



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

What if? we gather throughout May to ask, to imagine, to wonder, to make some mischief, to envision, to welcome newcomers, to invite back longtime members whom we haven't seen for a while, to worship in loving community on Sunday mornings, to live it every day by advancing justice and stretch spiritually, to pledge from a mentality of abundance, to sign up and show up for our FUNdraising happenings, kick back and engage and re-engage? What could happen if we did all this? I'm curious.

CURIOSITY is the theme of May—for our worship, religious education, and Small Group Ministry. Soul Matters is the resource-rich program that so many UU congregations have been tapping to enliven congregational life, and SOUL remains our overarching theme for the year. Worship services, RE sessions, Small Group Ministry, and the ongoing labor of our Ministerial Transition Team are in motion. How will it play out? I'm curious.

I'm curious also about what's on your mind and in your heart. While I meet with many of you pastorally, while I hear what's in your heart through Community Candles on Sunday, there's nothing like a one-on-one conversation for no reason at all other than to connect. In the two months of my remaining ministry with you, I would cherish this opportunity. Just give me a call or email me, and we'll do it.

As I glance out the window of my 2nd floor study here in the Meeting House, I'm inspired to open the window and breathe it all in. Spring awakens our curiosity, our wonder, as every living thing stretches and reaches and blossoms. Let's stretch and reach and blossom together.

With love and in the spirit of all that comes to life again and again—

Rev. Jan



Congrats to JT, Katie and Marielle on earning their Scouting Religion in Life emblems

About the Newsletter

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

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Minister Hours

Rev. Jan holds office hours Tuesday through Friday, 10:30 am to 4:30 pm and by appointment. Her day off is Monday. Since she is on two-thirds time, she usually takes a week off each month. In May, she will take a few days toward the end of the second and third weeks and will be away on Sunday, May 12. Rev. Jan continues to be available for pastoral emergencies at 781-733-0355.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees met on Thursday, April 18, 2019. Highlights of the meeting include:

- We had an update from the three-presidents meeting. They are looking for opportunities for all three congregations—Meriden, Bridgeport/Stratford, Mattatuck--to have a gathering. They settled on a summer picnic at Hubbard Park on Saturday, July 27th.
- We had an update from the Transitional Ministry Team.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting will be June 9. We had a brief discussion about Board of Trustees openings for next fiscal year.
- The Finance Committee submitted the draft budget for FY 2019-20.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be Thursday, May 16, at 7:00 pm, in the Lavender Room on the RE floor. All meetings of the Board of Trustees are open to the congregation as observers, except in those cases when the meeting goes into Executive Session.

Board of Trustees Openings

For fiscal year 2019-20, UUCM has several openings on the Board of Trustees. Self-nomination is possible. If you're interested in serving, please speak to a member of the Board of Trustees. Open positions for 2019-20 include: President, Vice-President, Clerk, Finance Chair, Property Chair, and two at-large members. Serving on the Board is a two-year commitment. If you are interested in learning more about serving on the Board of Trustees, or in some other position, please contact the Leadership Development Team at trustees@uumeriden.org soon. The new slate of officers and Board members will be presented for a vote at the Annual Meeting, June 9th.

Upcoming Services

Sunday May 5th

“Who we have been, who we are, who we can be” – Celebration Sunday

Worship Leaders: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Worship Associate: Barbara Kline

Sunday May 12th

” The Adventure of a Lifetime: How being open-minded can lead us down unexpected pathways” – Mother’s Day

Worship Leaders: Lynne Grobsky

Worship Associate: Lisa Urso

Given Mother’s Day and the many activities happening this Sunday, we will not have a May Second Sunday Potluck Dinner. Count on June 9, however, for our next 2nd Sunday Potluck Dinner, which is also our Annual Meeting. We shall gather together after worship over food and future, in the form of a vital agenda. Plan now for a morning that calls for full congregational participation!

Sunday May 19th

“George”

An Intergenerational experience of Worship

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Worship Associate: Jeff May

Sunday May 26th

“What next?”

Memorial Day Sunday”

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Worship Associate: John Sepples

Calendar of Events

www.uucentralct.org/calendar

Save Date! June 8 & 9

Traveling Photo Show featuring Sujitno and Dahlia, our Sanctuary guests

This exhibit is aimed at sharing the stories of families in Sanctuary, while also creating and expanding educational conversations across the state of Connecticut regarding the struggles of immigrant families as they try to navigate a broken and racist immigration system. Together we can create a more just world! This Photo Show will be at UUCM on June 8 and 9, 2019.

