloom.

Minister's Meditation

The Bully Pulpit

One of the phrases you'll hear most often when you call a minister to serve is the phrase "freedom of the pulpit, freedom of the pew." It is an essential component of most congregation's agreements with their minister. These freedoms are not limited to Unitarian Universalism, although the Waynesboro UU church has a nice definition:

FREEDOM OF THE PULPIT

This freedom is the commitment that neither denomination, nor ministers' association, nor congregation, nor community will prevent a minister in our tradition from speaking their truth in every setting.

FREEDOM OF THE PEW

This is our tradition's guarantee that the person in the pew – member, friend, or visitor – will never be required to agree or profess agreement with the minister.

<https://uufw.org/about-us/freedom-of-pulpit-freedom-of-pew/>

Whether I'm interpreting scripture or unfolding events, I have the right and the latitude to share my view, and you have the right to disagree. However, these basic freedoms are actually much more complex than they sound, and we ignore their complexities at our peril. Ministers and congregations will have to navigate the issue of power in their relationships. And that understanding is one of the most difficult things for a minister to develop and a congregation to recognize.

I will freely confess that, when I was first called to ministry, the mantle of authority did not rest securely on my shoulders and tended to slip off sideways. It was difficult for me, as it is for many of you, to see myself as a person of power "over." I had spent so long focusing my efforts on developing my power "within," I didn't realize I might have undue influence over someone else. Ministers walk a fine line between letting people know where they stand, and inadvertently inhibiting other's opinions. However, there are times when we must be our authentic selves to truly share ministry, as we ably demonstrated in our decision as a congregation to display a Black Lives Matter banner. Whatever happens, this church can make room for dialogue more than monologue.

So, with all humility but plenty of backbone, I invite you to share our power responsibly, compassionately, authentically and respectfully as we move forward together.

*In Peace,
Rev. Sarah*



MAY MUSIC MUSINGS



One of the big take-homes from Music Sunday last month was the contrast between what was (with clips from vintage recordings) and what is (with clips from this year of pandemic). We used to work in ensemble, blending our voices, matching our vowels and consonants, measuring our breaths. After all that preparation, we had just one thrilling performance for a live audience. The rules changed during the past year. We now work individually and in small groups to record a music selection in one take that is then used multiple times. It may be canned, but it's what we've got. Although we miss being together in our Sanctuary celebrating music in real time, we have learned something new about staying connected when the rules change.

Our musician friend Matt Meyer has spread his wings by writing a new children's book called *Desmond Gets Free*, beautifully illustrated by Khim Fam. We used this storybook for Music Sunday because it fit our message of working together. If you are interested in Matt's book, follow this link: <https://www.rhythmrevelations.com/books/desmondgetsfree>

The project in May is putting together our final virtual choir piece, "You Are the New Day." Bet Giddings has done a great job of setting us up, and choir members are preparing their voice tracks to add into the mix. This piece will be ready to share in June.

Collectively, we are doing well, hanging tight, staying optimistic, keeping a forward motion. I'm not sure what we're going to do with all our new skills, but I know they will come in handy as we move out of our virtual bubble.

Yes, we have cabin fever; but the lights on the horizon are blinking yellow rather than red, and we are glimpsing rays of green.

Susan Hotchkiss, Director of Music



VIRTUAL PLANT SALE

May 11 - 17

Attention all gardeners and would-be-gardeners. There will be another virtual plant sale this year, just a bit later! Mike Schroeder will take orders via email (mwschroeder379@gmail.com) May 11 through May 17 and will dig your plants immediately for pick up. There will be offerings of perennial flowers and herbs.

A supplementary catalog will follow hopefully on Monday, May 3. Meanwhile, email Mike if you have any plants to offer so she can put them in the supplementary catalog.

DO NOT SEND ORDERS BEFORE MAY 11. Mike will be away May 6 to 10, and your order will get lost! That said, supplies are limited, so do order early within the order period (May 11 through May 17)! Plants are \$5 each.

