



NEWSLETTER



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the
South Jersey Shore

Volume 22, Issue 6

June 2020

June Services

Theme: Compassion

We meet at our UU Center, Pomona Rd and Liebig Street, Galloway NJ (near the north entrance to Richard Stockton College).
Services are at 10:00 am unless otherwise noted.

<p>June 7</p>	<p>Remember Me <i>Guest speaker Amy G.S.A. Brooks</i></p> <p>This sermon serves as a reminder to show compassion to a people we are often quick to forget.</p>
<p>June 14</p>	<p>UU Second Principle: Justice, Equity, and Compassion in Human Relations <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i></p> <p>Our denomination commits itself to upholding and promoting justice, equity, and compassion in human relations, but how do we do that in real life? And how do we do it now during a pandemic? Join us as we explore this rich concept.</p>
<p>June 21</p>	<p>Who We Are <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i></p> <p>Unitarian Universalism is a multi-faceted movement. Today, we celebrate Father's Day, the Summer Solstice, and hold our Annual Congregational Meeting, in which we self-govern through the tradition of direct democratic process. And we are aware that our world is hurting, and many of us are hurting as well. How do we hold room in our hearts for all of these pieces? Must we prioritize or can we embrace it all? Join us to explore.</p>
<p>June 28</p>	<p>General Assembly Worship Watch Party <i>Rev. Dawn Fortune</i></p> <p>Today is the day our annual convention wraps up. Sunday morning worship of GA is traditionally live-streamed from the convention center, and this year there will still be a live-stream, but from an entirely online program. Instead of holding our regular worship service, we invite everyone, members and friends and visitors alike, to join in watching the live stream of GA worship. The link will be posted on the uucsjs website and on all our social media platforms.</p>

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UUCSJS

will be held via **Zoom** on

SUNDAY, June 21, 2020

(immediately following the Sunday service)

President's Corner

In the wake of the racial injustice and unrest in our country amid the ongoing Coronavirus Pandemic, I am having a hard time writing my Board President's update for our monthly newsletter. Like many of you, I am having trouble processing the reality of what is going on right now, and how to do my part to fix a fractured and hurting society.

Trevor Noah delivered a powerful speech on the ongoing nationwide protests following the [May 25 killing of George Floyd](#) in Minneapolis. Noah addressed the concerns of those who have expressed opposition to rioting and looting, while also offering context on the significance behind the forms of protest. "Fundamentally, when you boil it down, society is a contract," Noah said. "It's a contract that we sign as human beings amongst each other. . . . As with most contracts, the contract is only as strong as the people who are abiding by it."

Noah's speech struck a chord with me, as it immediately felt like he was speaking directly to our core UU values, especially our second principle of "Justice, equity and compassion in human relations." It also brings to mind the importance of covenantal relations, a topic that has come up in our congregation a lot over this past year. As UU's, we can lead by example of how we treat each other. We can continue to stand up for racial injustice and to be a part of the change that is needed immediately in this country.

The frustrating part for me is that I feel inept at taking any helpful steps towards this goal. Every day, I carry the image that last month's guest speaker CB Beal gave us in their sermon about having an inflatable beach ball in my brain that gets blown up, pushing everything else aside, and limiting my ability to do all but the most mundane tasks.

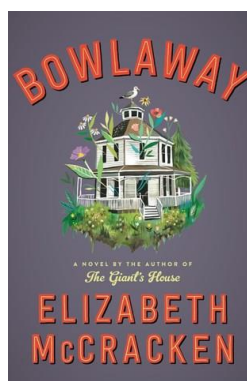
For the time being, I know that it will have to be enough for me to just keep going to work every day, and at least modeling covenantal behaviors with my coworkers and with my patients. I'm also committed to completing my work as Board President this month. As many of you know, my six year term on the Board has come to a close. You will see more about this message in my annual statement to the Board, and in announcements over the next few

weeks as to how we will be holding our Annual Meeting over Zoom. I value the covenantal behavior standards that UUCSJS members hold, and I feel that this will help to guide us through the current turmoil. My message to you for this month doesn't have an end that ties everything up in a neat bow, so I will simply end with what I always do...