May Workshops and Events



Closing Chapters: A Series of Workshops on End of Life

Thursdays, 6:30-8:00 PM – April 25, May 2, May 23

We cannot plan for our birth, but we can possibly plan for our death. Come join Rev. Jan for this series of workshops in which we explore the opportunities of our closing chapters—from bucket lists to living wills to how we hope to be remembered and by whom. We will draw on the needs and desires of participants as well as the rich resources offered to each. To register, please contact Rev. Jan at revjcarlssonbull@gmail.com

Sunday, May 5th, 12:30 pm

Anti-Racism Book Discussion

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

Saturday, May 11th, 8:00 am-1:00 pm

Tag Sale

Wednesday, May 8th, 6:30 PM

Curious About Yourself?

TED Talks! Adult Religious Education is taking TED Talks to new heights! In addition to the TED Talk, activities from Soul Matters will be incorporated into an experiential

workshop. On May 8th, Lynne Grobsky will facilitate “Get Curious About Yourself,” featuring a TED Talk and a related activity. When it comes to curiosity, we often leave out ourselves. In this workshop, you will be invited to get curious about yourself. Are you a giver or a taker? Join us and find out! To learn more, please contact Lynne Grobsky at lynnegrobsky@gmail.com

Sunday, May 19, 12:00 PM
Next Steps Workshop

Sunday, June 9, 12:00 PM
Annual Congregational Meeting

Ongoing Meetings and Activities:

Gong Meditation
Mondays, 7:30-9 PM

Anti-Racism Discussion Group
Tuesday, May 7th, 6:00-8:00 PM

Women’s Sacred Singing Circle
Tuesdays 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Mid-week Meditation
Wednesday, May 15th 7:00 – 7:45 PM

Philly Discussion Group
Wednesday, May 15th 6:30-8

Transition—and What It Means to UU Meriden

With Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull about to retire at the end of June 2019 (so soon!), our Board of Trustees has turned its attention to some vital next steps. Who will be her eventual successor? What will the selection process entail?

Fortunately, the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has well established best practices in place to help us through this

challenging time. With the guidance of the UUA Transitions office, our local Board of Trustees (BOT) has selected a Transition Team, consisting of Jane Dioguardi, Jeff May, and Tina Pedrolini-Caplan, who are spearheading our search for an interim minister. As an innovative move, we have joined forces with the Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society (MUUS) of Woodbury. With three MUUS representatives, we have begun a search for a yoked transitional/interim minister.

What is a transitional/interim minister?

A transitional minister has special credentials designed to help a congregation analyze its needs and move forward to the crucial step of selecting a permanent, settled minister. This interim period normally takes a minimum of one year and a maximum of two years. (Those who have been in our congregation several years may remember the Rev. Anthony Johnson, the interim minister whom we appointed after the Rev. Lucy Ijams left. Rev. Tony helped us spark the process by which the search team eventually called Rev. Jan.)

Because of the sensitivity of this process, the BOT made the carefully considered decision to proceed with a transitional ministry. Transitional ministers, by UUA guidelines, must be offered a stipend of at least 75% of the usual salary and hours of a full-time minister. Unfortunately, UU Meriden cannot afford this much. Neither can MUUS, whose settled minister is also leaving.

What is a yoked ministry?

In a yoked ministry, the same minister serves two separate congregations, on a 50-50 basis. Please be aware: UU Meriden is NOT merging with MUUS—we are simply embarking on a way to share resources in the form of a minister who can guide us through the transition.

In our yoked transitional ministry, each of the congregations will be responsible for 50% of the interim minister’s salary and compensation. By

joining forces with MUUS, we are able to offer a 100% compensation package to candidates with the highest possible credentials, while saving money, at least in the short term.

It is important to note that UU Meriden and MUUS have not yet come to a decision as to whether the two congregations will share a settled minister once the transition period is complete. The transitional/interim minister, working with both Boards of Trustees, will help both congregations decide what will be right for each in the long term.