Here is the link for the catalog to date:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mkCvDkZ8R4Ihd8p_iOXARKNQcqwQ2m-/view?invite=CKOy-rAJ&ts=608aec25



Unexpected Heroes

Easter was early last month, and we delivered baskets with Easter eggs, coloring pages and colored pencils to the children and youth. In class, the youth talked about a few new heroes. We also shared more characteristics that UUs value - stewardship, uniqueness and worship. Our *Change the World* book has taught us about boycotts. Our Zoom link will continue to go out on Saturday. If you are interested, please email us at dre@uumiddleboro.org. We meet from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings, and we have a lot of fun!

Junior and Senior Youth

Junior and Senior Youth will be meeting in person again twice a month. A calendar will be going out to the youth and will be posted on Facebook so that our families can keep up with the schedule more easily. The youth will meet together, and the last half hour will be dedicated to the Senior Youth to allow them to have time together. We had one meeting in person in April with the Senior Youth and Junior Youth combined. We shared pizza and started planning our youth service for June.

Dungeons and Dragons

A small group of mostly Junior Youth have engaged in a monthly Dungeons and Dragons group. There is still space for another child if anyone is interested! We have created our characters and are playing. We will meet on May 2 this month (yes, a week early so you can appreciate your moms on May 8!). A link will go out Saturday.

RE Committee

Our RE Committee meets the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. We have a small consistent group--Nancy Kidd, Christine Hoyle, Greg Stevens and Kim Correia. We are always open to new members - just reach out to me at dre@uumiddleboro.org

Parent Coffee Hour

We have continued Coffee Hour on the second Sunday of the month at 11:45. We will continue to meet on the second Sunday of the month. The group is open to RE parents.

Message for All Ages

In April we had *Old Turtle*, *Desmond Gets Free*, and *The Rescuers*. These were recommended by Sandra Holbrook, Susan Hotchkiss and Kelly Lownds

Kelly Lownds, Director of Religious Exploration



JUSTICE, EQUALITY, AND PEACE VIGILS

May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

We will continue scheduling weekly ½ hour vigils on **Saturday mornings from 11:30 to 12:00 noon**. In addition, we will be offering training to help us respond to folks with strong opinions. If you are interested in standing with us, but would like the training first, please add your name, but put an X in the first column. Sign up for training and/or the vigil by visiting https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bh50g1GJo86U_kwcs9k95_PaZTPNP7i8CugTK77hd6o/edit?usp=sharing

VIRTUAL ZOOM OFFERINGS

COFFEE WITH THE MINISTER

Tuesdays: May 4, 11, 18, 25
10:30 – 11:30 a.m.



Links will be sent out
for this event.

LET'S DO LUNCH

Thursdays: May 6, 13, 20, 27
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Links will be sent out
for this event.



JUST THIS SANGHA

Fridays: May 7, 14, 21, 28
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.



We meet every Friday at 6:00 p.m. Contact Tom Tanguay at tomjtanguay@gmail.com for further information. All are welcome.

VIRTUAL ZOOM OFFERINGS (continued)



SOCIAL JUSTICE FILM DISCUSSIONS **Saturdays, May 8 and 22** **9:30 – 11:00 a.m.**

The Racial Justice Committee is winding up the remainder of this church year with the following film discussions and activities. You will notice that there are two activities scheduled throughout this segment. For those who wish to join, we will be doing:

the 28-day journaling exercise based on the book *Me & White Supremacy* on **Saturday, May 22;**

and holding a vigil at the church on **Saturday, June 19**, to commemorate Juneteenth.

- 5/8 **FILM:** *Urban Rez* – Discussion.
 Facilitators: Natalie Johnson & Sandy Smiley
- 5/22 **ACTIVITY:** *Me & White Supremacy* by Layla Saad; 28-Day Exercise – Discussion & Share.
 Facilitators: Dorine Levasseur & Dody Adkins-Perry
- 5/25 Silent Dedication of Black Lives Matter banner today, the anniversary of George Floyd's death
- 6/5 **FILM:** *The New York Times 26 Mini-Films for Exploring Race, Bias & Identity With Students - A Conversation On Race and Who, Me? Biased?*
 (6 videos) - Discussion
 Discussion of *Microaggressions* paper.
 Facilitators: Deanne Bonnar & Bob Waterman
- 6/19 **WRAP-UP and FORUM** for Questions, Thoughts & Insights.....
 Facilitator: Natalie Johnson
- ACTIVITY:** Vigil to Commemorate Juneteenth.
 Facilitator: Lois Aldrich

PLEASE NOTE:

The Wampanoag Ancestor Walk in Plymouth originally scheduled for Saturday, May 1, has been postponed until **Saturday, September 4**, and will now be virtual.

