

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

May 2022



NOTES FROM REV. DAN

Two friends of mine recently got into a bitter argument — the kind in which neither is likely to budge, and in which the fallout from the things they'd said about each other in the course of fighting far outweighed the original disagreement. From the outside I could see them both for the good people they are, but they'd long passed seeing it in each other.

Some kinds of conflicts are difficult. They may be painful and polarizing. They may prompt us to anger, even when they are not our battles. From the outside we might see sides of people we love that disappoint us or hear only one side and see nothing but persecution — until we start to hear another perspective. It broke my heart to see my friends treating each other this way, and at last I had to realize a hard truth — I wasn't going to be able to fix this.

I thought about what Unitarian Universalism teaches about inherent worth and dignity, accepting one another, and loving others as we love ourselves. I thought about our congregation's covenant, which reminds us to look for the best in other people, speaking thoughtfully, respecting decisions we disagree with, and engaging directly when we do disagree.

Then I remembered an old story about a minister who held the unenviable position of moderator between two groups who couldn't

stand each other. As she watched and listened, the groups each talked some, and shouted more. Each side was so busy defending their own position that they didn't listen to or care what the other side said. At the end of this long debate, they turned to the Minister.

I realized that I could love both of my friends...I didn't have to choose between them.

I expect they thought she would pronounce judgment, tell them who won the debate, or at least venture some opinion as to the issues they discussed. But instead, she looked at the people

on one side of the room. "If you are on this side," she said, "God loves you." Then she turned to the others. "If you are on that side, God loves you." And that was all.

The truth is, I didn't have to take sides, and I didn't have to get pulled into somebody else's fight. I could be disappointed by what I saw, but I could also recognize that there was a great deal more that I couldn't see. Most importantly, I realized that I could love both of my friends as much as I ever had. I didn't have to choose between them. The best thing I could do was simply continue to love them both and make sure they knew it.

Perhaps, when conflict comes to our lives, there is nothing better we can do than remember Unitarian Universalism. Then look at one side and say, "You are worthy of great love." Look at the other side other side and say, "You are worthy of great love."

Take a deep breath and live that compassion.

In faith, Dan

Our Mission

Our mission is to:

GROW in spirit, heart and mind

LOVE through care and community

SERVE beyond ourselves



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Sunday Services



We gather, aspiring to be a thriving, caring, and welcoming community that supports each person's spiritual journey, embraces diversity, challenges us to live responsibly, and is a catalyst for a just and compassionate world.

May 1 10 am

**WORK. WHAT IS IT
GOOD FOR? (OR NOT)**

Brett Goldman

The first question we often ask when meeting someone new is “What do you do?” Starting a new relationship with such a loaded question reveals how complex a presence work is in our lives. Is it our passion or simply a means to an end? Does it accurately define us or distract others from seeing who we truly are? Brett will look at the concept of work from all sides – its benefits, its trappings, and how we’ve internalized what was modeled for us as we all struggle to figure out exactly what role work should be playing in our lives.

May 8 10 am

MOTHER’S SONG

**Rev. Dan Schatz
and UCWC Musicians**

Mother’s Day has a long history, from Julia Ward Howe’s proclamation for peace to contemporary expressions of gratitude for all who fill a mothering role in our lives, whether they bear the title or not. This special service of music, readings, and reflection will honor the work of mothers for social justice as well as the often complex relationships of motherhood.

May 15 10 am

ASK THE MINISTER

Rev. Dan Schatz

An annual favorite, this service will be shaped by you and the questions you ask. Please send questions about theology, world religions, ministry, ethics, current events or anything else to email: minister as soon as possible, and no later than May 8.

May 22 10 am

**FLOWER POWER
ANNUAL FLOWER
CELEBRATION**

**Rev. Dan Schatz,
Cassie Lengel, and
Miriam Davidson**

On this special Sunday, we invite those attending in person to bring a flower with them to the service (extra flowers will be on hand for those who don’t have them). Together, both in person and online, we will celebrate one of the most important and beloved rituals in Unitarian Universalism, as we each give a flower and come home with a different flower. The flowers remind us of the beauty in diversity and the power of community. This service will also include a ceremony of welcome for newer members.

