



THE TOUCHSTONE

A monthly publication of the Unitarian Church of Hinsdale

November 2021

Join us at: www.hinsdaleunitarian.org

Monthly Newsletter



DEEPENING CONNECTION

Dwell in Possibility: Paying Attention

Rev Pam Rumancik

As we enter the darkest part of the year, it's time to take stock and pay attention to the world around us. This can be hard when it feels like we have had to be on high alert for so long.

Despite the onslaught of advertising and pop-up commercials (even at the gas station – sheesh!) this can be a time to pay attention to nature and our inner being. A time to make space during dark evenings for a good book, a slow conversation, a 'sabbath' away from all screens.

But how do we pay attention to the right things? When I was in high school, I often was the person driving a gaggle of teenage girls around on weekend adventures. One night, while driving through the country with a car-load of chattering classmates, I noticed a train crossing up ahead – and could see the light of an locomotive far off to the right.

Now I've had a strong respect for – one might even say fear of – train crossings since I was little and had to cross one every day on my walk home from school. I had many anxiety dreams which involved being unable to move fast enough across the tracks while a powerful train barreled down upon me.

So this night, I kept watching that engine light. The crossing gates were not down or flashing but I kept looking to my right to see if that train might be moving.

A horn blared and I looked up to see that I had drifted left of center and was driving directly into the path of a semi-truck. I swerved back into my own lane with a rush of adrenaline, my heart pounding. I'm not sure anyone else in the car even noticed – but I did.

I had been paying attention to the wrong thing. While I needed to be aware of that train sitting down the track, it wasn't an immediate threat. My fear pulled my attention away from the job in front of me, driving my friends safely and staying in my own lane. This fear almost caused a major tragedy.

I think about this story when I notice folks who are so afraid of a Covid vaccine that they disregard the danger of the virus.



I also think of it when I realize I am paying way too much time to one aspect of my life – maybe working too much or trying to get all my projects done – to the detriment of my spiritual or emotional well-being.

This holiday season – find your lane. Pay attention to people, not gifts, to gatherings, not perfect decorations. Say a kind word to your neighbor, no matter who they voted for. Look up and see the stars.

In this time of darkness, make space for dreaming, for resting, for finding the thing your heart is longing for. This season allow the bright lights and laughter to fill you up, but notice the darkness too. And dream.



RACIAL EQUITY TEAM

8th Principle Discussion: Let the Conversation Begin!

by Steve Trout

As a life-long UU, I have been comfortable with our *Seven Principles* and *Sources of Wisdom and Spirituality* for many years. The *Seven Principles* nicely summarize our values and challenge us to live them each day. The *Sources of Wisdom and Spirituality* summarize the things that call us to gather on Sunday and give our money, time, and talent to support UCH and Unitarian Universalism.

In my experience, people are drawn to Unitarian Universalism from many different backgrounds, life experiences, and values. A big draw for me is the freedom to live a life filled with meaning, purpose, and joy surrounded by like-minded people who are willing to offer support and guidance, particularly through life's challenges.

Perhaps equally important is Unitarian Universalism's ongoing challenge to live our values and work to make the world a better place. I am continually inspired by our members' commitments to various causes such as environmentalism, social justice, public health, public education, and democracy. Our community calls us to do more by either widening our concerns (for example, animal as well as human welfare) and raising the bar (for example, working for anti-racism, rather than simply waiting for racism to diminish).

This year, we are being challenged to consider adopting an 8th Principle, which calls on us to *“build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.”*

This initiative was launched in 2013 by a group of Black UUs frustrated with the UUA's lack of progress in advancing its stated intention to eliminate racism within the Association and its congregations. The 8th Principle has now been adopted by at least 54 congregations and UU groups. Many other congregations are currently considering adopting it. In June 2023, The General Assembly is expected to review all of UUA's Principles, Sources, and Purposes, which may include the 8th Principle.

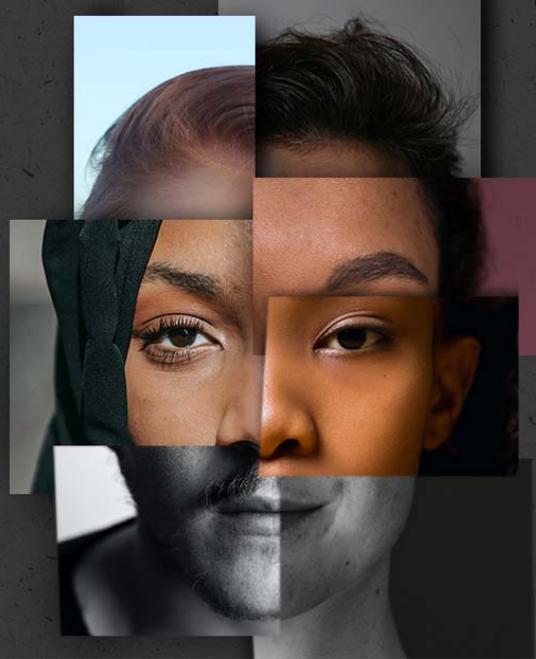
You may wonder why an 8th Principle is needed. Isn't our 1st Principle, “Respect for the Inherent Worth and Dignity for Every Person,” sufficient?

