

Unitarian Universalist Society: East

Member of the Clara Barton District of the Unitarian Universalist Association



Unitarian Universalist Society: East is a welcoming, open-minded, spiritual community seeking truth and meaning in its many forms. We share responsibility for building a more equitable, peaceful, and sustainable world.

Editor's Note: due to COVID-19 precautions, UUS:E has closed the Meetinghouse for all activities. Only staff members will enter the building until further notice.

Check our website and watch for email eblast notices for updates. <http://uuse.org>

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Find us on Facebook at [/UUSEast](https://www.facebook.com/UUSEast).



Sunday Services Schedule

September Ministry Theme: Renewal

In September we continue to hold one virtual worship service every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM. For the time being our Sunday services will be held using Zoom. Our Zoom login and call-in information will be shared through the congregational eblast. If you are not subscribed to the congregational eblast, please send a message to e-news@uuse.org or contact Annie Gentile in the UUS:E office to arrange another method of receiving relevant information.

August 30: "Child's Pose."

This morning we welcome members and friends for the UU congregations in Hartford, West Hartford and New London. Rev. Josh reflects on the physical, emotional and spiritual risks associated with going back to school in the middle of a pandemic. He offers "child's pose" as a spiritual response to living with such risk.

Coordinator: Rev. Josh Pawelek

September 6: "What Then, What Now: Experiencing the Pandemic."

Members of the UUS:E family will talk about their personal experiences during the COVID-19 crisis and what they anticipate as it continues. Four speakers will talk about one of the following areas: work life, school life, home life and spiritual life.

Coordinator: Marsha Howland and David Klotz

September 13: "Homecoming."

Don't miss our annual homecoming worship celebration featuring special music and rituals to mark the commencement of a new congregational year! And yes, we will be blessing the backpacks, briefcases, purses, etc. for the annual "Blessing of the Backpacks."

Coordinators: Gina Campellone, Mary Bopp and Rev. Josh Pawelek

September 20: "This Land is Your Land?"

Changes are coming to Unitarian Universalism, including changes to how we regard some of our most beloved spiritual forbears, music, and ways of being together in community. Rev. Josh offers his initial reflections on the June report from the Unitarian Universalist Association's Commission on Institutional Change.

Coordinator: Rev. Josh Pawelek

September 27: "Renewal."

Our ministry theme for September is renewal. As we journey more deeply into this strangest of congregational years, what are our enduring sources of renewal?

Coordinators: Gina Campellone and Rev. Josh Pawelek

2020 – 2021 Ministry Themes

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/themes.html>

July	none
August	none
September	Renewal
October	Deep Listening
November	Healing
December	Stillness
January	Imagination
February	Beloved Community
March	Commitment
April	Becoming
May	Story
June	Play

Community Outreach Ministry

Charitable Giving for September 2020

As always, thank you for your generosity.

"We do not gather our gifts only for ourselves, but to share with the larger community."

For the month of September, our regular community outreach offering will be dedicated to a variety of organizations working to address the problem of food insecurity. These organizations include the Manchester Area Conference of Churches, the HVCC Food Pantry and the East of the River Mutual Aid Society's "Fill the Fridge" program. As a supplement to our fundraising, the UUS:E Social Justice / Anti-Oppression Committee is also organizing food / supply drives. Watch our regular eblast for more information.

Please contact Louisa Graver at lgraver163@gmail.com, David Lacoss, or Nancy Madar at nancymadar@hotmail.com.

Checks made out to UUS:E will be treated as follows. If the memo line:

- ✓ is blank or "pledge" is written, all will go toward your pledge.
- ✓ has "COM" or the name of the charity is on the memo line, all will go to the charity.
- ✓ has "1/2 pledge, 1/2 COM," it will be divided equally.

Deepening Connections through Small Group Ministry

What is Small Group Ministry? A network of small groups (maximum size 8 – 10) whose main objective is to create an open and safe environment for mutual ministry and spiritual growth. Groups meet monthly, have a regular format, develop a covenant, and explore mutually agreed to topics that promote UU principles and spiritual development. This is not just small talk but an opportunity to explore meaningful topics such as trust, compassion, good and evil, or mindful living. Each group has a facilitator but group members share responsibility by participating fully to deepen their connections to one another, to UUS:E, and to the denomination as a whole.