With Gratitude (...and Love to you ALL),

~ Melissa Hutchison

BOOK CLUB will again meet via email on our usual meeting date, Friday, June 19. Email Barb Morell with any questions.



BOWLAWAY

by Elizabeth McCracken

An unconventional New England family faces scandal, inheritance battles and questions of paternities as viewed through three generations of their owning and operating a candlepin bowling alley in Salford, Massachusetts. *Bowlaway* is so deliciously weird and wise and alive. A gloriously fresh paean to the 'perversity of love'.

On Friday, June 19 an email chain will start to give opinions of the book and we might do a ZOOM meeting at 7 pm on the 19th – it would be the first Book Club ZOOM! Just a note, if you would like to be delightfully distracted, this is the book to do that for you.

MARGARET CIRCLE will meet again by email. This will be our third cycle of holding our gathering by email. While it is not at all the same as a live gathering, it beats having no contact.

Kim Trotto has the topic this month, and she has built it around an article in the March Atlantic Magazine – "The Nuclear Family was a Mistake" by David Brooks. If you have not received the excerpt but would like to have it and participate, please ask Betsy Searight to send it to you.

Our joys and concerns, and our reactions to the article about family should be sent to Betsy or to Kim by Wednesday, June 3. They will then be gathered in one document and sent to participants on Thursday.

Rev. Dawn Fortune
609.289.5782



Gentle People,

June is the time when summer begins in earnest. It is the time of the Solstice, Gay Pride, Father's Day, and this year, unrest in the streets of our nation and threats to the structure of our constitutional republic.

Just when we thought things could not get more difficult or challenging, they do.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, you are not alone. I think most people in our country right now are feeling overwhelmed. Not only are we overwhelmed, but we are in this Catch-22 impossible situation: We want to protest, but we want to adhere to wise medical advice and quarantine. We want to get out after being cooped up for months, but we don't want to get sick and we don't want to make others sick.

Businesses and organizations and churches all over the world are struggling with the tensions between needing to be in business and needing to keep their customer base alive. I look at the giant protests happening in the streets, and I understand their importance, but I worry about the germ transmission rate in such a mass of humanity.

What I want to share with you is this: if you decide to march and protest, I will support your decision. If you decide to stay home to avoid getting sick, I will support your decision.

I can't tell anyone what is "enough" for each of us to do in the fight for social justice. I've had multiple conversations with people in recent weeks about just this subject. Our hearts are broken. We are enraged. We see the faces of the people at memorial ceremonies and feel their grief and loss. And we feel guilty for all that we cannot do.

So I am going to encourage you: you, who don't think you can do anything, to engage in acts of microjustice. This is one of those times when we, who feel powerless, engage in the work of the trim tabs. Remember my story about trim tabs? Buckminster Fuller spoke about them. They're little flaps on the hulls of giant ships, below the waterline, that, when adjusted just the slightest bit, create the beginnings of a wash that will allow the rudder to turn the giant ship.

Some of us can go to the marches and run for office and go to Washington to protest or represent. And the rest of us can do the work of the trim tabs: we can engage in microjustice, by calling out family members who say racist things. By writing letters to the editor. By sticking a Black Lives Matter sign in our front yard, or in a window facing the street. We can call our senators and congressional representatives. We can call our

state-level lawmakers. We can develop relationships with our municipal- and county-level representatives.

There is a lot each of us can do.

You don't have to do it all.

None of us could.

But we can each do a little bit, and like the trim tabs, we can turn the giant ship.

And you know what? Some days, the most you can do is to get out of bed and sit on the couch. Some days, it may take all of your energy to simply take a shower and feed yourself.

On those days, be extra gentle with yourself. None of us has any experience dealing with this kind of thing, or especially so many kinds of things happening all at once.

Let someone know you're hurting and need help.

We've got you.

We are all in this together, and together we will get through.

Be well,

Rev. Dawn



Rev. Dawn's Twitter handle is
@queerpreacher

You can tweet about UUCSJS
using the hashtag **#uucsjs**

Welcome to Protesting!

