

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION OF WILMINGTON

BEACON APRIL 2020



OFFICE HOURS

MINISTER

REV. CHERYL M. WALKER

TUESDAY 11AM – 4PM

WEDNESDAY 11AM – 4PM

THURSDAY 11AM – 4PM

AND BY APPOINTMENT

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

LESLIE O'CONNOR

MONDAY 10:30AM - 3:30PM

WEDNESDAY 10:30AM - 3:30PM

THURSDAY 10:30AM - 3:30PM

ADMINISTRATOR

JULIE BURCHAM

TUESDAY 9AM – 2PM

WEDNESDAY 9AM – 2PM

THURSDAY 9AM – 2PM

FRIDAY 9AM – 2PM

***SUBJECT TO CHANGE - PLEASE CALL
AHEAD**

APRIL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

APR. 5

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

APR. 12

REV. CHERYL

APR. 19

REV. CHERYL

APR. 26

WORSHIP TEAM

UUCWNC BOARD MEMBERS

PRESIDENT: DON SMITH

VICE PRESIDENT: BETH O'CONNELL

SECRETARY: CORNELIA MAXTED

KAREN GOTTOVI

MIKE HOSICK

JIM LUDWIG

PAMELA WAITE

TREASURER: JOHN GRIGSBY

BOARD OF Trustees

Many of us experiencing the current health crisis realize that this is new territory. Not only is it a viral attack on our health, but it is also an attack on our finances. How long will the Corona Virus flourish, closing businesses and schools as well as sickening thousands of people and killing many of the most vulnerable? No one can really say, but the virus is taking hold in our state and community.

Dan and I live at Carolina Bay, along with Maggie and the Gugans. Although we are in the independent living section, (meaning we are supposed to take care of ourselves) we are now supposed to isolate ourselves from each other and stay in our rooms – just like you at home. Lunch and dinner are brought to our rooms from a limited menu. All exercise classes are canceled, and all gatherings of over 10 people are prohibited. It's a lonely place now.

Thank goodness for the internet and Zoom! Because of this, members of our congregation who are technologically savvy were able to participate in last Sunday's virtual service with Rev. Cheryl and Jerry Winsett. It's not the same as being there in person, of course, because we also missed time with friends, but it was wonderful. Stay tuned for the plans for other Zoom services next Sunday and in April as well.

So, keep well, and be safe. Follow the protocols for hand washing and distancing. Know that an immunization will be developed so that this virus will not cause such havoc another year. Check on your family, friends and neighbors, particularly those who are alone. Let our caring committee know if you find out about someone from our congregation who needs help. Read books and set aside some for our sale, clean out old clothes and clutter, and learn something new. This too will pass.

Karen Gottovi



MINISTER'S MUSINGS

As I write this column COVID-19 has already taken the lives of over 20 thousand people world-wide and over 1,000 people in this country. My hometown, New York City, is the epicenter of the pandemic. There are over 80 million people in the United States who are under mandatory “stay at home” orders. Over 3 million people filed new unemployment claims this month. These are times like no other we have experienced.

For the foreseeable future social distancing will be the norm. It means that we will not be able to worship together in person. There will be no in person Open Houses, no JUULIETS or ROMEOs meeting in restaurant. There are no in person meetings and plans that have been in the works for months by some teams have to be set aside. Social distancing also means social isolation. These are times like no other we have experienced.

Yet we persist. This is a time that calls for us to be creative and think out of the box. We are leveraging technology to do some of the things that we do in person. We will worship together using Zoom. Just go our website www.uucwnc.org and you'll find a link on the first page to our worship Zoom room. We will have meetings the same way. It will not be the same as being together, but at the very least we will have ways to stay in touch. If you want to schedule a meeting contact Julie at [julie @ uucwnc.org](mailto:julie@uucwnc.org). You can also use Zoom on your own by signing up and creating an account. And its free, though there are some limitations on the length of a meeting. You can also use Google hangout to connect with a couple of friends.

These are also times to embrace some old ways. Remember when you picked up the phone and called people? Remember when you wrote letters? This is a good time to do those things again. Imagine the joy you will spread when someone goes to the mailbox and finds a letter from you.

The biggest challenge we may face is what to do with all the time we have while we are staying at home. It's one thing to stay at home by choice and quite another to stay at home because we must. Remember all those projects you thought about doing and claimed to never have the time? Well you have the time now. Get out of the house, if you can, for some fresh air. Take a walk. Explore the internet. I recommend the Tiny Desk Concerts on YouTube to find new and interesting music. Turn off the news! You don't need 24 hours of updates about bad news, and right now all the news is bad. You don't have to totally disconnect but moderate how much news you ingest.