All are welcome to join any or part of these offerings. Any questions may be directed at Deanne Bonnar or Natalie Johnson.

VIRTUAL ZOOM OFFERINGS (continued)



NEW MOON MEDITATION

with Natalie Johnson

Tuesday, May 11

6:00 – 6:45 p.m.

This month's New Moon falls in the sign of Taurus, the consummate Earth sign, inviting us to sink our roots in deep, to stand our ground like the bull in the face of inequity and injustice, and to remain steadfast and strong in our commitment to creating a new way of being on this planet..... a way that honors all beings, both human and more than human. We gather just days after Mother's Day and so will honor our beloved Mother Earth who holds, shelters, feeds, protects and loves us all unconditionally.

We invite you to join us in this celebration of love for all creation. All are welcome.

The link will be sent out for this event.

FULL MOON MEDITATION

with Natalie Johnson

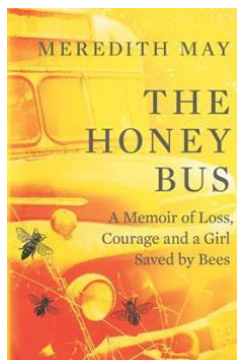
Wednesday, May 26

6:00 – 6:45 p.m.

Tonite we are gifted not only with a Full Moon but also a full lunar eclipse. The moon is in the sign of Sagittarius; and as the archer, he helps us to aim our arrows of promise and aspiration..... carrying our desires into the higher realms to receive spiritual assistance.

These arrows are not weapons of war but rather arrows of peace and love released by us and meant to carry our commitment to co-creating a better world far into the future. Come join us as we employ the heightened energies of the eclipse to amplify our expressions of greater love. All are welcome.

The link will be sent out for this event.



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Next Meeting is June 21

6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

The May Book Club meeting is cancelled. Our selection for June 21 is *The Honey Bus* by Meredith May. The setting for the June meeting will be determined closer to the date.

For more info, contact Carleen Loper at Carleenml@aol.com.

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL PARISH COMMITTEE MEETING

April 21, 2021

Present: Jim Bonnar, Bob Waterman, Marc MacQueen, Katie Allen, Rev. Sarah Person, Lois Aldrich, Eileen Smith

Guests: Gil Cote, Kelly Lownds

April 7 check-in meeting minutes approved.

Pledge Drive Update: Gil Cote provided an update on the pledge drive - 39 pledges so far totaling \$132,053. Waiting to hear from 20 people with the potential of another \$30,000. If received, this would leave approximately \$17,000 to meet our pledge goal of \$180,000. Pledge drive is running for 3 more weeks. Marc MacQueen expressed concern that we may not receive the same amount of pledges as last year.

Minister's Report: Rev. Sarah distributed and reviewed her report for April. We may have a new member for lay ministry! Pastoral programs will be coordinated for the fall.

Discussion around plans for re-opening the church. Rev. Sarah, Kelly Lownds and Susan Hotchkiss participated in a UUA webinar on planning for safe re-opening of churches and in-person gatherings, which included best practices. The UUA is offering ZOOM accounts to churches, for a fee. This would mean our church could have two Zoom accounts. The PC agreed to purchase a 2nd account from the UUA. The plan is for this account to be registered to and managed by the office administrator (Val) and allow a limited number of other people to have access (Bob Waterman, Kelly Lownds and Katie Allen volunteered).

Treasurer's Report: Marc MacQueen reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Nothing unusual to report for March, and no concerns at this point. If pledges keep coming in as they should in May and June, Marc thinks we could end the church year with surplus. We have not used investments this year.

