

THE FELLOWTARIAN

Newsletter of the Unitarian Congregation of West Chester

September 2023

Guest Ministers During Rev. Dan's Sabbatical

While our Minister, Rev. Dan Schatz, is on sabbatical, we are excited to hear from a variety of Unitarian Universalist clergy.



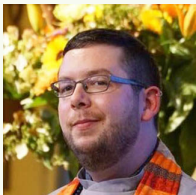
September 17: Rev. Sana Saeed

A graduate of Harvard Divinity School, and past President of Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), Rev. Sana Saeed has been on the Congregational Life Staff for the Central East Region of the UUA since July.



September 24: Rev. Keith Goheen

Rev. Keith Goheen has served as chaplain at Beebe Healthcare in Lewes, Delaware, for 18 years. He has been in ministerial fellowship with the UUA since 1999 and is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek.



October 8: Rev. Kevin Jagoe

Rev. Kevin Jagoe serves BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Warrington, Pennsylvania, as their minister, and is Adjunct Faculty with the Humanist Studies Program of the American Humanist Association.



October 15: Rev. Meg Mathieson

Rev. Meg Mathieson serves as the minister of Unitarian Universalists of the Cumberland Valley in Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania, and is a candidate for a Doctorate of Ministry through the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California.

While Rev. Dan Is on Sabbatical...

Rev. Dan will be on sabbatical through October 21. During this time, he will be unavailable by email, phone, or text. Both our Office Administrator Maggie Christy and Director of Lifespan Faith Development Cassie Lengel will be able to get in touch with Dan in the event of a congregational emergency. In the event of a pastoral crisis, the lay pastoral care team will have a list of on-call UU ministers.

For regular pastoral support, please write to email: [pastoral-care](mailto:pastoral-care@ucwc.org). For questions about adult programs or children's religious education, please write to email: [DLFD](mailto:DLFD@ucwc.org). For other questions, contact our Administrator at [administrator](mailto:administrator@ucwc.org) or the Executive Team at [executive-team](mailto:executive-team@ucwc.org).

Our Mission

Our mission is to:

*GROW in spirit, heart
and mind*

*LOVE through care
and community*

*SERVE beyond
ourselves*



A Welcoming
Congregation

501 South High Street
West Chester PA 19382
610-692-5966
office@ucwc.org
www.ucwc.org

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.

September 3 10 am

**I WILL SEE YOU
IN SEPTEMBER**

**Rev. Dr. Om Prakash
Gilmore**

There was a song a long time ago by Gary Lewis and the Playboys called I Will See You In September. One of the lines is "Have a good time, but remember, there is danger in the summer moon above. I will see you in September, or lose you to a Summer love." The Summer has passed. There have been many distractions. Now we are in an in between space, about to enter into the Autumn season. As the Taoists say, "In summer things grow, in the Autumn we gather the things that we need to last through the hard winter." How do we gather the things that we need from an alluring, but turbulent summer, not only to keep us secure through the coming winter, but also alive, vibrant and free?

Rev., Dr. Om Prakash (John Gilmore) is a retired Unitarian Universalist Minister, writer, Certified Life-Coach, Licensed Massage Therapist and Teacher. He is a graduate of Meadville Lombard Divinity School. He later received his D. Min. at University of Creation Spirituality in Work and Spirituality and did Postdoctoral Work at Sat Yoga Institute in Costa Rica studying spirituality and identity. His focus for the last 20 years has been the practical application of alternative therapies and healing modalities to empower and to remove the negative effects of oppression, suppression, and depression. He was a regular monthly Dharma teacher at Won Buddhist Institute in Abington, Pennsylvania, and is presently serving on the CUUPS national board in the position of Right Relations, and as a Trustee on the Triumph Church of the New Age Board.

September 10 10 am

INGATHERING

Cassie Lengel

Drawn by the vision of what can be, we continue our quest to grow, love, and serve together. This service will include our annual Blessing of the Backpacks. All who attend, and especially school aged children and youth, are invited to bring their backpacks or other bags with them to the service. (For those who don't bring bags, we can bless "virtual backpacks.")

September 17 10 am TO BE ANNOUNCED

Rev. Sana Saeed

A graduate of Harvard Divinity School, and past President of Diverse Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), Rev. Sana Saeed has been on the Congregational Life Staff for the Central East Region of the UUA since July.

September 24 10 am

**UNIVERSAL
HOLINESS**

Rev. Dr. Keith Goheen

Universalism has been present in Christianity since its inception, but universal salvation has not always been the prevailing view, nor has it meant the same thing at all times in Universalist and UU history. Let us explore universal holiness as a spiritual condition open to us all.

Rev. Keith Goheen has served as chaplain at Beebe Healthcare in Lewes, Delaware, for 18 years. He has been in ministerial fellowship with the UUA since 1999 and is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Mill Creek.

