



# 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



Beginning and Beginning are at the heart of transition.

So it is with transition in professional ministry, woven with the dynamic that is shared ministry. Over the past seven years, you and I have ministered together in modes pastoral and prophetic through the media of worship, religious education, justice making, facilities tending, governance, stewardship and finance—all dimensions of practicing loving community, advancing justice, and nurturing spiritual growth. We have been and you will continue to be a community that is spiritual and religious. Without the spiritual power of love, religion lacks heart. Without the communal power of religion, spirituality lacks accountability. We are woven, complex, and aspiring to live our mission, realize our Unitarian Universalist principles and purposes, and draw from the riches of resources theological and historic. What evolves is connection, deep connection that transforms each of us and which each of us shape.

Next to LOVE, my favorite theological word is GRACE. Grace distills goodness that is unearned; it encompasses beauty; it holds wonder. By the grace of God some of us say; others say, by the grace of Love. I understand the two as synonymous. By the essence of grace, we have walked together and as we travel these final steps together, know that I am grateful for the grace we have known, the stories we have shared, the justice we have sought to practice, the laughter and the tears, the equanimity and the conflict from which I trust we have grown, the strengths we have realized, and the challenges that remain.

In this final month of my ministry with you, I invite you for a conversation—to share whatever is in your heart—rather like a community candles interlude with me. What's in your heart? What would you like to share that you have left unshared until now? What would you yet hope for from me? Know that as I depart from ministry with you as of June 30, I honor my covenant with my Unitarian Universalist colleagues and our larger Unitarian Universalist world to sever ties for at least two years. This means that I will not contact you, and I ask you not to contact me. I will not attend worship services or events held at the Meeting House. This allows the new professional ministry and the texture of your next chapter to take root. It further allows my next chapter to take form—with family and

## About the Newsletter

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

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[www.uumeriden.org](http://www.uumeriden.org)  
[www.facebook.com/UUMeriden/](https://www.facebook.com/UUMeriden/)

Send newsletter submissions prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month to: [newsletter@uumeriden.org](mailto:newsletter@uumeriden.org)

## Contacts

### *Our Minister*

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### *Office Administrator*

Steven Nahas, our Office Administrator, is here on Tuesday 11-2, Wednesday, 11-3, and Thursday, 2-5. You can also reach him at [office@uumeriden.org](mailto:office@uumeriden.org) and 203-237-9297.

### *Minister Hours*

In this last month of Rev. Jan's ministry with us, her office hours continue as Tuesday through Friday, 10:30 am to 4:30 pm and by appointment. Her day off is Monday. On two-thirds time, she will take a few days off toward the end of the third week and will be away on Sunday, June 23. Rev. Jan is available for pastoral emergencies at 781-733-0355 until her final day with us, which is June 30.

and my larger community. If we cross paths at a vigil in Hartford, a rally at the State House, a trip to the supermarket, or a chance meeting at a concert, I hope we will greet one another congenially, but not as minister and congregant. Such is the nature of ministry that is given and received, shared and transformed.

Consider our spiral garden, born just seven years ago, inspired by one among you who was inspired by a friend who was inspired by her inner voice. Where does it begin—this spiral garden that graces the grounds of the Meeting House? At the periphery or the interior? Do we enter in from the circumference or emerge from the interior? Yes and yes. And so as we move from the interior of our hearts and from the exterior of our day-to-days, might we continue to discover that we are always beginning, that we are ever in transition, and that we are ever graced by the journey itself. We begin and we begin again.

May it be so. I love you. Amen.

Rev. Jan

## Welcome Rev. Tony Lorenzen



After a two-month search process, the Transition Team of Jane Dioguardi, Tina Caplan, and Jeff May recommended

the appointment of Rev. Tony Lorenzen as our new minister beginning in August. The Board approved the appointment on May 24th.

Rev. Tony was born in Fitchburg MA, and received his Master of Divinity degree from Harvard in 1994. He became a U.U. in 2003 after leaving the Catholic Church and was ordained to UU Ministry in 2007 by First Church

in Leominster, MA. He has served congregations in Massachusetts and Texas and has had experience leading multiple congregations who are sharing professional ministry, as we will be doing with the Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society (MUUS) in Woodbury.

According to the Transition Team members, Tony stood out as not only the best candidate who applied, but as a perfect match . . . “We feel like we hit the lottery.”

