



UU and You

*the monthly newsletter
of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden*

*Ours is a religion of covenant rather than creed.
Practicing Loving Community, Advancing Justice, and Nurturing Spiritual Growth
are how we seek to live this faith.*

From the Minister

UU Feet!

Have we ever considered the tension between what it is to be Unitarian and what it is to be Universalist? Perhaps not for a while, so as I anticipate foot surgery at the end of this month, I'll explain. At the end of my left foot are what I call my Unitarian toes. At the end of my right foot are what I call my Universalist toes (aspiring at least). Yes, they are on one body, just as the strands of Unitarianism and Universalism became one body with their 1961 merger. But habits of history have a way of holding on.

Unitarians have long been known for our individualism—from "the inherent worth and dignity of every person," the principle that dates back only to 1986, to Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Self-Reliance," the essay that dates back to 1841. Perhaps this emphasis on the individual is grounded in Unitarianism as the notion of the oneness of God. Community and interdependence can easily fade in this theology of singularity. What can emerge is what Rev. Fred Muir, a contemporary UU minister, has called the iChurch. Community is sacrificed on the altar of "I" and "me." This is what has happened on my left foot. The big toe ("the boss") has leapt aggressively over the second toe and allowed all those smaller toes to lean in at something like a 45-degree angle. When I try to remind the big toe that it's part of a series, it ignores me and lops back into its bully position. We as Unitarians can easily do the same, especially if the squeaky wheel(s) in

our congregations assume solo voice as a habit and other members lean in, unable (or unwilling) to challenge. As for those ornery toes, it's time for foot surgery—specifically March 27.

On the other foot, the 2nd-5th toes lean also, trying to force the big toe into the same bossy stance as on my left foot. But the big toe of my right foot was corrected long ago by foot surgery and calls for more cooperation than is the case with its counterpart on the left. Ergo, the toes on my right foot form what might be called an aspiring collaborative, aka aspiring Universalists. They're not perfect, but they're trying; and like it or not, they work as a team with relative effectiveness. Somehow, they get that they're part of "an interconnected web," that principle of Unitarian Universalism that also dates back only to 1986. Universalism itself dates back to the 2nd c. AD and the teachings of Origen of Alexandria, who held that a loving God would eventually bring everyone to heaven. Even if there were a few detours in Origen's map, his theology was overall inclusive—i.e. universalist.

No perfect feet, no perfect toes, no perfect body—mine or yours or that which we recognize as Unitarian Universalist. Might we aspire in our larger UU world and in this congregation to affirm that none of us as individuals is the be-all-and-end-all, but we are each interdependent with every other member,

every other congregation, and part of the larger interdependent web.

About the Newsletter

UU and You is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden.

328 Paddock Avenue
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www.uumeriden.org
www.facebook.com/UUMeriden/

Send newsletter submissions prior to the 15th of each month to: newsletter@uumeriden.org

Contacts

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Minister Hours

Rev. Jan holds office hours Tuesday through Friday, 10:30 am to 4:30 pm and by appointment. She is available for pastoral emergencies at 781-733-0355. Her day off is Monday. Since she is on two-thirds time, she generally takes a week off per month. In the months ahead, she will be off the last week of March and the first week of April, the Sundays of March 31 and April 7, to accommodate foot surgery on March 27. She is still available for pastoral emergencies by phone.

Let's trust that it won't take surgery to realize this, but it will take practice.

In the spirit of practicing loving community, toes and all—
Rev. Jan

Board of Trustees

UUCM Board of Trustees Goals and Objectives
2018-2019

The Board of Trustees approved the Goals and Objectives on January 7, 2019. Draft tasks/actions will be reviewed, revised and approved by the Leadership Council, since some of them will be referred to Committees/Teams and Councils for implementation.

Goal 1 (Short and Long term): Become a more family friendly congregation.

Objectives

- Make outdoor and inside space more family friendly.
- Develop a culture of "it takes a congregation (village) to raise a child."
- Improve retention of children and youth to continue involvement in UU churches as young adults and adults.
- Provide meaningful religious education programs for the church's children and youth.