THE AUCTION IS COMING!

The 2023 Service Auction is coming in October, and we are looking for a small team of people to help. Please contact Janine Galen (email: [auction](#)) if you'd like to be part of the auction team.

- Meal Planning
- Entertainment/Decorations
- Donations and New Fundraising Ideas
- Setup/Clean Up

The auction is an important fundraising event for UCWC and a great way to give and receive services.

Timeline

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Oct 7 | Deadline for submissions to be included in the auction catalog. Late submissions will be published in an addendum. |
| Oct 24 & 26 | Online Silent Auction. Same format — Google Sheets — as last year with specific bidding hours. |
| Oct 28 | 4:00-7:00 pm. Hybrid Live Auction with Auctioneer. You will have the choice of participating in person or virtually. |

Plan Your Donation Now

You can enter your donation [here](#).

Here are some ideas: artwork, antiques, a group dinner, party, or picnic, home-baked bread/cookies/cake/pie, IT help, lessons, hand-crafted items, pet care, handyman services, carwash, lawn mowing, garden plants, a themed basket, use of a vacation home, frequent flyer miles, items of value in excellent condition.

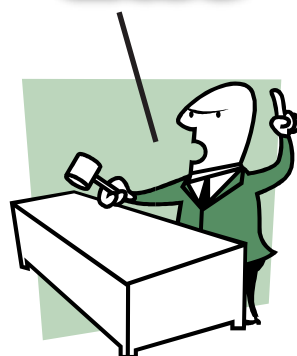
Solicit a Business Donation

With Covid and the economy impacting so many local businesses, let's try to make a difference by seeking out a diverse group of stores, services, and restaurants this year. **We are particularly looking for minority-owned businesses as part of our commitment to racial justice.**

We are offering a free quarter-page, full color ad in the catalog for any business donating to the auction. Take [this solicitation letter](#) to a local business and tell them about our offer. If they aren't ready to decide, follow up in a week. Your help in soliciting donations is greatly appreciated.

RAINBOW TEXT EFFECT BY ABDULARIS ON FREEPIK.COM

Donate
Now...
Click
Here



A Word about Donations

We welcome gently-used antiques, jewelry, *objets d'art*, and other items of value in excellent condition, but not used "yard sale" items, obsolete electronics, worn-out furniture, etc.

Committee on Ministry

The Committee on Ministry will host two gatherings following the Sunday services on October 15 and 22.

Committee members will lead the October 15 meeting with the goal of enhancing conversations that were started in the spring by continuing open and direct communication with each other. All questions and comments are welcome, particularly those ques-

tions that remain related the complex issues surrounding the resignation of our emerita minister. Other topics of discussion are also welcome. Please note that there will be other meetings specifically focused to discuss Article 2 and the 8th Principle.

Rev. Sana Saeed, CER Congregational Life Staff of the UUA, will facilitate the October 22 meeting, a listening circle. This meeting will

continue encouraging us to talk to each other, though the focus will be on expressing emotions, feelings, and reactions following our varied experiences related to Rev. Rohde's resignation and events that led up to it.

All are welcome.

Shelly Case
Jim MacFadyen
Emily Sweet

Lifespan Faith Development

*We invite families
and friends of all
ages to join us for an
interactive service to
bring our community
together for another
great year.*

REflections: Religious Education Update

You begin your adventure in the town of West Chester as you make your way through the streets with your friends and family to the Unitarian Congregation. It is a beautiful September morning, and the smell of the fresh air is rivaled only by the coffee in your hand.

As you travel, you make a perception check and realize you hear the sound of little running feet. You turn just in time to steady your coffee as a group of young UUs rush to get to see their friends at the congregation. As you climb the stairs your ears begin to pick up the joyful strains of the choir warming up inside. You glance around and make an intelligence check and recall that this must be our annual Ingathering Service.

Excitedly you enter and greet the many faces you've missed over the summer. You find your name tag and approach the ushers at the back of the sanctuary. There they give you the usual order of service, but also offer you a choice of colorful bits of glass and stone. You are ready to absent mindedly take one when you look down into the basket and something catches your eye.

It's a beautiful piece – your favorite color! It's a strange shape, but beautifully unique. You pick it up and it catches the light around you and changes hues. You look closer to see delicate traces of color inside it or texture along its surface. You pick this piece, but it's more like this piece has picked you. You take it to your seat, and rolling a wisdom check, you realize it just might be a reflection of you in all your uniqueness. Sitting back, you smile and wonder just what this service has in store.

This program year here at UCWC kicks off on September 9 with our ingathering service. We invite families and friends of all ages to join us for an interactive service to bring our community together for another great year. This year we are focusing on the theme "Open Hearts, Open Minds," as we explore being a more welcoming place for all people, learning about other religions, and building our relationships together. If you enjoyed the story above, I'd invite you to consider learning more and signing up to help with our youth Dungeons and Dragons game. (See next page.)