May 29 10 am

CARRY-ON BAGGAGE

UCWC Congregants

When we think of our “baggage”, we generally think of unwanted weight that we bring with us. But if you’ve ever flown, you know that carry-on baggage is something much more positive. Your carry-ons are the essentials, the things that you can’t live without. Several UCWC members will share with us their carry-on baggage from the faiths of their youths. What do we keep from our earlier faiths that we still hold valuable today?

Ask the Minister Service

Over the next two weeks, Dan will take questions for the May 15 “Ask the Minister” service. Questions can be on theology, congregational life, Unitarian Universalism, world religions, or other topics you’d like to hear about, and Dan will weave the service around the questions received.

You can send questions to Dan (email: minister) or write them on a card and put them in the question box in the lobby. All questions will be read anonymously, though it is helpful to leave your name so Dan can contact you for clarification. Please submit your questions by May 8.

From the President

In our Fifth UU principle, our congregation affirms and promotes “the use of the democratic process within our congregations.” The most obvious way we do that at our annual meeting, when members vote on the budget and candidates for the board and nominating committee. This year, we’ll have the annual meeting after the Sunday morning service on either June 5 or June 12.



Most years, the budget that you vote on doesn’t present any big or controversial questions. We generally aim to continue existing operations and treat our paid staff fairly. Doing so is typically a bit of a stretch for us, but somehow we figure out a way to meet those goals.

This year’s budget proposal will come as inflation has erupted to painful levels – roughly 7 percent in the past year. Dealing with these higher costs, including cost of living raises for staff, is one reason our stewardship campaign urged you to increase your pledge if at all possible. Dozens of you did – and for that, we are thankful. Yet, total pledges fell well short of covering our expected cost increases.

We will hold a town hall after a Sunday service in May (date TBD) to share more details on the budget and discuss ways of meeting the challenges that inflation is posing for us.

At our annual meeting, you will also vote on candidates for the board and the nominating committee. Recruitment is still in progress; candidates will be listed in the official notice of the annual meeting, which is issued in late May. Our tradition is to nominate only one candidate per vacancy. That’s because contested elections are meaningful only if there is a major and significant disagreement about the direction of UCWC. Offering a choice just to so there is a choice is insulting to the candidate(s) who agree to serve and then lose.

But if there is a serious disagreement about our operations or our future, members are always free to nominate candidates from the floor at the annual meeting. In that case, voting proceeds by secret ballot.

Ideally, we avoid strong disagreements about budget questions or elections to leadership. But if there is disagreement, members can have their say through voting, because that is what our commitment to the democratic process requires.

– Matt

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Are You Thinking About Membership?

If you are new to our congregation or have been around for a while and are considering membership, Rev. Dan would love to connect with you. We are planning a New Member Welcome Ceremony as part of our May 22 service, so this could be a good time to join. Rev. Dan can be reached at email: **minister.**

Small Group Ministry

Small Group Ministry is a way to gather with other Unitarian Universalists twice a month for community, conversation and connection.

Each session is organized around a theme and includes a chalice lighting, readings, and questions to spark discussion. Groups are led by trained facilitators who meet regularly with Rev. Dan.

If you are interested in joining a group, please write to email: **SGM.**

Men’s Group

The Men’s Group will meet via Zoom on Tuesday, May 3, at 7:00 pm. Michael Werner will lead the discussion. The topic will relate to our perceptions of own success with a focus on these questions: Was there an event in your life when you had the feeling that you had made it? Have subsequent events caused you to reconsider whether you truly made it? How has your self-assessment changed as you have matured?



All men are welcome. The Zoom link will be sent out directly via email. If you are interested in participating but are not yet on the email distribution list, please reach out to Mark and Dirk at email:

mens-group.

Lifespan Faith Development

Whether you have children in the program or not, come talk to us about what it's like to be an RE teacher.

REflections: Religious Education Update

Mother may I join in RE? *Mais oui!* Of course you can! These past weeks we have enjoyed having a number of new and returning faces joining us in our RE classroom, and we'd love to see you there too. We will continue to meet throughout May for our RE classes and our All Ages Flower Service. Then join us in June for a big celebration for RE Sunday.

Mother may I be a teacher? Oh, I've been waiting for you to ask. Whether you are a new family to the congregation or have been coming for years, whether or not you've ever taught before, whether you have children in our program, or they're grown up, or no children of your own – come talk to us about what it's like to be an RE teacher. Get a feel for things now as we look ahead to the upcoming fall.