Goal 2 (Short term): Develop process for hiring an Interim Minister

Objectives

- Determine the process for hiring an Interim Minister through a yoked/shared minister with Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society (MUUS).
- Hire an Interim Minister in June to begin on Aug. 1, 2019.
- Welcome and integrate new Interim Minister into congregational life.

Goal 3 (Long Term): Review and establish governance infrastructure, policy and procedures

Objectives

- Become incorporated and maintain incorporation with the CT Secretary of the State by _____ (date).
- Review and revise UUCM Bylaws by _____ (date).
- Review, revise and adopt new policies, guidelines and procedures for UUCM (on-going).
- Develop a culture of transparency, from the Board of Trustees and Councils, Committees/Teams and Task Forces, to the congregation.
- Review and revise and/or develop and implement one- and three-to-five-year goals and objectives from the Board of Trustees, Councils, Committees/Teams and Task Forces.
- Maintain fiscal sustainability for the short and long term.

Goal 4 (Short and Long Term): Develop collaborative relationships with other churches and the wider community.

Objectives

- Collaborate with other Unitarian Universalist congregations.
- Intentionally become a regional church.
- Collaborate with other houses of worship.

A copy of the Goals and Objectives and proposed actions will be posted at the church.

Donna Stimpson, President

Upcoming Services

www.uucentralct.org/worship

Sunday March 3rd

“The Path of Awakening”

An Intergenerational Service

Worship Leaders: Lynne Grobsky

Worship Associate: Barbara Kline

Rev. Jan will be leading worship at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Rock Tavern in the Hudson Valley of New York this Sunday. This is our part of a pro bono pulpit exchange between Rev. Jan and Rev. Chris Antal, who was our pulpit guest on November 11, 2018.

Sunday March 10th

“Bardo: Between Now and Then”

Worship Leaders: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Worship Associate: Lisa Urso

Second Sunday Potluck Dinner – Come enjoy this post-service time of food and fellowship directly after the service. Please bring an entrée, salad, or dessert to share.

Sunday March 17th

“The Grace of Detours”

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Worship Associate: Jeff May

Sunday March 24th

“From Seed to Blossom”

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull with

Worship Associate: Barbara Kline

Sunday March 31st

“It’s About Time—and Space”

Worship Leader: Jeff May

Worship Associate: John Sepples

An Evening of Music

Sunday March 17th, 7:30pm



SHELLEY SEGAL



The Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden is proud to host an evening with Australian singer-songwriter Shelley Segal. Shelley grew up in Melbourne, Australia in an orthodox religious community. As a young adult, she questioned her Jewish tradition with its strict rules and rituals separating men and women. Through her music, Shelley has become a staunch human rights advocate, giving purpose to her anger over rules and regulations that heavily impact women and those who want to live on their own terms. Shelley's songs and stories relate to her journey, discussing issues of belief, women's rights, humanism and secularism over spirited, soaring vocals.

Please join us for an evening of music, laughter and discussion. Light refreshments will be available.

Doors are at 7pm Show starts 7:30pm. Tickets are \$20 and \$15 for students.

Calendar of Events

www.uucentralct.org/calendar

Saturday, March 2nd 10:00 AM

Hands-On Saturday

Sunday, March 3rd 12:30 pm

Anti-Racism Book Discussion

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

Wednesday, March 13th 7:00 PM

TED Talk "3 things you should ask yourself about everything you do"

Sunday, March 17th 12:00 PM

Getting To Know U Workshop

Sunday, March 24th and 31st 12:30 PM

Map and Share Your UU Journey Workshop

Ongoing Meetings/Activities

Gong Meditation

Monday, 7:30-9 PM

Anti-Racism Discussion Group

Tuesday, March 5th 6:00-8:00 PM

Women's Sacred Singing Circle

Tuesdays 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Mid-week Meditation

Wednesday, March 6th and 20th 7:00 – 7:45 PM

Philly Discussion Group

Wednesday, March 20th 6:30-8

Soul Matters

Themed base Ministry for All!