Below is the Timeline the UUA has set for the interim minister search:

- The Congregational Record (church profile) was submitted on April 16th.
- Ministers review church profiles and submit their interest to the Transitions Office by April 27th. (“I’m interested in being the interim for the following congregations.”)
- Transitional Ministry Team will receive names of potential interim ministers from the Transitions Office on April 29th. Then the Transitional Ministry Team will interview interested ministers in late April and beginning of May.
- First week of May, the Transitional Ministry Team will send their recommendation(s) to both Boards of Trustees. May 13th, Transitional Ministry Team submits lists of yeses/nos/maybes to Transitions Office.
- May 15th, offers extended by Transition Ministry Team to potential interim ministers.

Soul Matters

This is material prepared for our congregation by the UUCM Adult RE Committee from the Soul Matters collective, May 2019.



Get Curious About How the World Works

Seeker (<https://www.seeker.com>) is a website built for the super curious! It is organized to help you explore every aspect of our world: space, tech, earth, health, culture. Its short videos take you deep within minutes. So much to satisfy a curious mind!

So, your assignment is simple and hard at the same time:

- Search through this amazing website. Identify the ONE video or article you are most curious about. Figure out which one got you so interested that you couldn’t help telling others about it!

What do you think is the deeper reason it drew you in, beyond “I was just curious about it”? In other words, make sure to get a little curious about why you were curious.

Word Roots *Curiosity* stems from the Latin *curiosus*: careful, diligent, or inquisitive. This is the same root for *care* and *careful*, which implies an intention in curiosity, a sense of purpose about it. As the word moved into Old French and Middle English, it took on qualities of *eager to know* (often in a bad sense), *solicitous*, *anxious*, *inquisitive*, *odd*, *strange*.

Wise Words: {People} go abroad to wonder at the heights of mountains, at the huge waves of the sea, at the long courses of the rivers, at the vast compass of the ocean, at the circular motions of the stars, and they pass by themselves without wondering.

Saint Augustine

Song: Open Your Mind by Melissa Etheridge
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=110&v=vkk23blXuxY

Next Month’s Theme is Beauty

Theme-based ministry

The purpose of theme-based ministry is to foster a cohesive understanding of what it means to be UU by bringing together worship and religious education along thematic lines. The intention is to include the development of multigenerational connections, the extension of faith development beyond Sunday morning, and the solidification of the correlation between the religious and the practical. To learn more, please contact Lynne Grobsky at lynnegrobsky@gmail.com.

Our monthly themes for 2019 are:

March – Journey

April – Wholeness

May – Curiosity

June – Beauty

CYRE Committee

What's happening in Religious Ed

In April, a couple of the girls finally put Godzilla, the furry caterpillar, to rest with all due solemnity. The youth participated in activities relating to the theme of Wholeness, including a bubble meditation and outdoor bubble-making session. On April 21st we held an old-fashioned Easter egg hunt with prizes of candy and other assorted objects and one grand surprise. We are grateful for the addition of Paul Kline and Jane Dioguardi to our teaching volunteers. The theme for May is Curiosity. We will explore subjects that we are curious about. Ramadan begins May 5th, and we hope to understand the meaning of it. Being curious has its risks and its rewards, and we will explore that seeming contradiction. Now that spring has finally arrived, we hope to get outside more often.

Social Justice Council

A MORAL BUDGET for Connecticut in 2019

On April 4th many people--those who are a

part of D.U.E. Justice Coalition, Moral Monday CT, several Connecticut unions and faith-based groups, including UU churches--met at the CT Legislative Offices to demand that Gov. Lamont and Connecticut legislators pass a MORAL BUDGET that will:

- Ensure good jobs and fair wages
- Protect vital public services
- Fully fund public schools
- Protect and expand quality affordable health care
- Expand clean energy and protect the environment
- Advance a shared prosperity for all

On May 20th, we will once again stand in solidarity and urge our elected leaders to pass a MORAL BUDGET that supports all Connecticut residents and asks the wealthy to pay their fair share. This action will honor the memory of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and fight for income equality in Connecticut.

Please join us at 4pm at the Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Ave, Hartford. This is your House: You are needed! Let's together address our concerns to all the legislators and the governor. See you at 4pm on May 20th at the LOB.

Anti-Racism Discussion Group

We are finishing up the reading and discussion of *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. Upcoming meetings on the first Tuesday of May and June will include short films or TED Talks or YouTube videos, followed by a discussion.