— Cassie Lengel, Email: DLFD



What's Happening in Religious Education?

Each week we invite our children in grades PreK through seventh to gather with their families in the sanctuary upstairs for the first 15 minutes or so of our service.

We'll get a chance to sing together and listen to a story before we head down to our class. In our classes we are continuing to celebrate our joys and sorrows, have crafts and activities, and we explore some discussion questions through a Disney/Pixar short film.

Our older youth are welcome to join in upstairs or for our crafts and chats as they are comfortable. We will continue to meet in our OWL class on Sunday evenings at 7 pm.

Adult RE: An Exploration of World Religions

We will meet each month for a 7 pm Zoom session to explore a different religion and how we engage them as UUs. This curriculum is based on Stephen Prothero's book, *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World* and the podcast "Interfaith Voices."

This month we will meet on May 3 to discuss Buddhism and then again on May 17 to discuss Paganism. RSVP to email: Adult-RE.



Join Us for "Explorations" A Program for Beginning and Deepening our UU Journeys

Come one, come all! Whether you're new to Unitarian Universalism or you've been with us for years, join "Explorations." This is a small-group-style program that is a great way to make some connections and deepen your relationships with others as you engage some guided readings and discussion questions together.

This program examines what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist through weekly topics that bring us together as we delve into our common faith and our individual experiences. Let's GROW together our spiritual practices and make new friends.

We will be guided through "Explorations" by our very own Jen Feld and Teri Lesser on April 28 and May 12 at 7 pm via Zoom. Please RSVP to email: DLFD.

Stones in the Wall: Social Justice

Each event, each action is another stone in the wall of social justice.

UUSC Update: New Partner LDYC

Recently, UUSC became the first funder of the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition (LDYC). UUSC's support is opening doors for youth from across the globe, ensuring that their stories about climate change are heard in places like the United Nations Climate Change Conference.

With technology and storytelling from a youth perspective, new leaders like Ineza Umuhoza Grace, raised in Rwanda, are emerging to pressure global leaders to change policy and reverse course, providing hope for a more sustainable world.

Ineza has seen firsthand the drastic changes happening in Rwanda. As she puts it, "These damages are profound. These losses are irreplaceable." Like other countries that have contributed the least to climate change, her community is at the frontline. As a result, Ineza has committed to act for climate justice, working to repair the environmental harms to the place she calls home and many similar communities in the Global South. She is part of a growing global youth movement aiming to create a borderless youth partnership.

Read more and watch her story [here](#).

Support UUSC's work [here](#). Any donation makes you a member. Thank you.



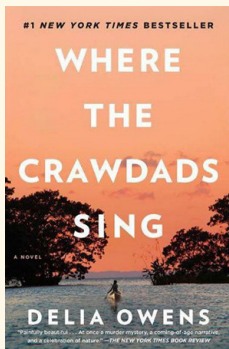
Diversity Book Group

May 15, 7:00–8:30 pm, on Zoom
(Date is Third Sunday to Avoid Mother's Day)
Leaders: Pat Bove & Debby Kern

Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens

Kya, the "Marsh girl," has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. She is sensitive and intelligent but yearns for human connections.

Kya then finds herself drawn into a world she does not understand. For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark of murder. This tale of isolation and nature told through the eyes of an abandoned child reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were.



Criminal Justice Reform

The UCWC Criminal Justice Reform team has two "asks" for you:

- **Medical and Geriatric Parole.** Take just 2 minutes and 40 seconds to watch this recap on YouTube of the press conference in Pittsburgh from Straight Ahead about the importance of passing PA Senate Bill 835, which would establish geriatric and medical parole in Pennsylvania. Click [here](#).
- **UU's Working on Behalf of the Incarcerated.** Consider the options for involvement via Worthy Now under the umbrella of our continental-wide organization the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), and the UU group The Church of the Larger Fellowship where you can connect with others in our faith community for criminal justice reform. Learn more about the pen pal program connecting UU's who are incarcerated with UU's in the community and other efforts [here](#).

Consistent with the first principle of Unitarian Universalism, we encourage everyone to recognize that each person is more than the worst thing they've ever done. Contact Robin Garrett at email: criminal-justice.