I haven't reached a conclusion on this point, but my sense is that not all is well within UCH, Unitarian Universalism, and the UUA. Two years ago, I was shaken by tearful and angry accounts offered by several Black UUs of when white UUs made them feel like outsiders in their own church. We can and must do better. We are not a racially diverse community and are not as welcoming as we might think. I look forward to discussing the merits of adopting the 8th Principle and considering what we can do individually and collectively to eliminate racism in ourselves, UCH, UUA, and our community.

I NEED YOU TO SURVIVE

BELONGING IN A RADICALLY DIVIDED WORLD

Reflections in Black, Brown and White
from "The Great Turning" Conversations



I NEED YOU TO SURVIVE Belonging in a Radically Divided World

Thursday, November 18, 2021

7:00-8:30 p.m. ET

Virtual conversation

To join us, please [RSVP at this link](#)

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; racial uprisings sparked by the killing of George Floyd; the increased impacts of climate change and economic devastation; and overt threats to democracy typified by abortion bans, voter suppression and ever tighter immigration restrictions—each of these simultaneously experienced events have changed us all in ways too numerous to count.

In these difficult days, divisions, especially racial divisions, have widened, and social and political conflict seems intractable. Some speculate that racism is too endemic to ever be eradicated in the U.S. Auburn does not believe that.

Grounded in the assumption of our radical interdependence, faith- and spirit-rooted communities across the country remain committed to exploring through word and deed “what it means to belong to each other.”

On Thursday, November 18, 7-8:30 p.m. ET, Auburn will present and reflect on the findings, conducted with individual groups of Black, Latinx and White leaders of faith and moral courage committed to grappling with what it means to belong to each other in a profoundly divided world.

What do these leaders believe it will take to create a multiracial democracy in the U.S.?

What are the challenges we face toward this goal?

How does creating space for intra-racial encounter impact our ability to confront, dismantle and re-imagine a world beyond the supremacist logics that continue to threaten the survival and full flourishing of us all?

Join us for this virtual, timely and spirit provoking conversation.

[Click here to register](#). ASL provided.

Presented by members of the research team:

- Lisa Anderson *Embodied Justice Leadership, Auburn*

- Erica Ramirez, PhD, *Applied Research, Auburn*
- Sharon Groves, PhD, *Partner Engagement, Auburn*
- Rev. Jennifer Bailey, *Faith Matters Network*
- João Chaves, PhD, *Hispanic Theological Initiative*
- Rev. Jennifer Harvey, *Drake University*

Moderator: Keisha E. McKenzie, PhD *Senior Vice President of Programs, Auburn*

SOCIAL JUSTICE MONTHLY COLLECTIONS

Invitation to Help a Family Seeking Asylum in Aurora

By Marian Honel-Wilson

UCH was invited to assist in helping to connect a recently reunited family just settled in Aurora with local resources to meet their basic needs, including food, winter clothing, funds to pay utilities, assistance setting up medical appointments, and more.



The family's story, as told by their Family Reunification Case Manager at [Al Otro Lado](#):

This family of 4 arrived in the US from Mexico 2 weeks ago. They are starting their lives over entirely in Aurora and need assistance getting situated in their new home. The 2 parents have a 12-year-old daughter and 13-year-old son that they are working to get enrolled in the local school system. In order to comply with the US government's legal processes, the parents are barred from employment for up to 6 months while they await employment authorization. For this reason, the family will need help paying for essentials in the interim, including winter clothing, food, utilities, furniture, transportation, and medical bills. English is not the family's first language, and they've really struggled the first 2 weeks here to communicate, so assistance with setting up a doctor's appointment for dad and son would also be helpful. The family is Catholic and values connection with a faith-based community, so we hope to connect them with a local congregation.