No one knows how long this will last. What we do know is that there are things we can do to help slow the spread and things we can do to help one another. The church may be physically closed but it is still spiritually open. Take care of yourselves, take care of each other.

Love,
Rev. Cheryl



Note from your Faith Formation Director

And how she discovered that washing your hands can be good for your soul ...

I sing ‘Happy Birthday to You’ as I wash my hands for what seems like the 100th time of the day. The slight sting of alcohol that comes with the occasional hand sanitizer shortcut causes me to channel my inner Lady MacBeth as I mutter ‘out damn spot!’ to the bathroom mirror. I recognize the need to turn this most mundane of tasks into something meaningful for my soul or I will surely go as mad as Lady MacBeth.

Ritual purification is common throughout many cultures and religions. Japanese Buddhist temples have a basin called a *tsububai* at the entrance and ablution is also a part of the highly ritualistic tea ceremony. Both Shinto and many Native Americans practice ritual purification in natural running water. The Hebrew Bible mentions several situations where it is required, oriented mainly toward the mysterious power of the female (menstruation, postpartum, sexual relations) and of the biological (unusual bodily fluids, corpse uncleanness). Christians adapted Hebrew practices and added cleansing to the liturgical communion and, of course baptism. Jesus modeled humility when he washed the feet of his disciples. Hindus bathe in rivers considered holy, like the Ganges, before festivals and after funerals. Islam has *wudu*, performed before prayer and full-body cleansing *ghusl* for more formal ceremonies. Indigenous Americans frequent ceremonial sweat lodges.

Water is a symbol of birth, as it recalls the fluids that accompany birth. It’s a symbol of life because it nourishes all living things. Ritually anointing the hand is a symbol of the renewal of creation as well as a spiritual cleansing that prepares us for the work of a new day. When you wash your hands, wash with intention. A *kavanah* - a word, prayer, concept or chant that helps you focus – might be used to direct your attention to the holiness of this most ordinary of moments.

Water flows over these hands

May I use them skillfully

as I construct and shape this day.

[based on a prayer by Thich Nhat Hanh]

In these days of pandemic, the ordinary task of washing our hands has truly become holy. Consider treating it as such, and you will scrub with a renewed sense of purpose. Find your own *kavanah* to prevent your inner Lady MacBeth from surfacing. I found Dori Midnight’s poem about washing hands to be profoundly thought-provoking, and it may give you some new perspectives from which to start your own cleansing meditations.

https://dorimidnight.com/uncategorized/wash-your-hands/?fbclid=IwAR1olrZzbR-wRF_brY_HbEh3wYlqbeztux4gxEPdghp5OYsoRIbS4Ibld3U

Shalom.

Leslie O’Connor, UUCWNC Faith Formation Director



ZOOM MEETINGS

During this time, we will only have meetings via Zoom (zoom.us). Zoom will enable quick meeting capabilities from anywhere on any device with video and audio.

How to schedule:

You will schedule all meetings through Julie, julie @ uucwnc.org. The main information about Zoom that you need to know is:

- We only have one meeting room.
- There will be at least a 15-minute break in between meetings.
- Meetings will be scheduled for no longer that 2 hours.
- They need to be scheduled at least 1 day in advance.
- If you schedule the meeting YOU will need to join the meeting 5 minutes before the start time to be the moderator of the meeting.

First you will need to contact me with the meeting information. I will need the following information:

- Your Group/Organization/Meeting Name
- Time of meeting request
- Your Name

I will schedule your meeting if there are no conflicts. If there are, I will contact you and we will work out a day/time. Once your meeting is scheduled **I will send you an email with the invite** to your meeting so that you can send it to everyone that you wish to attend the meeting. Below is an example of what that email will look like. ▼

UU Wilmington is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: TEST Meeting ◀**Your Meeting Name will show Here**

Time: Mar 24, 2020 02:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)◀**Your Date & Time will show here**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/358954608>

Meeting ID: 358 954 608

One tap mobile

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

I will also be putting all meetings on our online calendar except the room will be (Z) for 'Zoom'. This way everyone can see what is scheduled on the online calendar through the website just like before as well.

Training is available through Rev. Cheryl, please email her at revcheryl @ uucwnc.org set up a training time.

Treasurer's Update

What, we have no money???

As they say on a popular television commercial, "NOT TRUE".

Due to the amount of time that we have been physically apart, I felt it was appropriate to update you on our finances. UUCWNC is currently financially sound and with our reserves, we have the resources to operate comfortably in our socially distancing environment.