Environmental Issues

A few members of the Social Justice Council have volunteered to take on Environmental Issues that affect UUCM and its members. Initial steps will provide some education on various issues. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact us via activejustice@uumeriden.org.

Guest at Your Table Update

Additional contributions have been received, increasing the total to \$ 1,022.12 with a total of 19 members/friends of UUCM participating. Thanks to everyone who made this annual program so successful.

Treasurer's Report

The results for the first ten months of Fiscal Year 2018-19 show us with a positive Net Income. Here are the details.

Our gross income is \$91,258.16. Our total expenses are \$89,250.61. Therefore, net income is \$2,007.55. The gross income includes pledges, collection plate, rentals, fundraising, special donations. Pledges make up 77% of our income. Thank you to all for your generous donations. Please continue to make every effort to meet your financial commitment.

Trish Schneider, UUCM Treasurer

Communications Goals

The Communications Committee is working to align our communications with the congregation's mission and goals.

Our plans for 2019 include:

- Review and improve internal and external congregational communications tactics.
- Develop brand and best practices for internal communications (e.g. ministry brochures).
- Develop local media/press releases and improved social media postings.
- Increase the visibility of the congregation to Meriden and surrounding communities.
- Assist with redesigning our congregation's website.

For more information, contact Communications Committee chair, Trish Schneider, at trishs@cox.net.

Chalice Sanctuary Team

Ramadan is a high holy month for Muslims. This is a very important time for our guests, Sujitno and Dahlia. It starts May 5 and ends June 4. During this time, S&D will be fasting until sundown. It is a time of prayer and reflection for them. They can speak to us but will want to avoid topics that are controversial and troubling. They will likely spend a lot of time in their room praying. Please respect these limits during this important month.

It has been a very busy time for the CST. We have been involved in reaching out to other congregations, attending meetings with other Sanctuary congregations and activist groups working on immigration issues. There have been some very important events. Other important events are planned.

On April 14, the Chalice Sanctuary Team facilitated the church service to update the congregation on where our Sanctuary mission stands and what the future direction will be. At the Second Sunday potluck, we showed the DVD "Brightness at Noon." This is a program that has been shown on TV and is a national report on houses of worship which are offering Sanctuary to people facing deportation. Sujitno and our church are featured in this report--in fact, the report opens with us. It is an interfaith look at why congregations are taking on this work. It is an honor to be featured in a report that is being aired nationally. We have set up a system for sharing this DVD, and it has already been shown in a synagogue in Norwalk. We hope to see many showings around the state.

Another very important event was the opening of a traveling photo exhibit about Sujitno and Dahlia and Nelson Pinos and his family. Nelson is in Sanctuary at First and Summerfield Church in New Haven, which is where the first showing

occurred, on April 13. It will be shown next at the UU Church in Manchester. We will open it in our church on June 8 and have the photos with us for the following week. We hope to have a large showing, including legislators and media. This will take some work, and we hope we can count on support from the congregation for set up, clean up, and refreshments (finger foods and desserts).

This has been a long journey for justice. Our Team has shrunk, but no one has left because they didn't want to do the work. People have moved away, had health problems or work or personal issues that have prevented them from continuing. Jan will be leaving us at the end of June. So we are asking for help. We would love to have folks join the Team. We meet once or twice a month. If you aren't able or willing to be a Team member, we could use help with specific tasks. In this newsletter you will find a form that lists some ways you can help. It would be great if you would indicate areas where you can help. You can mail the form to the Chalice Sanctuary Team at the church, put it in our mailbox in the copier room at church, drop it in the collection plate, or copy and paste it and email it to me. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Nancy Burton nburtoncnm@gmail.com

Girl Scout Cookies Thank You!

Thank you very much to our church family this cookie season for making Marielle's cookie sales so successful. Marielle sold 2,570 boxes of cookies this year. A part of these cookie sales included 42 boxes given in thanks to the South Meriden Volunteer Fire Department and the Meriden Engine 1 Firehouse, and also included donations collected for over 18 cases (218 boxes) for Cookies for Heroes to send to active service members at home and overseas and to veterans' homes and hospitals around the state. Marielle has also raised and donated \$460 for camperships for Girl Scouts in Connecticut--enough for a complete campership for two

weeks at day camp or one week at resident camp for a girl in need! Once again, thank you all for helping Marielle reach her goal this year. Angelique Metivier

Kudos and Thank You to:

All who led April's worship services:

April 7 – “Embracing Being Enough Is Being Whole” Brava to Worship Leaders Barbara Kline and Lisa Urso for this inspiring worship experience that fully addressed the monthly worship theme of Wholeness.