Rev. Tony shares our passion for Social Justice ministry – in fact, one of the things that attracted him to our congregation is the social justice work that we have been doing. His enthusiasm is infectious, and his warmth and genuine love for the world come through in the first few minutes of speaking with him. Tony believes very strongly in shared ministry. On his website he writes,

“Our partnership will be a spiritual one, grounded in the best foundations of humanistic religion. My training in spiritual direction has taught me how to listen attentively to the lives of individuals and communities. The better we are able to listen to our congregation, its people, and the surrounding community, the more spiritually grounded we will be, and we’ll be better able to serve our community through our outreach programs and social justice partnerships.”

Tony will begin his official ministry with us on August 19th. He will co-lead worship with Rev. Jan here in Meriden on June 16th. There is a possibility that we may be putting together a joint worship experience sometime in August with our congregation and MUUS . . . more on that will be announced soon.

The Meriden Transition Team worked together with three members of MUUS in the selection process, and the MUUS team shares our enthusiasm. Together with MUUS, we are hiring Tony full-time as a transitional minister,

and he will divide his time equally between the two congregations. Rev. Tony will work with us and MUUS under a year-by-year “contract ministry” arrangement, and we will be setting goals for what we hope to accomplish during his time with us.

Our sadness in parting with Rev. Jan as she moves into retirement is tempered by the possibilities of what lies ahead. Rev. Jan, who has worked with Tony both in his early years as a UU Minister and on the Board of the UU Ministers Association, is thrilled with our selection and feels we have made the perfect choice. “I could not be happier that I will pass the torch to Tony Lorenzen,” she said.

## Upcoming Services

[www.uucentralct.org/worship](http://www.uucentralct.org/worship)

### Sunday June 9th

#### “For All That Is Our Life”

*Worship Leaders: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull*

*Worship Associate: Barbara Kline*

“For all that is our life” is one of our best-loved songs, while “all that is our life” is an ever-changing montage of our hopes and concerns, yearnings and hurts, celebrations and otherwise. As a worship experience in itself and as a prologue to our annual congregational meeting, how might we describe this shifting scenario with honesty and love?

### Sunday June 16th

#### “Strong and Beautiful” – Fathers’ Day

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

*Worship Associate: John Sepples*

“Church fathers” they’re traditionally called, referring to the seemingly ancient sages who laid the foundations of this congregation and this faith over the centuries. Why not “church parents” or even “revered shoulders”—such is the reality of the foundation on which we stand—shoulders strong, beautiful, and human. How is this so, and how might we flex our own

shoulders for those who come after us? How also does this translate into the intimacy of our families, from generation to generation?

### **Sunday June 23rd**

#### **“Five Beautiful Stones”**

Worship Leader: Jeff May

Worship Associate: Lynne Grobsky

Drawing on the symbolism from the Hebrew Scripture story of David and Goliath, the great 20th century Unitarian theologian James Luther Adams spoke of the "Five smooth stones of religious liberalism," the fifth of which declares that "[T]he resources (divine and human) available for the achievement of meaningful change justify an attitude of ultimate optimism."

Unitarian Universalism is a faith of hope. Not blind hope that waits for some external agent to deliver miracles, but a faith of real and active hope, based on a declaration that we are called to pay attention to the continuous unfolding of human understanding and in a community of mutuality, use the work of our own hands, hearts and minds to bring justice and compassion to the world.

### **Sunday June 30th**

#### **“Blessings and Farewell” –**

#### **Intergenerational**

Worship Leader: Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull

Worship Associate: Lynne Grobsky, Barbara Kline, Jeff May, John Sepples, and Lisa Urso

On Rev. Jan’s last Sunday of ministry with us, she and all our worship associates will recount our blessings and Jan will bid us a loving farewell.

**Annual Pool Party & Picnic** – right after the worship service! – Come join us for our annual “welcome to summer” social get-together.

## **Calendar of Events**

[www.uucentralct.org/calendar](http://www.uucentralct.org/calendar)

### **Saturday, June 8 at 5 Pm**

#### **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.

### **Sunday, June 9, 12:00 PM**

#### **Annual Congregational Meeting**

Our ANNUAL MEETING and 2nd Sunday Potluck Dinner directly follow worship this morning. Please bring a salad, entree, or dessert to share, and participate in this meeting, for “this is what democracy looks like!”