The Annual Pledge Sunday will not be held by the Generous Life Team in April as originally planned; therefore, the Finance Committee will be unable to prepare a budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year which begins July 1. We are asking that if possible, for you to continue your current pledge level until we can prepare a new budget for next year.

Many make pledge payments via bank drafts and other electronic sources. We appreciate your support and ask that if possible, that you continue this process even into the new church year.

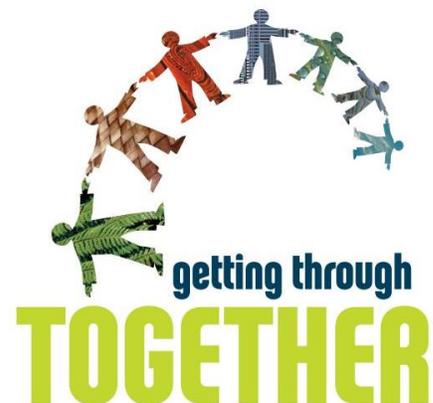
Others make weekly pledge contributions during the Sunday Service offering. These offerings, along with donations can be mailed to the church office at UUCWNC, 4313 Lake Ave, Wilmington, NC 28403.

These are frightening times for all of us. We understand that some of you have lost income due to social distancing and job losses and will not be able to make your current pledge. Take care of you and your family, and we will all get through this.

Perhaps, this year we will have a real HOMECOMING.

John Grigsby

Treasurer





Parents are children’s primary teachers, but what is society teaching our children about sexuality? Our Whole Lives is an antidote to sexualized media messages, peer pressure, misinformation and prejudice. It provides accurate, age-appropriate information, puts sexuality in the context of values and personal responsibility, supports healthy decision making, and strengthens social skills. These skills and values help prepare youth to make healthy choices for life.

Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Grades 7-9

The ‘Our Whole Lives’ program is a fundamental component of our UU Religious Education curriculum roadmap. UUCWNC is looking for a few volunteers to facilitate the program for our 7th- 9th graders (12 – 18 students). The quarantine situation that we find ourselves in mandates a flexible approach to scheduling and formatting the program that we can meet with input from our volunteer facilitators. All training expenses will be covered by UUCWNC. *Please contact Leslie O’Connor, [leslie @ uucwnc.org](mailto:leslie@uucwnc.org) for more information.*

FUN FACT:

OWL is so important that it has its own page in Wikipedia!!
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Whole_Lives

Please help make it happen for the children of UUCWNC!

Workshop Cancelled

The “*Caregiver Exhaustion and Self-Help*” workshop planned for April 5th has been cancelled. Because demand for this presentation will probably increase during our period of seclusion, it will be rescheduled when our community reconvenes!



Caring Committee



Acting in concert with the minister, the caring committee provides short-term support, care and assistance to UU members and friends who are experiencing illness, injury or crisis. We are here for you. Your personal information is always held in confidence unless you wish us to share it with the broader UU community.

The committee is fully cognizant of the extraordinary needs and limitations placed on all of this during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our members will do whatever they can to be supportive without incurring undue risk. Please continue to share your special needs, and, if possible, we will assist or at least try to point you in the right direction! A lot of our operations in the immediate future may be electronic in nature! Our UU friends who are living in extended care facilities are now isolated from family and friends, confined to small spaces. Other members live alone and are experiencing similar isolation. We encourage you all to reach out to each other by phone or email and maintain feelings of connection. If you would like to be placed on a list of UU's who receive regular check-in calls from one of us, please do let the chairperson of the month know that.

The current members of the caring committee are: Cathy Campau, Carol Ann Davis, Diane Halley, Jeanette Koshar, Jeannie Lennon, Jane Linn, Kami O'Keeffe, Jill Pollack, Betsy Randall-David, and Reverend Cheryl M. Walker. When our social situation becomes less stringent, we will once again be looking for people to help with providing rides, delivering meals, and so on.

The chairperson for April is Betsy Randall-David.

We join together this month to extend our heartfelt sympathies to Kami O. on the loss of her brother.

Peace and be well.

Choir goes to Chapel Hill

During the weekend of Feb 29 – Mar 1 twelve members of the UUCWNC Choir attended the UU Southern Area Choir Festival at Community Church at Chapel Hill UU. With over 160 choir members from congregations throughout N Carolina and Virginia and under the direction of Glenn Mehrbach, two Sunday morning performances were given of John Kramer’s “The Immigrant Experience.” This is a powerful seven-movement choral piece that draws on texts from numerous sources including Emma Lazarus’ “The New Colossus” (Give me your tired, your poor . . .), and American statesmen from Thomas Paine to George W. Bush all of which drive home our nation’s rootedness in being - and remaining “an asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty.” While an emotional experience the piece also proved to be a very challenging musical undertaking that, in the end, we felt privileged to be a part of.