Choose your class:

FIGHTER: March in demonstrations

TANK: Put your body between the vulnerable and cops' attacks

ROGUE: Flood snitch lines with false reports/kpop facecams/etc

HEALER: Provide medical support and supplies to protesters

BARD: Spread the word and help members of the other classes keep up their spirits and mental health

CHEMIST: Provide food and needed supplies to communities targeted by police and agitators

WIZARD: Use your technical skills/platform to help keep lines of communication going and inform people

SUPPORT CASTER: Keep your allies strong by donating money and/or time to bail funds, protest orgs, etc

No matter your skills and resources, there's a class
for you to play and a role you can fill!



About this month's guest speaker....

Amy Brooks is a cisgender, queer, Australian-born immigrant to the United States who loves a good cup of hot tea and hates mornings. Amy's pronouns are she/her/hers. When she is not working, she enjoys reading, spending time with her family, and dismantling the kyriarchy.



Deeply familiar with grief and trauma, Amy finds truth and meaning in the liminal spaces where humanity encounters the Divine.

Amy shares her home with her wife, Laurie; as well as her children, four cats, a dog, and assorted members of their chosen family.

Amy will be joining us from Brighton IL (Central Time).

She tweets from <https://twitter.com/AmyGSABrooks>

NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UUCSJS

Unitarian Universalist Congregation
of the South Jersey Shore

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that
the **ANNUAL MEETING** of the
UUCSJS

will be held via **Zoom** on

SUNDAY, June 21, 2020

(immediately following the Sunday service)

for the purposes of: approving the budget for the 2020-21 Fiscal Year; electing members of the Board of Trustees, Nominations Committee, and Committee on Ministry; and transacting such other business as may come before the congregation.

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP, GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

Sunday, June 28, 2020, General Assembly livestreams its Sunday morning worship.

Many congregations have a custom of viewing the GA worship service in their own congregational spaces on this day. UUCSJS has not done this, but we are going to try it this year!

Join us for the largest annual gathering of UUs joining in worship!

If you want to sneak a peak at last year's GA worship, you can see it here:

<https://www.uua.org/ga/past/2019/worship/sunday>



MESSAGE FROM THE UUA PRESIDENT: UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR GATHERING

By Susan Frederick-Gray, UUA President

May 14, 2020



Dear Leaders,

As states around the country begin to loosen guidelines and take actions to reopen, even as COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to climb, we have received many questions from congregations about returning to in-person gatherings.

Over the past several weeks, the UUA has consulted with multiple public health officials in order to update the guidance we provided on March 12 recommending congregations stop gathering in person.

Based on advice from experts, we continue to recommend that congregations not gather in person. We also recommend that congregations begin planning for virtual operations for the next year (through May 2021).

Take a moment to breathe. I know this is significant.

While there is much public conversation about “reopening,” the reality is public health officials consistently predict a long trajectory for this pandemic. A majority of our congregational members, leaders, and staff members are in high-risk categories. Our care for the well-being and safety of our members and staff must be a priority in this pandemic.

Additionally, religious gatherings are considered highly contagious events. The acts of singing, the familiarity of people across households, the multigenerational community of children, youth, adults and seniors—the things that make our congregations so special—also create more risk for spreading the virus.

Given that so much uncertainty and risk remain, anticipating a year of virtual operations allows for more creative long-term planning, while still being flexible if conditions change significantly. We recognize that with time, and depending on the specific conditions and recommendations of local public health officials, small in-person groups of people and limited staff activities onsite may become possible while wearing masks, observing social distancing guidelines, and following diligent cleaning practices.

In making our recommendations, we are guided by science and our deepest held values. This pandemic teaches us that our actions directly impact the health and well-being of our neighbors and so it is imperative that we make choices that keep our congregations and larger community safer. As COVID-19 disproportionately impacts people with disabilities, Black people, Indigenous communities, Latinx people, the elderly, and essential workers, a majority of whom are women and women of color, religious communities have a moral responsibility to do all we can to reduce risks for those already at such high risk.

Public health officials are clear. There will need to be multiple weeks of reduction in infections, adequate testing, sufficient personal protective equipment available, contact tracing programs and perhaps a vaccine before it will be safe for many of our congregations to fully gather in person again.

All this said, **our ministries are essential services**. I am moved by congregations who are increasing their services and generosity to the larger community during this pandemic. I am inspired by those who are keeping their “virtual” doors open. Many congregations have committed to keeping their services widely accessible and available to new people and visitors, while also creating more opportunities for virtual small groups to tend to the social, spiritual, emotional, and material needs of their members.