RE: Kelly Lownds reviewed her report. Greg Stevens may not be youth adviser after this church year. She will keep us posted. Meeting with youth outside 2 times a month. Dungeons and Dragons meet once month. 2 - 6 youth meet with Kelly on Sunday morning. This year Kelly distributed Easter baskets to the young children. She is currently planning the June service with the youth. Kelly meets with RE parents on the second Sunday of the month; usually 4 - 6 parents attend. Kelly is working on updating CORIs for staff.

Music Committee: Katie Allen stated there was nothing new to report this month.

Social Justice Committee: Congregation overwhelmingly voted to hang banner at the April 18 congregation meeting. Lauren Haugh sent email to the PC with requests to purchase 2 3x4 Black Lives Matter banners. Her email also suggested there be a public dedication when hanging the banner.

The PC agreed to Lauren's request to purchase banners (funded by donations). There was discussion around where to hang, how to hang, safety trainings, security cameras, etc. Jim Bonnar is to consult with the Social Justice Committee, Building and Grounds staff, and JR regarding where/how to hang banner, and any necessary safety precautions that should be taken (i.e., security cameras, etc.). Agreed that the banner should be hung in a location that is out of reach.

The PC discussed the request for a public dedication ceremony at the hanging of the banner, and the majority of the PC is leaning toward congregation only dedication rather than a public gathering. It was suggested the dedication be coordinated with anniversary of George Floyd's death (May 25).

The Social Justice Committee requested the PC consider Cash in the Plate for May to go to the RIA house in Framingham, an agency that provides a range of community-based services to people in the commercial sex trade who have experienced exploitation, trafficking, and prostitution. The PC supports contributions to RIA but would also like to explore more local options. Kelly Lownds agreed to research local organizations in this area.

Annual Reports: Coming due. Bob Waterman offered to work on drafting the annual reports.

Quarterly Budget Meeting: Sunday, May 23, was proposed and accepted for budget meeting.

Annual Meeting: Friday, June 11, at 7:00 p.m. was proposed and accepted as the Annual Meeting.

Fundraisers in Spring: Considering an online auction, possible road rally (John Mullen)?

Next PC meeting check-in Wednesday May 6, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Parish Care

Parish Care help is available to assist with meals, transportation, emergency babysitting, and hospital visits during illnesses or other family emergencies.

We are a diverse, active and caring community; and we welcome your questions and your participation. You are always invited to call or visit our minister to discuss any matter of concern to you.

Lay Ministry Coordinator: Susan Curtiss
Lay Pastoral Minister: Sue St. Germain
Meals: Juli Gould

Parish Committee

President: Jim Bonnar
Vice President: Bob Waterman
Treasurer: Marc MacQueen
Assistant Treasurer: Eileen Smith
Parish Clerk: Lois Aldrich
Members At Large: Katie Allen
Nicole Sykes



Church Calendar

We would like to keep the church calendar up-to-date. Please check the online calendar by visiting <http://uumiddleboro.org/>, click on About Us, and scroll down to Calendar to confirm that your virtual meeting or event is scheduled. Contact the church office (office@uumiddleboro.org) with any changes or additions.



Mission Statement

We seek to provide a sanctuary where people can come together as a community to foster spiritual and personal growth through education and open discussion, to offer the opportunity for meditation and worship, and to serve as a liberal religious voice.

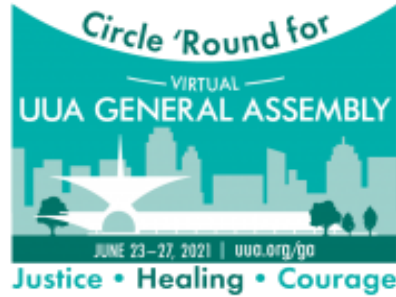
In our interactions with one another, we seek to build a strong community, great with acceptance, appreciation, caring love, respect, tolerance, trust, and forgiveness; to listen to one another and resolve our conflicts peacefully; to sympathize with and show compassion to one another; to express our creativity together; and to delight in fun and friendship.

As a religious community, we strive to help one another in our individual journeys to discover our spiritual selves; to find purpose, self-worth, and peace; to explore moral and ethical questions together; and to inspire, challenge, and to stimulate one another intellectually - with open-mindedness and without judgment.

As individuals and in the larger community, we will speak against injustice and cruelty. We seek to model tolerance and diversity; confront the fear of difference; and thoughtfully address the many difficult problems of our world.