– Cassie Lengel
DLFD@ucwc.org



Welcoming Congregation Status Renewal

We are very excited to be looking again at our status as a Welcoming Congregation here at UCWC. We will spend time this upcoming year updating our understanding of LGBTQIA+ issues, learning new language, practicing new strategies for welcome, worshipping together, and creating a safer and braver space in our community. If you would like to join a group to help make this possible, please reach out to email: **DLFD**.

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

Neighboring Faiths

This year our RE Classes are going to embrace the theme of openness by learning about and experiencing world religions.

This is one of our classic RE offerings and involves time in the classroom, time for activities, and time to visit/speak with people from other faith communities. We are looking for a dedicated team of teachers who can help us lead this group. Let us know if this interests you at email: **RE**.

Teachers Retreat Postponed

Calling all folks who are current, previous, and potentially interested RE Teachers. We want YOU to join us for a teacher retreat to celebrate your unique gifts and grow together as a teaching team. There will be food, activities, group conversations, and some basic knowledge about what you need to know about RE. You do not need to have any experience, nor do you need your clearances just yet — we want you to just come and have fun. RSVP to DLFD@ucwc.org so we know how to plan and watch **Connections** and your emails for the rescheduled date.

Signup to be a Guest Star

This year we are inviting our High School Youth Group to join us on a quest for friendship and teamwork as we enter the world of Dungeons and Dragons. Each youth will have the opportunity to roll and design a character to role play as we encounter different scenarios and make decisions as a group.

We would LOVE to have our adults get involved. If you are familiar with DnD or role playing games and would like to help run parts of a campaign, please reach out. We also invite everyone to complete their clearances so you can star as a guest appearance — whether as a simple shopkeep or perhaps even the big bad villain. For more information, please contact email: **DLFD**.



Backpack Blessing

Children, youth, and adults are invited to participate in our annual Backpack Blessing at our Ingathering Service on September 9. Each year we celebrate our theme and then carry these wishes with us to remind us that we have a community that cares for us, and that together we will work to make the world



a better place. So bring your bags, briefcases, backpacks, purses, diaper bags, fanny packs, gym duffels, reusable grocery bags — whatever you use to carry things with you each day can also be used to carry the love of this congregation with you too.

Stones in the Wall: Social Justice

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

UUSC Update

We've shared our arti-



cles about the work of The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) around the world to help communities abroad.

Many of you kindly support UUSC with a yearly **donation** of any amount, trusting them to identify communities in need and to take action.

Take a moment to watch this video about their work right in the United States, our home: **A Community-Centered Approach to Climate-Forced Migration.**

UUSC operates with a focus on the adage, "Nothing about us, without us." Central to all projects are listening to and honoring the opinions of people in the local communities and including them in decision-making. It demonstrates regard for others and is the way to truly help.

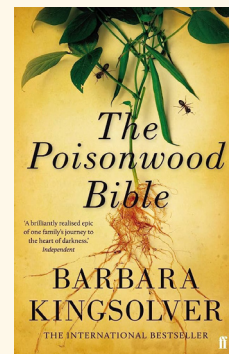
Diversity Book Group

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver

Sun, Sep 10 7:00-8:30 pm Zoom Led by Debby Kern

The Poisonwood Bible is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in Africa. A Pulitzer Prize finalist, the story is told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it — from garden seeds to Scripture — is calamitously transformed on African soil.

The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy. Against this backdrop, Orleana Price reconstructs the story of her evangelist husband's part in the Western assault on Africa. Also narrating the story, by turns, are her four daughters.



Racial Justice Ministry

"Difficult Conversations" Congregational Workshop

Sep 24 11:45 am-1:30 pm Pizza Lunch Included

Have you ever wondered how to speak up when you see someone spoken about unfairly? UCWC's Racial Justice Ministry group invites members and friends to join us in exploring how we can approach "Difficult Conversations."

As a starting point, we looked for techniques to better communicate in difficult conversations about race and soon realized that these techniques could be used for a variety of unrelated difficult conversations — including those with our family members.

Using the experience and materials of Debby Irving's *Racial Justice Educator and Writer's Transformational Conversation Cheat Sheet*, we put together a 90-minute workshop, open to anyone at UCWC. While we will be using racial issues as our lens for these strategies, you will learn strategies and approaches that can help create respectful communication and enhanced understanding with any person or subject.

Some years ago, one of UCWC's interim ministers described our congregation as adverse to conflict. We like each other. We care about each other. And we want to get along, so it's easier to talk about what unites us, rather than things we disagree about. But we need to be open with each other as well.