We are happy to announce that a subscription to Soul Matters has been obtained for March through June. This multi-level, deep resource contains everything needed for meaningful worship, education, and small-group ministry. Most importantly, it provides monthly themes that connect all ministries together in our church. The theme for March is "Journey." Spiritual development requires more than just an analysis of a topic. This rich compendium provides meaningful, experiential activities and spiritual exercises. Each monthly theme focuses on a spiritual value that our UU faith has historically

honored and calls all of us to embody in our lives.

Journey: What Does It Mean to be a People of Journey?

Material prepared for our congregation by the UUCM Adult RE committee from the Soul Matters collective, March 2019:

Your Journey in Six Words

Larry Smith is passionate about helping people share their life journeys. He created a website with numerous tools and prompts to make sharing easier. One prompt turned out to be everyone's favorite: Pare down your life journey to six words. It was inspired by Ernest Hemingway taking up a bar bet to write a novel in six words. Hemingway's response: "For Sale: Baby shoes, never worn." Besides making the telling of your journey easier, this six-word challenge helps people focus on, celebrate and hold on to the essence of their stories.

So, this month, take up the challenge for yourself. Below are some example six-word journeys and online resources to help you on your way.

Example Six-Word Journeys

Married by Elvis; divorced by Friday

Down for maintenance, be back soon.

Threw spaghetti on wall; some stuck.

Told to marry rich. Married Richard.

We're the family you gossip about.

Wasn't born a redhead; fixed that.

Mom was "earthy"; Now I'm "green."

Son's autism broke and rebuilt me.

Online Resources:

The Story of the Six-Word Project: Why it worked and why it matters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jR1V7lxsOu0>

Video Meditation with Inspiring Six-Word Journeys:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBnP0DoGjRI>

Six-Word Story Writing Advice:

<https://eightladieswriting.com/2016/03/16/elizabeth-six-word-stories/>

Word Roots

Journey has its roots in the Old French *ournée*, a day's length; a day's work, a day's travel. For instance, a day laborer was called a journeyman; we write our daily adventures in a journal. Looking at life as a journey, the idea of day becomes important. What part of my past do I carry forward into this day and what part do I leave behind? How do I set my compass for the travels of this day, moving into my own becoming?

Wise Words

We get lost. The question is not whether we will get lost in life, but rather how we will move through it in faith. Will we dwell on everything that we have lost? Or will we focus instead on everything that we have yet to find?

Rev. Erik Martínez Resly

Song: Wayfair Stranger by Rhiannon Giddens

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1Z4PAZX9Bs&index=2&list=RDz-6XGj16wrE>

Video to Watch: Bold & Untold (for Women's History Month)

<https://www.makers.com/bold-and-untold>

"The badass women in history you never knew about—until now"

Book: *Becoming*

Michelle Obama

Next Month's Theme is Wholeness

WELCOME TO STEVEN NAHAS AS OUR NEW OFFICE

Administrator

After Donna Stimpson, Jane Dioguardi, and Rev. Jan reviewed the resumes of multiple applicants and interviewed a number of them for this position, we realized that the most qualified candidate was in our membership. While we generally avoid employing members, Steven Nahas is an exception. He expressed interest early on and brings many years of managerial, administrative, and computer experience. As a seasoned UU, Steven also understands this environment. Steven's hours are Tuesday 11-2, Wednesday 11-3, and Thursday 2-5.

Social Justice Council

During our regular **Anti-Racism** meetings on the first Tuesday of each month, we are continuing to discuss the book *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. The second session will be held on March 5th 6-8p at UUCM, 328 Paddock Ave, followed by the third and final session on April 2nd 6-8p. Please feel free to join at any time. The book can be found on Amazon or at the UUA bookstore or by contacting Angie at activejustice@uumeriden.org. We have also added another 3-session discussion of this book starting on Sunday, March 3, 12:30-2:30p, continuing on Sunday April 7 and Sunday May 5.

LGBTQA (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Ally) will soon begin to explore starting up the support group for adults.