We hope that a vaccine or an effective treatment will be found soon to change this timeline. In the meantime, being able to plan the longer horizon of virtual services offers an opportunity to be creative in planning for life-giving, essential ministry across physical distance.

Our detailed [UUA Guidelines on Gathering In Person as COVID-19 Subsides](#) include specific questions for congregations to ask to determine risk assessment and readiness plans before beginning any moves to gather in person. We will continue to update them as more information becomes available. As always, we encourage you to reach out to [UUA regional staff](#) if you need support in your planning.

I continue to hold you, your community, and all of our people in my heart and in my prayers. I know adjusting to this new reality is heartbreaking. I also believe congregations who continue to lean into their mission and life-saving ministry will find ways to thrive in this time. Ministry is so deeply needed. As is moral leadership rooted in community care and in science. May we keep offering this to our communities.

Yours in love and gratitude,
Susan

CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Creating Sabbath Space at Home

"Mom, how long have we been inside? Four months? Five?"
"Well, it's been about 10 weeks I think since you haven't had church or dance."
"No, it's definitely been longer. It feels like we have been home forever!"

I know many of you have had similar conversations with your children recently. And maybe you and your children are feeling like you have been home "forever" too! Maybe you have been feeling a little disconnected; disconnected from the outside life you had before COVID-19, disconnected from friends and family, disconnected from your faith? This disconnect is causing real pain. We can use this month's theme of compassion to help us build a little more connection. We can act in a way that shows our children we hear their grief.

This month, families will be able to choose between two different resources for faith at home. One resource will be our usual Soulful Home packet that brings the monthly worship theme into the weekday with stories, discussion questions, and activities for families to do together during the month. The second option for families this month is called "Creating Sabbath Space at Home." This resource offers families a chance to make space in their week for worship, rest, and connection. It won't lift coronavirus restrictions or get your family's life "back to normal" but it might help to create a special

space in your home that will help you and your children to feel nourished. A Sabbath space that offers rest and connection doesn't seem like an extra right now but something necessary.

Children's RE will still meet each Tuesday afternoon for a story and a chat. But, instead of a project for kids to work on during the week, each child will be encouraged to work with their family to create their own family Sabbath. My weekly family newsletter will provide parents with activities to try out with their children, like setting up a family altar, creating your own family chalice, a family worship time, and more.

We, as parents, have the opportunity to create something special that can become a beautiful new ritual for our children. We can respond with compassion and create a space in our homes and in our families that can help lessen the pain of our children's grief. I hope you will take this journey with me this month.

*In Fellowship,
Jessica Dunn Safonof
Director of Religious Education*





UUCSJS

Stay connected to our community!

Sunday

Worship on Zoom at 10 a.m.

Join our Zoom meeting here: <https://tinyurl.com/uucsjszoom>

(Meeting ID: 224 677 6604, password 306591)

BY PHONE, Dial: 1-929-436-2866 and wait for the prompt. then enter:
224-677-6604# and password 306591

Tuesday

Calling all kids! Join Ms. Jess for RE Lab at 3 pm

For privacy and safety reasons, please email uucsjsdre@gmail.com for an invitation to this Zoom Meeting.

Thursday

Common Arts for DIY Hearts 7 pm

Join us in this open makers space to work on your current project with company. **All makers and all ages welcome.**

Join us on Zoom here: <https://tinyurl.com/uucsjscrafts>

Friday

Calling all kids for Friday Night Fun 7 pm

Spend some time just hanging out having fun together in this open zoom room for kids. Bring your current art projects, your legos, your pets. We will talk, play games, hang out. For privacy and safety, please email uucsjsdre@gmail.com for an invitation to this Zoom meeting.

Saturday

Buddhist Sangha 10am

Join us on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/612061240>

All are welcome.

Heartfulness Meditation

**Mondays & Wednesdays at 6:25 pm, Thursdays at 7:25 pm,
Saturdays at 7am**

Join us on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/2219690745>

Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is available with Rev. Dawn via phone or video chat.

Appointments are available Wednesday through Saturday. Email minister@uucsjs.org or call 609-289-5782.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore

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Visit us on the Web: www.uucsjs.org

June 2020

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