### **Friday, June 14, 7 PM**

#### **Retirement celebration for Rev. Dr. Jan Carlsson-Bull**

### **Friday, June 21, 7:30 PM**

#### **Honor and Celebrate the Summer Solstice: Community Drum and Dance Circle**

Drummers, musicians, and dancers of all ages, genders, and abilities are always welcome! Bring your favorite instrument or share one of ours. Some extra drums and percussion will be available. No prior experience is necessary or expected. The public is welcome. \$5.00 cover. For more information contact Bob and Maureen Muir at [tmuir@comcast.net](mailto:tmuir@comcast.net) or [maureen.muir1951@comcast.net](mailto:maureen.muir1951@comcast.net)

### **Sunday, June 30, 12 PM Annual Pool Party & Picnic**

Annual Pool Party & Picnic – right after the worship service! – Come join us for our annual “welcome to summer” social get-together. All are invited to Jeff May and Sandy Duffy’s home at 333 Brownstone Ridge, Meriden. The pool is warm, so pack bathing attire. Please bring picnic fare to share. Count on grilled hotdogs, hamburgers, and veggie burgers. Sign up during coffee hour! To assist in setup or other ways, please contact Jeff May at [jeffmay@jeffmay.net](mailto:jeffmay@jeffmay.net) or (860-919-6025 or 203-639-0090).

**Save the Date! Saturday, July 27, 10 am  
Picnic at Hubbard** with our Sister congregations, UU Mattatuck and UU Great Bridgeport Congregations.

### **Ongoing Meetings and Activities:**

#### **Gong Meditation**

Mondays, 7:30-9 PM

#### **Anti-Racism Discussion Group**

Tuesday, June 4th, 6:00-8:00 PM

#### **Women’s Sacred Singing Circle**

Tuesdays 7:00 – 8:30 PM

#### **Mid-week Meditation**

Wednesdays, June 5th and 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 – 7:45 PM

#### **Philly Discussion Group**

Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8

### **BOT Update**

On Thursday, May 16, 2019, the UU Meriden Board of Trustees held two meetings:

- The first meeting was a joint meeting with the Board of the Mattatuck Unitarian Universalist Society (MUUS), in which we discussed and came to a conclusion on our two congregations’ upcoming yoked ministry and an update on our ministerial transition.

- The second meeting was strictly for the UU Meriden Board, in which we received a report on our recent Annual Stewardship Campaign.

The next meeting of the UU Meriden Board of Trustees will be held on Thursday, June 13, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Pete Seeger (Lavender) Room on the Religious Education floor. All meetings of the Board of Trustees are open to the congregation as observers, except for those cases when the meeting goes into Executive Session.

### **Chalice Sanctuary**



The afternoon of May 31 marked a celebration of Sujitno and Dahlia Sajuti’s freedom to return home to West Hartford after 599 days in sanctuary at our church. Sujitno’s legal team has secured assurance from ICE (Immigration & Customs Enforcement) that they no longer have jurisdiction over Sujitno and Dahlia’s case and will no longer pursue them. Senator Richard Blumenthal, an advocate for Sujitno from the beginning of his stay here, was present to celebrate with us, along with a representative from Attorney General William Tong, City Councilman Miguel Castro, and a throng of congregants and friends and supporters. The press was here in full force, and in addition to Senator Blumenthal, we heard from Attorney

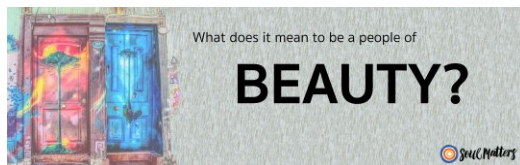
General Tong's spokesperson; Diana Blank, lead attorney with the New Haven Legal Assistance team, which has provided pro bono counsel; Alok Bhatt, from Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance; Sujitno and Dahlia; Rev. Jan; and Nancy Burton, coordinator of our Chalice Sanctuary Team that has overseen this ministry of sanctuary.

This victory is communal. The outcome speaks for the power of working together with perseverance. The march toward justice is a marathon, not a sprint. Sujitno and Dahlia are now able to observe the rest of Ramadan with their own faith community.

We hope you will join us for an additional celebration on Saturday, June 8 at 5 pm, which also marks the first day at this church of the traveling photo exhibit featuring Sujitno and also Nelson Pinos. Nelson has been in sanctuary for over a year and a half at First and Summerfield Church in New Haven. This will now be a partial celebration of Sujitno's release, for Nelson remains in sanctuary. Please bring finger food to share. Donations will be collected at the door to help Sujitno and Dahlia get back on their feet financially. The work for justice for our undocumented immigrant neighbors continues.