We have recently been discussing **Homelessness** in Meriden and **Prison Reform Legislation** in CT. We are not sure if we will pursue either of these issues. If you are interested in one, please contact us at activejustice@uumeriden.org.

We will also be discussing being one of the sponsors for a Fundraiser for the **CT Immigrant Bail Fund**, sponsored by New Sanctuary CT, on

March 30th. More information will be available in the weekly announcements.

Have you heard about the new federal legislation "**Green New Deal**," which is a 10-year plan to mobilize every aspect of American society toward 100% clean and renewable energy, guarantee a good job to all members of our society, and create economic prosperity? This may sound like a lofty plan that is out of reach, but there is a newly started grassroots group, "Sunrise Movement," whose mission is to create change by urging local federal Representatives to pursue the passage of this or like legislation. Mother Nature is urging us to do something about the environment. Are you interested? If so, please contact activejustice@uumeriden.org.

Chalice Sanctuary Team

The Chalice Sanctuary Team continues to work with activist and faith-based organizations that work on immigrants' rights. Our church is getting support from those organizations in our work to sustain sanctuary for Sujitno and Dahlia. We are planning to have a Q&A information session for the congregation at the March 10 church service. We hope you can join us so you can hear more about what is going on and can ask questions or offer opinions or suggestions to the Team.

There was a demonstration in front of the ICE building in Hartford on February 8. It was a cold, rainy day, but it was still well attended. We got good press coverage in both print and TV media. Both Rev, Jan and I spoke, as did Senator Blumenthal and Attorney General William Tong. We hope to have more actions to keep pressure on ICE to free Sujitno and keep the public aware of his continued self-incarceration in our church. Along with CIRA (Connecticut Immigrants' Rights Alliance), we have launched a phone campaign to the ICE leadership in both Hartford and the regional

office. Outside groups have been involved and supportive along with members of our congregation.

Our congregation has been supporting Sujitno and Dahlia in sanctuary for a long time now. A member of the Unitarian Society of New Haven, Sarah Foreman, has joined our team, and she has been a breath of fresh air that we have needed. Financially we have had enough support from outside faith communities and individuals so that we have not had to shoulder all of this responsibility ourselves. USNH has continued to be a particularly wonderful source of financial support. However, we offer other types of support that do have an effect on all of us. The CST members are acutely aware of this and the fact that people can begin to feel burned out. Unfortunately, the legal system, particularly the immigration system, does not move quickly. We can fill you in on more particulars when we meet. I asked Sujitno's lawyer recently if she is optimistic about whether we will see freedom for Sujitno, which is our end goal. She wanted to be careful but said she is more optimistic than pessimistic that we will see a good outcome, and that our efforts on Sujitno and Dahlia's behalf will lead to them being able to remain in the country they have called home for over 30 years. It is important for all of us to realize the march for justice is a marathon, not a sprint. We need to hold each other up on the journey. N. Burton

Worship Associates

Welcome to spring. The Celtic season of spring started with Imbolc on February 1st. We are looking forward to some refreshing services in the coming weeks with new ways to look at things and refreshing our soul. Soul is the theme the Worship Associates chose for this year, and we hope you are finding it enriching. We are blessed to have our minister lead most of these services. We have also had wonderful guests. I would encourage those who are

interested to consider either leading a service yourself or working with a friend. Lay-led services are a big part of our congregation, and I am very open to discussing this further. The Worship Associates request a proposal for a service 8 weeks before the proposed service. You can contact me at barbarakline93@gmail.com or call 203-440-0943. You can also talk to Rev. Jan.

Membership

Getting To Know U Workshop

Sunday, March 17, Noon to 1:30 PM

Are you new here? We would like to get to know you better. If you feel the same, please plan to join us for one of these introductory workshops in which Rev. Jan and representatives of our Membership Committee welcome you for a getting acquainted gathering. Who are you? What is your spiritual journey? What brought you here? Who are we and what are we about? Count on a light lunch and activity packets for children.