First Sunday Food Collection

In this time of social distancing, we are not collecting food on the first Sunday of each month. However, as always, you can still make a financial donation – with no personal contact on your part. We will buy grocery store gift cards and give them to the Food Cupboard.



Please make your check out to “UCWC” and write “Food Cupboard” in the memo line. Mail your check to:

Unitarian Congregation of West Chester
501 South High Street
West Chester, PA 19382

You can also donate to the Food Cupboard on the UCWC donation web page – click [here](#) and select “Grocery Cards for Food Cupboard.” Contact Cyndy Bullaughey, email: [grocery-program](#), for more information.

The West Chester Food Cupboard commits to provide a variety of fresh and nonperishable healthy food items to people who reside in the West Chester school district...because no one should go hungry!

Fun & Fellowship

Family & Friends Game Night

Come on out for Game Night on Friday, May 6. The games begin at 7:00. Fun for all ages! Bring a favorite or learn a new one. See you there.

Masks are still being worn indoors, and there is no food or drink at this time. Contact Susan Batchelor, email: [fun](#).



Share-the-Plate Generosity



The Social Justice Committee’s Share-the-Plate program raises money to give to local non-profit organizations working to improve life for Chester County residents. We are pleased to announce the share-the-plate recipient for May 15 (third Sunday of the month), **The Friends Association**.

Friends Association provides programs and services that prevent homelessness and promote the independence of families with children.

Their Housing First model combined with their trauma-informed, two-generation approach make the community better for all. Friends Association helps families stay together during times of crisis while connecting them with personalized case management, community resources, and skill-building.

They support all families experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness in Chester County, including single moms and dads, two-parent, multi-generational, grandparent, and LGBTQ+ families. The Association works with families to empower them as they build on existing strengths and skills and work together to build resiliency, stable housing, and financial independence.

Please note the following as you prepare your donation:

- All checks should be payable to “**UCWC**”.
- Checks with memo “All to charity” or similar go to the charity. Clearest is “**All to Friends Association**”.
- Checks with memo “plate”, “STP”, or “share the plate” are split 50/50. Clearest is “**STP 50/50**”.
- All other checks go 100% to UCWC, unless otherwise indicated.

Thank you for your generosity to March recipient, The Melton Center, in the amount of \$690.

Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

Click [HERE](#) to access our website main calendar, which includes late April events.

Pastoral Care

The Pastoral Care Team contact for this month is **Carolyn LaTulip**.



- May 1 Sun First Sunday Food Collection.** See p. 6.
 - May 2 Mon Executive Team.** 7:00 pm. Email: [executive-team](#).
 - May 3 Tue Criminal Justice Reform Team.** 3:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 5.
 - Men's Group.** 7:00 pm. Zoom. See p. 3.
 - Adult RE: An Exploration of World Religions.** 7 pm. See p. 4.
 - May 4 Wed Small Group Facilitators Meeting.** 7:00 am.
 - May 6 Fri Family & Friends Game Night.** 7:00 pm. Sanctuary. See p. 6.
 - Deadline to Submit "Ask the Minister" Questions.** See p. 2.
 - May 8 Sun Diversity Book Group.** 7:00-8:30 pm. See p. 5.
 - May 9 Mon Religious Services Committee.** 6:30 pm. Email: [religious-services](#).
 - May 10 Tue Program Council.** 7:00 pm.
 - May 12 Thu Explorations.** 7:00 pm. See p. 4.
 - May 15 Sun Share-the-Plate Sunday.** Friends Association for Care and Protection of Children. See p. 6.
 - May 17 Tue Election Day.** Vote your UU principles.
 - Adult RE Committee.** 4:30 pm. Email: [adult-re](#).
 - Adult RE: An Exploration of World Religions.** 7 pm. See p. 4.
 - Board Meeting.** 6:30 pm. All are welcome.
 - May 19 Thu Religious Education Committee.** 7:00 pm. Email: [religious-education](#).
 - May 24 Tue Committee on Ministry.** 6:30 pm. Email: [COM](#).
- EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:**
- Most Thursdays Spirit Singers Practice.** at 7:00 pm. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: [choir](#).
 - Various Dates Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups).** See [web calendar](#) or contact email: [SGM](#).

Budget Town Hall in May

On a date to be decided there will be a Town Hall (following a Sunday Service) to discuss the 2022-2023 budget.

See *From the President*, p. 3, for more details.



The Fellowtarian is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

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