April 14 – Chalice Sanctuary Sunday was observed in the context of worship through a full sharing of our ministry of Sanctuary. Abundant thanks to Nancy Burton, Coordinator of our Chalice Sanctuary Team; and members of our Sanctuary team Donna Stimpson, Steve Volpini, Sarah Forman, and Rev. Jan (who participated by video technology). And special gratitude to Sujitno Sajuti, our Sanctuary guest of a year and a half as of April 9, for sharing in his own voice and the scripture of the Qur'an. During the 2nd Sunday Dinner that followed, we viewed the documentary, “Brightness at Noon,” which addresses the Sanctuary movement across the country and features Sujitno!

April 21 – Easter Sunday – led by Rev. Jan with Lynne Grobbsky as Worship Associate and offertory drummer and Alan as pianist, our focus was “Arise and Greet the Day!” Our youngsters were with us for the first part of the service and then left for the RE session on Rebirth, celebrating Easter and Earth Day, after which they took to the rear grounds for a deliciously boisterous Easter Egg Hunt.

April 28 – “From Bud to Blossom” was the focus of worship, and it seems, of this time, with the concurrent Meriden Daffodil Festival on Saturday and Sunday of this weekend. While many of our congregants were serving at the booth in the big festival tent, others gathered

for worship with Rev. Jan and Worship Associate, John Sepples. A particular joy was the participation of three of our youngsters, Marielle Metivier and JT and Katie Dawson. Early in the service they received their UU-specific religion badges for Scouting.

Thanks to **Mary Lou Woods**, sister of Jane Dioguardi, who is serving as substitute pianist in Alan's absence—specifically the Sundays of April 28 and May 5. Let's welcome her back.

Richard Gault and our Children & Youth RE Committee and all our teachers for planning and implementing inspiring sessions for our youngsters, highlighted by an April 21 session on "Rebirth" celebrating Easter and Earth Day, followed by an Easter Egg Hunt.

Samira Mayers and Dani Gomez, Youth Group participants who have been hard at work painting a mural in the Lime Room on the RE Floor of our Meeting House.

James Dawson and Angeliqve Metivier, who have guided three of our youngsters toward attaining their UU-specific religion badges in scouting.

Diane Szymaszek and Chet Rynaski and Liz Hall for tilling and weeding and planting and working with Mama Nature to bring our Spiral Garden back to glorious life.

Jean Rynaski, Chet's mother, for contributing the Buddha figure for our Spiral Garden from her garden and to Diane and Chet for transporting it.

Donna Stimpson, for weeding and planting and working with Mama Nature to beautify the grounds at the entrance to our Meeting House.

For all who worked our booth at the Meriden Daffodil Festival—for setting up, grilling, preparing and heating tomato soup, squeezing a zillion limes for the lime rickeys, and making hot chocolate to warm our many customers when the temperature dipped a bit. Count on specific names for the June newsletter! A loud shout-

out to organizer Donna Stimpson!

For all who are current on their pledges for 2018-19!

For all who have submitted their pledges for 2019-20!

For all who completed the congregational survey as part of our ministerial transition.

For all who should have been cited and were overlooked.

Loving Wishes:

Alan Dougherty, our much-loved pianist and member from his youth, is moving through a two-phase kidney transplant. On March 18, he was at Hartford Hospital for a nephrectomy, the removal of his kidneys. Since then he has been on dialysis. On Friday, April 26, he returned to Hartford Hospital and received a new kidney!! Love and wellness for Alan, his wife, Kim; daughter, McCartney; and parents, Ann and Harry Dougherty as they surround Alan with support through this long hoped-for procedure. Cards for Alan are welcome at 9 North Colony Road, Unit 1, Meriden, CT 06450.

Connie Florio Welton welcomes your notes at 9 North Road, Southington, CT 06489.

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

Sujitno and Dahlia Sajuti hold hope every day that they might gain their freedom to remain in this country. As of April 28, it is one year and 200 days!

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 Steven Nahas know at office@uumeriden.org.