## Soul Matters

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



### The Beautiful Thing You Protect

Rev. Sean Parker Dennison writes, "The ability to see beauty is the beginning of our moral sensibility. What we believe is beautiful we will not wantonly destroy."

Rev. Mary Katherine Morn writes, "Beauty does more than awaken us. It also admonishes us. It demands something... We are here so that together we might heed the admonitions of beauty. Answer its call to create, protect, and preserve."

Reverends Morn and Parker Dennison remind us that beauty is more than a salve. It does more than restore and soothe. It creates commitment. It lures us into loving it and becomes something we can't live without. We end up willing to give our lives for it. We protect it at all costs.

So, what is that beautiful thing you protect at all costs? That core beautiful thing you defend like a mama bear because you know you'd be lost without it? For some of us, it's a form of nature. For others, it's a type of justice. For still others, it's a way of treating each other, like kindness. Or treating ourselves, like self-love. Whatever it is, we all build our lives around it. Look closely and you'll notice how deeply it defines us. By protecting it, we protect ourselves.

Spend some time this month getting clear about that piece of beauty that turns you into a mama bear. After all, isn't getting clear about it what life is all about?

**Word Roots:** The Greek word for the beautiful is kalon, which is related to the word kalein, which includes the notion of 'call,' suggesting that there is something about beauty, wherever we find it, that tugs at us, pulls at us, drawing us into the divine.

A second Greek word for beauty is hōraios, from hōra, meaning "hour." Beauty was thus associated with "being of one's hour." Thus, a ripe fruit (of its time) was considered beautiful, whereas a young person trying to appear older or an older person trying to appear younger would not be considered beautiful.

The Ancient Greeks also equated beauty with harmony and virtue, which brings together the

ideas of “call” and “hour.” Beauty is not a static experience but one of being in the rightness of the moment, an expression of the divine.

Watch and Meditate: “There is Beauty in Not Knowing”

<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=2688>

Our monthly themes will resume in September 2019. September’s Theme is...EXPECTATION!

## 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](mailto:lynnegrobsky@gmail.com).

Our monthly themes for 2019 have been:

March – Journey  
April – Wholeness  
May – Curiosity  
June – Beauty

## Social Justice Council

### Anti-Racism Discussion Group

We have finished the discussion of *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo. The group meets on the first Tuesday of every month 6-8pm. If you have an interest, please join us as we prepare for summer activities and also for next fall.

### New Environmental Issues Taskforce

We’re still looking for additional people to help with the new taskforce, which will deal with environmental issues that affect UUCM and its members. Initial steps will be to provide some education on various issues. If you are

interested in joining this group, please contact [activejustice@uumeriden.org](mailto:activejustice@uumeriden.org).

### LGBTIQQA Rainbow Group

Lesbian, Gay, Bi-, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, Ally

There was a meeting at the end of May to discuss reorganizing the Rainbow Group.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, June 15, 2019: First LGBTQ Pride Event in Middletown. For more information contact [activejustice@uumeriden.org](mailto:activejustice@uumeriden.org).

## Worship Associates

Wow, it is June! I hope you have enjoyed Soul Matters. We thought it a good way to tie our ministries together. I, along with the rest of the Worship Associates, want to express our gratitude to Rev Jan. She put us together and has been a guiding force. We will miss her as she sets off on her next journey.

Our summer schedule, when worship services start at 10am, begins on July 7th. Summer is a great opportunity here at UUCM. Our services may be a little different, and as always we invite you to reach out to us if you are interested in assisting with worship. We would love it if you wanted to share your gifts with the congregation with music or as a greeter. We can always use people to welcome congregants and to help with coffee hour. Thanks to all who make Sundays a special time of the week. I am looking forward to the year to come.

Blessed Be,  
Barbara Kline  
Co-chair Worship Associates

## Treasurer’s Report

### Treasurer’s Report June 2019

The results for the first nine months of the Fiscal Year 2018-19 show us with a positive Net Operating Income.

Here are the details.

Our gross income is \$101,795.24. Our total expenses are \$101,423.52. Therefore, net income is \$371.72. The gross income includes pledges, collection plate, rentals, fundraising, special donations.

Here is a breakdown of our sources of income. Pledges make up 77% of our income. Rentals and fundraising make up 15% of our income. The remaining 8% of our income is a combination of collection plate, special donations, and miscellaneous income. Thank you to all for your generous donations. Please continue to make every effort to meet your financial commitment.