In our work together, we strive to be a healthy congregation. We hope you will join us on September 24 at 11:45 am for pizza at UCWC, and after, to explore ways to better communicate in all aspects of our lives, including working effectively together and continuing in healthy relationships, both outside and within the congregation. RSVP to email: **racial-justice**.

Criminal Justice Reform "Dying Out Loud"

The Criminal Justice Team urges you to take eighteen minutes and watch this powerful documentary. Pennsylvania has the highest rate of mass incarceration in our region in great part due to the excessive number of people on LWOP/ a life sentence without the opportunity to apply for parole. Many of them did not actually kill anybody. Please, please take the time learn about these realities so when our team provides opportunities for you to make calls, write letters, or send emails, you will understand how urgent and compelling this issue is.

Summary description of the film:

Female prisoners in an American maximum-security prison explain how they got to be facing

Life Without Parole, even though they did not pull the trigger. They serve this lifelong sentence in prison without hope, even though they didn't kill anybody.

It depicts the realities for lifers in prison for decades after they were convicted and sentenced and how the system gets it so wrong focusing only on punishment rather than recognizing that so many incarcerated people grow and change over time and do not belong in prison.

Please **watch the video**. Email **criminal-justice** when you are ready to pitch in. As little as 2-3 hours a month can make a big difference.

Fun & Fellowship

THE AUCTION IS COMING!

SEE PAGE 3

Folk Singing

Our next get-together is Saturday, September 9, at 7:30 pm. We meet at the home of Linda and Steve Sander.

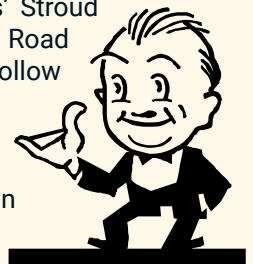
All vaccinated adults are welcome. No singing talent or experience is necessary, just a desire to have fun. (We are not a performance group.) Capable musicians should bring their instruments. Bring a munchie if you wish. Maps are in the foyer. Contact Steve at email: **folk-singing** with questions or driving instructions.



Men's Group

The Men's Group will meet in person on Tuesday, September 5, at 4:00 pm in the parking lot of Natural Lands' Stroud Preserve at 454 North Creek Road to hike. Further details will follow via email.

All men are welcome. If you are interested in participating but are not yet on the email distribution list, please reach out to Mark or Dirk at **mens-group**.



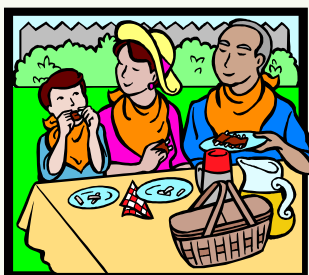
Calendar

All email addresses
@ucwc.org

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



Don't Miss Our
Fall Picnic
Details to
come in
"Connections."



- | | | |
|--------|-----|--|
| Sep 1 | Fri | Family Game Night. 7:00 pm. Sanctuary. |
| Sep 4 | Mon | Racial Justice Ministry (Formerly the Black Lives Matter Committee). 5:00 pm. Zoom. Contact Pam Sapko for more information. See p. 6. |
| | | Executive Committee Meeting. 7:00 pm. |
| Sep 5 | Tue | Men's Group. 4:00 pm. Stroud Preserve. See p. 7. |
| Sep 6 | Wed | Small Group Ministry Leaders. 7:00 pm. |
| Sep 9 | Sat | Folk Singing. 7:30 pm. Home of Linda & Steve Sander. See p. 7. |
| Sep 10 | Sun | Annual Fall Picnic. 11:30 am. Location and other details to come. |
| | | Diversity Book Group. 7:00-8:30 pm. Zoom. See p. 6. |
| Sep 11 | Mon | Religious Services Committee. 7:00 pm. |
| Sep 12 | Tue | Council Meeting. 7:00 pm. |
| Sep 17 | Sun | First Day of Religious Education for Children. See p. 3 and 4. |
| | | Share the Plate Sunday. Benefits the Friends Association . |
| Sep 18 | Mon | Racial Justice Ministry. 5:00 pm. Zoom. Contact Pam Sapko for more information. See p. 6. |
| Sep 19 | Tue | Board Meeting. 7:00 pm. |
| Sep 20 | Wed | UUJusticePA Reproductive Justice Meeting. 7:30 pm. Zoom. |
| Sep 24 | Sun | "Difficult Conversations" Workshop. 11:45 am. Sanctuary. Pizza lunch included. See p. 6. |
| Sep 26 | Tue | UUJusticePA Gun Violence Prevention Meeting. 7:00 pm. Zoom. |

EVENTS OCCURRING REGULARLY:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Most Thursdays | Spirit Singers Practice. at 7:30 pm. For specific dates, contact Miriam Davidson, email: choir . |
| Various Dates | Small Group Ministry (Several Active Groups). See web calendar for dates and email: SGM for available dates and times. See p. 5. |

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

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