MAY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
2 10:00 a.m. Virtual RE 10:30 a.m. Virtual Worship Service 3:30 p.m. Virtual Junior Youth	3 2:00 p.m. Recording, Sanctuary	4 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall 10:30 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour 7:00 p.m. Virtual Choir Rehearsal	5 6:00 p.m. Virtual RE Committee	6 12:00 noon Virtual Let's Do Lunch 7:00 p.m. Virtual Spirituality Group	7 1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 6:00 p.m. Virtual Just This Sangha	8 9:30 a.m. Virtual Social Justice Film Discussion 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
9  10:00 a.m. Virtual RE 10:30 a.m. Virtual Worship Service 11:45 a.m. Virtual RE Coffee Hour	10 2:00 p.m. Recording, Sanctuary	11 Virtual Plant Sale 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters 10:30 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour 6:00 p.m. Virtual New Moon Meditation 7:00 p.m. Virtual Choir Rehearsal	12 Virtual Plant Sale 7:00 p.m. Virtual Music Committee	13 Virtual Plant Sale 12:00 noon Virtual Let's Do Lunch 7:00 p.m. Virtual Spirituality Group	14 Virtual Plant Sale 1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 6:00 p.m. Virtual Just This Sangha	15 Virtual Plant Sale 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
16 10:00 a.m. Virtual RE 10:30 a.m. Virtual Worship Service Virtual Plant Sale 4:00 p.m. Junior/Senior Youth June Newsletter Deadline	17 Virtual Plant Sale 2:00 p.m. Recording, Sanctuary	18 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters, Parish Hall 10:30 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour 7:00 p.m. Virtual Choir Rehearsal	19 6:30 p.m. Virtual Parish Committee	20 12:00 noon Virtual Let's Do Lunch 7:00 p.m. Virtual Spirituality Group	21 1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 6:00 p.m. Virtual Just This Sangha	22 9:30 a.m. Virtual Social Justice Film Discussion 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
23 10:00 a.m. Virtual RE 10:30 a.m. Virtual Worship Service 11:45 a.m. Budget Meeting 4:00 p.m. Junior/Senior Youth	24 2:00 p.m. Recording, Sanctuary	25 10:00 a.m. Peaceful Quilters 10:30 a.m. Virtual Coffee Hour Silent Dedication of BLM banner 7:00 p.m. Virtual Choir Rehearsal	26 6:00 p.m. Virtual Full Moon Meditation	27 12:00 noon Virtual Let's Do Lunch 7:00 p.m. Virtual Spirituality Group	28 1:00 p.m. Organ Practice, Sanctuary 6:00 p.m. Virtual Just This Sangha	29 11:30 a.m. Peace Vigil, Church Lawn
30 10:00 a.m. Virtual RE 10:30 a.m. Virtual Worship Service 4:00 p.m. Junior/Senior Youth	31  2:00 p.m. Recording, Sanctuary					



The global pandemic has created disruptions in all of our lives, including in how we gather for our annual conference, General Assembly (GA). Originally planned to be held in Milwaukee, WI, UUA leadership and the Board of Trustees have decided to transform the onsite event into an all-virtual event, in response to public health guidance discouraging in-person gatherings.

Virtual GA retains many of the important elements that attendees have come to expect and cherish: worship experiences, powerful speakers, learning opportunities, and dozens of interactive programs over five days. If you haven't registered for Virtual GA 2021 already, there is no better time than right now! Registered attendees are among the first to hear program announcements, such as the Ware Lecturer, and only registered attendees will have access to the **NEW!** GA app. So, register early to join online discussions, familiarize yourself with the GA schedule, and find your place in our community of communities: <https://www.uua.org/ga/registration>

You may now view the full GA schedule! While we still have some big upcoming announcements (like this year's Ware Lecturer - details coming soon!), you can now preview the abundance of Virtual GA programming including 75 On-Demand Programs and 39 Live Webinars. And remember, there is no "tyranny of choice" at a Virtual GA because anything attendees miss live can eventually be watched On-Demand: <https://www.uua.org/ga/program/schedule>