UCH members are invited to donate gently-used winter clothing and household furnishings, as well as cash and Walmart gift cards, for this family in desperate need of everything to start their new lives in Aurora. The agency working with them, [Al Otro Lado](#) (it means "across"), provides legal and humanitarian support to refugees, deportees, and other migrants. **BEGINNING SUN. NOV. 14, PLEASE BRING YOUR ITEMS TO THE ALICE WARREN ROOM, where you'll see a box for clothing and a table for other items. If you have large furniture items and can arrange transportation to Aurora, please let us know. Anyone who would like to help coordinate UCH's work with this family, please contact Rev. Pam, Marian Honel-Wilson, Char Cepek, Nancy Weill, Mary Getty, or Bonnie Wayman-Dodd. Different kinds of help are needed for this project: team co-chairs, Spanish-speakers, donors, fundraisers, drivers, materials sorters/coordinators, as well as researchers to help connect the family to local resources in Aurora.**

UCH was invited to this work by Rev. Dottie Mathews, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee Clergy Representative to [CAPAS - Congregational Accompaniment Project for Asylum Seekers](#). Rev. Dottie connected us to Rochelle Morgan-Verdin of Al Otro Lado, whose office is in San Diego. The family settled in Aurora because the mom's mother lives there. As they have just arrived, they need all of the following items:

1. *Food assistance*
2. *Winter clothes*
3. *Furniture*
4. *Connection to local Catholic Congregation*
5. *Assistance locating low-cost clinic for father and son's medical needs and prescription refills*
6. *Transportation assistance*
7. *Help with covering utilities during the winter*

Because of privacy concerns, and concerns about the family's safety should their asylum request be denied and they be deported, Al Otro Lado is not providing a photo of the family or revealing the family's name or country of origin. If you are interested in learning more about Al Otro Lado, their work, or the issues at our

southern border from their perspective, you are invited to watch these two videos. The first [here](#) is about Al Otro Lado's work with family reunification, and the second [here](#) is a recent *60 Minutes* special about the family reunification process.

As one person said after I talked to her about this family, "If Kathy Salzano were here, she would be all over this." I suggest we engage in this work in the name and memory of Kathy Salzano, and we will move mountains. Thanks in advance for all your help!

ANIMAL MINISTRY RECIPE OF THE MONTH

This month's recipe is from Pat G. If you have a great vegan recipe to share, please email it to UCHAnimalMinistry@gmail.com

Delicate and Delicious Cookies

(makes about 30 cookies)

1 cup Smart Balance or I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!
1 cup powdered sugar
2 tsps. vanilla
1-1/2 cups flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 cup rolled oats



Cream butter and powder sugar s-l-o-w-l-y.
Add vanilla then flour, baking soda, and oats.
Mix well.
Chill 30 minutes.
Line pan with parchment paper.
Shape dough into a ball about the size of a nickel.
Bake 15 minutes at 325° F.
Enjoy!

Save the date for our post-holiday dinner! Animal Ministry is planning to resume our annual post-holiday dinner on Thursday, January 6, 2022 at Shree in Westmont. All are welcome, but RSVP required at UCHAnimalMinistry@gmail.com by the end of 2021 so that we can plan the menu.

Compassionate Consumerism during the holidays. Animal Ministry encourages you to consider the impact that your holiday purchases have on our animal friends. A Well Fed World is a great alternative. More information is available at: <http://AWellFedWorld.org>

Please note: Animal Ministry has moved its meetings to the 3rd Sunday of the month at 11:30 am.

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

Help make the holidays brighter for children in need!

Due to Covid our Christmas Giving Tree will look a little bit different this year. Instead of choosing individual children to sponsor we are collecting **\$25 gift cards from Target and Walmart only and unwrapped gifts for children ages 8 to 15yrs.** We have committed to 25 gift cards and as many gifts as we can collect. Please make your purchases and bring to church no later than November 28th. All gifts will be donated through Humanitarian Service Project located in Carol Stream, IL.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

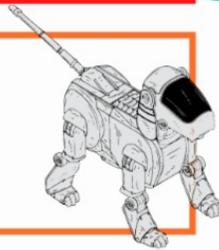
Collecting Toys and Other Gifts for Children ages 8 - 15

TO HELP BRING A SMILE TO THE FACES OF BOYS AND GIRLS ENROLLED IN OUR CHRISTMAS OFFERING, WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING DONATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Board Games
- Puzzles Journal Sets Art Supplies
- Craft Supplies



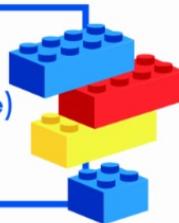
- Science Kits
- Model Kits
- Electronics



- Action Figures/Dolls
- Jewelry
- Bath Products



- Legos
- Sports Equipment (Junior Size)
- Radio-Controlled Cars



BE CREATIVE, INSPIRE OTHERS, AND IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY

FUNDRAISE FOR HSP BY VISITING WWW.HSP.AGENCY

CLICK GET INVOLVED

Consider Carbon Offsets for Your Holiday Travel

Are you traveling by plane over the holidays? According to the Sierra Club, worldwide, airline travel contributes to roughly 2% of carbon emissions, which are key drivers of climate change. Travelers can purchase carbon offsets to help fund development of carbon-neutral energy projects at a level equal to the amount of carbon emitted by their flights. While carbon offsets are not a quick-and-easy fix to the carbon costs of air travel, they can help us to think about the true costs of our travel choices.