Trish Schneider, UUCM Treasurer

## Kudos and Thank You to:

All who led February's worship services:

**May 5** – Celebration Sunday – “Who we have been, who we are, who we can be” – with worship coordinated and led by Rev. Jan and with featured participants being Angelique Metivier and Sandy Duffy, our stewardship campaign co-chairs; Tina Caplan, Jane Dioguardi, and Jeff May as the members of our Ministerial Transition Team; and Angie Swanger, as coordinator of our Anti-Racism Ministries. We were inspired by reflections “On Celebration” offered by Angelique and Sandy; reflections on “Who we have been” by Jeff, “Who we are” by Jane, and “Who we can be” by Tina; and “Why I come here” by Angie. Thankfully, these messages were all videoed by Jeff. Rev. Jan issued an “Invitation to light candles of commitment” to all ready to submit their 2019-20 pledges within the week.

**May 12** – On this Mother's Day Sunday, Lynne Grosby led worship, with Worship Associate Lisa Urso, on "The Adventure of a Lifetime: How

being open-minded can lead us down unexpected pathways.” Thanks to both for this inspiring and memorable worship experience.

**May 19** – “Why?” was the focus of this intergenerational worship experience led by Rev. Jan with Worship Associate Jeff May and dramatically brought to life by Richard Gault, Marielle Metivier, and the whole congregation acting out an adapted version of e.e. cummings' story, “The Old Man Who Said ‘Why?’”

**May 26** – On this Memorial Day Sunday, Rev. Jan, with Worship Assistant John Sepples, led worship on the question: “What next?” We invited congregants to create an altar of memorabilia and shared stories of those we have loved and lost. So too we explored the layered meanings of the question as this congregation moves into its next chapter, with a “surprise greeting” via video from Rev. Tony Lorenzen, who will serve this congregation and the Mattatuck UU Society in Woodbury beginning August 19.

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

Thank you to **Randy Heath** and his father, **William Heath**, for working together to patch potholes in the parking lot, to install new gutters on the shed (that will carry rainwater away to the back and help dry the otherwise damp musty interior), and many months ago for installing the window in the former 2nd floor office space that has been Sujitno and Dahlia's living space, allowing the sun to shine in! They both rolled up their sleeves in this generous work.

Thank you to **John Sepples**, for practicing yoga on the steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum on Sunday, May 19, on behalf of Living Beyond Breast Cancer, a major fundraiser. With him was his sister, Christine, who completed treatment



for breast cancer this past February.

**Thanks to our Ministerial Search Team**—Tina Caplan, Jane Dioguardi, and Jeff May, who worked diligently over the past many months with the three-person team from the Mattatuck UU Society in Woodbury toward the naming of Rev. Tony Lorenzen as Transitional Minister, who will equally serve both congregations beginning this August.

**Thanks to The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)** for hosting on May 14 a Ramadan Iftar with Sujitno and Dahlia and many on the Chalice Sanctuary Team. Iftar means break-fast and is observed at sundown each day of Ramadan. After prayer, we all assembled for dinner and fellowship. Abundant thanks to Tark Aouade, of CAIR, for initiating this and for all in CAIR who prepared and served what was a break-feast.

- **Thanks to Arig Elhamouly** for bringing members of the Muslim Students Association at Choate for an Iftar with Sujitno and Dahlia on May 24. For all who are current on their pledges for 2018-19!

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

For all who should have been cited and were overlooked.

**Congratulations to our graduating seniors, whom we are honoring during worship on Sunday, June 2:**

**Dani Gomez**, who will attend Southern Connecticut State University in the fall.

**Max Heath**, who will attend the University of Vermont in the fall.

**Samira Mayers**, who will attend Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island in the fall

**Sonja Hadley** (Sonya Hadley cannot make the June 2 service), who will attend Scripps College

in California in the fall.

## Loving Wishes to:

**Ad Sternberg, who turned 94 on May 27!**

**Connie Florio Welton**, who is especially challenged by chilly spring rains. 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**, whose hope of gaining their freedom to remain in this country was realized on May 30 after 594 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](mailto:office@uumeriden.org).

**June 19-23**

**“The Power of We”**



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Thanks to our delegates, Donna Stimpson and Jane Dioguardi, who will attend GA this year.

Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden



**Chalice Sanctuary Team with Sujitno and Dahlia Sajuti. Thank you for all your hard Work!**

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Meriden

328 Paddock Avenue  
Meriden, CT 06450