Sally Spalding, Choir Director





GENEROUS LIFE TEAM

WE NEED NOT FEEL ALONE IN OUR SOCIAL ISOLATION

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me ‘Look for helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’ To this day, especially in times of ‘disaster’, I remember my mother’s words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers—so many caring people in this world.”

~Fred Rogers

Fred Rogers’ mother was right. We’ve seen this in any number of disasters—from tireless first responders and rescue workers risking their own lives to address the 9/11 disaster, to those who reached out here and elsewhere to respond to those in need during natural disasters like hurricanes to other health crises like the ebola outbreak. We know we are a caring people who are always ready to lend a hand to those in need.

We also know from psychological research that helping others helps us feel better as well. For example, one study found that those given \$5 with instructions to give the money to a stranger reported feeling happier than those given \$20 to spend on themselves (Dunn, Aknin & Norton, 2008). It feels good to give. It makes us happy to do so.

Certainly, our congregation is emblematic of this human quality of generosity. We give of our time, our money and our skills to those in need through our volunteer efforts in the community, our contributions to Share the Plate, and our individual outreach calls and visits to those in our congregation who are struggling. We do this all the time—not just during a crisis.

But now we (our community, our state, our country, our world) are in crisis. We can’t give in our usual ways. We can’t hug. We can’t volunteer in our usual ways.

We are trying to be responsible. We are doing what we can to avoid spreading the virus by socially isolating to the extent that we can and taking extra precautions when we are out in the world to protect ourselves and others.

It may seem simple: just stay home and avoid contact with others. Yet we are social beings. We thrive on personal connection. We may feel lonely and sad when we can’t connect directly with those we care about.

At UUCWNC we are already working to break down barriers. Just this past Sunday we Zoomed together to join – electronically – in a worship service. And how nice it was to see one another’s faces and hear a bit about how people were doing. Also, as Rev. Cheryl mentioned on Sunday, the church is planning other Zoom events that will bring folks together on other days of the week.

In addition, many of us are also calling, texting, emailing and using face time and similar video platforms to actually see one another as we check in. It’s certainly not the same as an in-person hug or handshake, but it helps break down the feeling of isolation and loneliness.

We encourage everyone to join in, to reach out to someone every day—by phone, email, text, social media, Zoom, or face time. Find the ways that work best for you and check in on one another. Helping others not only helps them, it makes us feel better.

APRIL 2020 FULL MOON



April's Full Pink Moon on the 7th will be the biggest super moon of the year. It's called a pink moon not because it looks pink, but because it appears around the time that creeping phlox or moss pink flowers begin to bloom in eastern North America.

Sadly, we won't be able to meet again for a while but can certainly stay in touch with one another and enjoy the beauty of the Cape Fear region in spring.



EMAILS

All of our old emails will be going away this month so please make sure that you have changed your notes, contact lists, etc. to note that fact.

You will now need to use our new email addresses only.

Rev. Cheryl	revcheryl @ uucwnc.org
Leslie	leslie @ uucwnc.org
Julie	julie @ uucwnc.org
Digest	digest @ uucwnc.org
Beacon	beacon @ uucwnc.org



Your Virtual Unitarian Universalist Association



It's not just our congregation that has gone virtual. Many UU events are taking place on the internet. Here are just a few:



BRAVER/WISER Life is full of hard edges and complicated choices. Braver/Wiser gives you weekly message of courage and compassion for life as it is. Every Wednesday we deliver an original written reflection by a contemporary religious leader, and brief prayer, grounded in Unitarian Universalism. Join the Braver/Wiser community and [sign up today!](#)

Side with Love and Love Resists: April the 2nd at 6:30 pm Eastern -Join UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, Emma's Revolution, Side with Love Campaign Manager Everette Thompson, Organizing Strategy Director Rev. Ashley Horan, Dr. Charlene Sinclair of Black PAC & Intern Minister at First UU Richmond, a Detention Watch Network Organizer, and UUs from across our black, brown, LGBTQ and justice networks. Here is the link to register: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Ch1eYD97Q9ad2IR0s445Ag?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Just+Acts%3A+Organizing+for+Justice+During+the+Pandemic&utm_campaign=Just+Acts+-+Mar+2020

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Questions? Please contact Elizabeth Terry at [niaworkone @ gmail.com](mailto:niaworkone@gmail.com) or 910-274-6408