Interested in learning more? Go to <https://sustainabletravel.org/our-work/carbon-offsets/>, which takes you to Sustainable Travel International, identified by treehugger.com as offering the best air travel carbon offset program of 2021. You can learn more about offsets, calculate the carbon footprint of your flights, and purchase offsets.

UPCOMING WORSHIP SCHEDULE 2021

November 21st - Simple Gifts

Rev Pam Rumancik (She/Theirs)

When Covid is not ravaging our communities, our church traditionally celebrates the Sunday before Thanksgiving with a Stone Soup story and feast along with a Bread Communion service. This year, with our children still not vaccinated, we are looking to celebrate community even as we maintain our social distance. What can we share? How can we celebrate connection in ways that keep everyone safe? We can be thankful without all the trappings. We can celebrate simple gifts. All vaccinated folks are welcome to join us in person with a mask. The service will also be shared on [YouTube](#).

November 28th - On Reason and Reverence - Discussion

David Lloyd

Our fourth Sunday is a time to reflect on the messages we've shared all month. Your service leaders will offer a reflection on the month and then ask all assembled to share their perspective. It's a time to share and to listen; to reflect together to find deeper meaning. That's what community is all about- right? All vaccinated folks are welcome to join us in person with a mask. The service will also be shared on [YouTube](#).

December 5th – Widening the Circle: The principle of the thing

Rev Pam Rumancik (She/Theirs)

There's a great saying: If it ain't broke, don't fix it. I really wish those technology wizards would follow that advice and stop making me relearn new systems every time I turn around when the old technology worked just fine for me. But – maybe it didn't work fine for somebody else. Unitarian Universalists have [7 principles](#) that we claim to live by. Recently, many of us have awakened to the fact that they don't work for all of us. An [8th principal](#) has been proposed to try and remedy that situation. How should we respond? What do we need to know? How can our original principles guide us? All vaccinated folks are welcome to join us in person with a mask. The service will also be shared on [YouTube](#).

December 12th – Celebrating Bodhi Day

Rev Pam Rumancik (She/Theirs)

While our faith holds many subsets within; Christian, Jewish, Humanist, Atheist, often our most closely observed cousin is Buddhism. As a practice of life without a necessary deity, Buddhism offers a path to a fuller experience of being human without demanding belief in troubling dogma. What gifts can we receive from the Buddha as we celebrate his day of enlightenment? All vaccinated folks are welcome to join us in person with a mask. The service will also be shared on [YouTube](#).

December 17th @ 7:00pm - Pagan Winter Solstice Celebration

Gather as we approach the darkest night of the year to celebrate the returning of the light. A time-honored tradition at UCH, we celebrate with music, drums and readings. This service will not be livestreamed.

December 19th - No-Rehearse Pageant: The Grinch Who Stole Christmas

Rev Pam Rumancik / John Cooperrider / Pam Fodor

Join the congregation in hearing the story of a Grinch who found his heart at Christmas time. It's a jolly time of celebrating together. All vaccinated folks are welcome to join us in person with a mask. The service will also be shared on [YouTube](#).

December 24th 4:00 pm - Christmas Eve

Celebrating the Returning Light

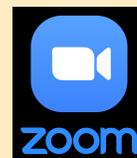
Rev Pam Rumancik

The longest night has passed, what mysteries does Christmas have to reveal? Where is the hope in the star, in a manger, in a child? Let's banish the darkness in a time of celebration for the many gifts in this world. All vaccinated folks are welcome to join us in person with a mask. The service will also be shared on [YouTube](#).

December 26th - Out with the Old – What will the New Year Bring?



You can view the Sunday service live and recordings of past services on our [YouTube channel](#).



Join us for Virtual Coffee Hour via [Zoom after the service](#)

Because we are now live to the world, we ask that when discussing Cares and Concerns live during the candle lighting time, you use only first names to protect the privacy of those you are concerned about, unless you are announcing public information such as a death or a memorial service.

UPDATE: SCAM ALERT



They are still at it... Each month a new wave of emails go out asking folks to contact Rev Pam for an urgent matter. **Do Not Respond!** Your minister will never ask you to buy gift cards or make purchases of any kind. If in doubt of any communication, contact Rev Pam at minister@hinsdaleunitarian.org. All others are fake email addresses. Delete them.

STAFF INFO & ON-SITE DAYS:

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Minister

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Facilities Manager
Choir Director
Music Facilitator
Social Media Manager

John Cooperrider - Grounds@hinsdaleunitarian.org
Julia Beckman - ChoirDirector@hinsdaleunitarian.org
Jamie Pastman - Music@hinsdaleunitarian.org
Cherita Axel - Socialmedia@hinsdaleunitarian.org

Mon - Thursday
Monday Sabbath. Tuesday onsite - other days virtually
Friday - as needed

News & Notes

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Bob Daniel-Wayman - President@hinsdaleunitarian.org

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