The Membership Committee meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm. Chaired by Molly Nolan, we would be delighted to have you come join us! To learn more and/or to register for a workshop, please contact Membership Chair Molly Nolan at mollybnolan@gmail.com or Rev. Jan at revjcarlssonbull@gmail.com or in person.

Kudos and Thank You to:

All who led February's worship services:

February 3 – "The Spirit of Tet: A Renewal of Communal Soul" – Thanks to Rev. Jan and Dr. Edward Tick and Dr. Seb Perumbilly for leading this service that connected what Tet, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, means for the

Vietnamese and what it recalls for thousands of Americans, with a call to bridge this divide with a renewal of communal soul. And thanks to Lisa Urso for serving as Worship Associate.

Thanks to Dr. Tick, Dr. Perumbilly and Rev. Dr. Jan for leading the afternoon workshop on “Healing Wounded Souls in the Aftermath of War.”

February 10— Stone Soup Sunday, an intergenerational service led by Rev. Jan with the Stone Soup play adapted by Jennifer Hadley, co-directed with James Dawson, Richard Gault, Jeannie Jalbert, Angelique Metivier, and featuring the children and teachers of the congregation. Thanks to John Sepples for serving as Worship Associate. A shout out to prime soup chef, Barbara Kline!

February 17 — “Really See Me!” – Thanks to worship leaders Donna Stimpson and Anita Sanders and to Worship Associate Lynne Growsky for this memorable worship experience on ableism and how we can better address this multi-faceted issue and become more welcoming congregations.

February 24 – “Connecting in a Disconnected Time” – led by Rev. Jan with Randy Heath, who purchased this topic in last year’s goods and services auction. Thanks to Jeff May for serving as Worship Associate.

Sandy Duffy and Trish Schneider, for spending ample time with Steven Nahas, our new Office Administrator, getting him up to speed on software specific to UU Meriden, and other office procedures. Rev. Jan is working closely with Steve and is officially his supervisor.

Jeff May for spending many hours refurbishing and cleaning up files on the office computer.

Thanks to all who weathered the Friday, February 8 Rally in the Rain in front of the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) building in Hartford on behalf of Sujitno’s

freedom—Nancy Burton, Angie Swanger, Diane Szymaszek, Steve Volpini, Donna Stimpson, Alok Bhatt, and Rev. Jan. And thanks to Senator Dick Blumenthal and Attorney General William Tong for joining us and lending their vocal support. As of March 1, **Sujitno will have been with us for 507 days!**

For all the committee chairs who have submitted your budget requests for 2019-20!

For all who should have been cited and were overlooked.

Loving Wishes to:

Connie Florio Welton, who continues to recuperate from hip surgery and a long stay in rehab, now at home. Why not send her a note at 9 North Road, Southington, CT 06489?

Scott Barnard, who continues to receive treatment for lung cancer and cope with ALS.

Sujitno and Dahlia Sajuti, who hold hope every day that they might gain their freedom to remain in this country. It is not easy to be in sanctuary for such a prolonged period. As of March 9, it will be 17 months! Thanks to Nancy Burton who continues as **Coordinator**, and **Alok Bhatt**, our **liaison with CIRA (Connecticut Immigration Rights Alliance)**, who is our liaison on multiple matters of sanctuary and the legal process, which we are ever hopeful will culminate in legal recognition of Sujitno’s right to stay in this country.

All who are moving through difficult times.

If you know someone who has contributed to this church in a distinctive way in the recent past or someone whose life happenings call for special wishes, please let Rev. Jan know at revjcarlssonbull@uumeriden.org so that we might extend Kudos, Thank You, Congratulations, or Loving Wishes in our next newsletter!

Our Larger UU World

Thinking about GA – the General Assembly of our Unitarian Universalist Association?



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

It's not too early to do so!

Registration opens March 1 for this year's GA in Spokane, WA, June 19-23.

To learn more, visit www.uua.org/ga and contact Donna Stimpson at feministangler@aol.com

or Rev. Jan at revjcarlssonbull@gmail.com or either Donna or Jan in person.

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