UUS:E has participated in small group ministry for about twenty years. There are currently groups that meet in the afternoon and evening. There are some spaces available in existing groups. Additional groups could be formed if there is an interest and we can provide training for new facilitators. At this time groups are meeting virtually using Zoom.

For more information contact: Louisa Graver, lgraver163@gmail.com.



Virtual Music Salon

There will be a virtual Music Salon Unplugged on Friday August 28 at 6:30 PM! It will be virtual, so recordings of musicians will be presented, but the musician will be there "in-person." Musicians of all levels are invited to perform. We will be on Zoom, enjoying each other's music and having fun. Bring your favorite beverage and relax! As always, listeners will be welcome. If you would like to participate as a musician or listener, or if you simply want more information, contact Peggy Webbe at peggywebbe@gmail.com or 860-871-8035. Or contact MaryBopp@verizon.net. A few days before the event, we will send Zoom sign-in information to those who have contacted us.

Mabon Ritual

Join the UUS:E Pagan Study Group
Sunday September 20, 6:00 via Zoom
All are Welcome!



Please join the UUS:E Pagan Study Group as we celebrate Mabon, the autumn equinox. We will celebrate the 2nd food harvest and a time of balance, via Zoom. Peggy Gagne will host by casting a circle at her own altar and include in her circle all who wish to join the celebration as the Wheel of the Year turns. We will have a little history, along with a look at how we might strive for a little more balance in our lives.

Please plan on having a small snack and drink of some kind on hand so we can all share in cakes and ale. Also, plan on having on hand a piece of paper and a pen or pencil in order to participate in the ritual.

The Minister's Column: Hallelujah!

Dear Ones:

And so our 2020 – 2021 congregational year begins. Welcome home! I really mean that. Even though I can't welcome you back to our beloved UUS:E meeting house on Elm Hill at the Manchester-Vernon line, east of the Connecticut River; even though I can't welcome you back to that physical space where the ashes of our deceased friends and loved ones are interred, where hawks fly, where deer forage, where an ancient spring hides in the woods; even though I can't welcome you back to our beautiful, green, accessible building, I still say "welcome home." It's always been true that the congregation is not the building. The congregation is those of us who gather for worship in whatever form it takes, education in whatever form it takes, performances in whatever form they take, community time in whatever form it takes. I wish we could gather in person, face to face. But as you know, prudence, safety, an abundance of caution, and the guidance of our principles counsel otherwise.

While I wish I could say "welcome home" in person, there's a part of me that is relieved I cannot do so. As I write these words, so many of us are bracing for a return to in-person school. So many of us, whether parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, or friends have had to contend with the excruciating process of deciding if in-person schooling is the right path for our children. Some of us are teachers or school administrators who've had to prepare for in-person school knowing there is no guarantee of safety, knowing there is risk even under the best circumstances. So many of us are waking up with knots in our stomachs, wondering how back-to-school is going to play out, wondering what detail we may have forgotten to consider. I'm mindful of those words in our hymnal from the poet Wendell Berry: "When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound of what my life and my children's lives may be...." I've had my share of these moments in the lead-up to sending Mason off to college, and now getting ready to send Stephany off to teach and Max off to 9th grade. "When despair for the world grows in me...."

I am relieved that we aren't trying to make in-person church happen in the middle of a pandemic. I am relieved I don't have to convince any of you that it's the right thing to come back to in-person programming at UUS:E. Churches are proving to be frequent sources of outbreaks across the country. In my view—and certainly in the view of our leaders at the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston—we have no business returning to in-person services, especially not right now. I am relieved that at least one important touchstone in our lives doesn't have to wrestle at all with the decision to re-open. We remain virtual!

With that, let me write the words again: Welcome Home! Welcome to the 2020 – 2021 congregational year at UUS:E. To be sure, it will be different. My prayer is that it will be spiritually nourishing for all of you—a source of comfort, sanity, peace, love and, within the bounds of safety, engagement. May it be a good year.

With love,

—Rev. Josh



Enter, rejoice, and come in!

A Religious Education message from Gina

Dear Friends,

When UUS:E abruptly went into quarantine mode last March, many of us imagined that our time apart would be short-lived. I know that's what I thought! Who knew that nearly six months later we would still be coping with a coronavirus crisis requiring vigilant social distancing and mask wearing protocols? Who imagined that in September schools and universities would not be welcoming students and teachers back to classes as usual, and that much schooling would happen through distance learning? Who dreamed that UUS:E's worship services and Religious Education program would continue to take place only virtually? None of this is what I anticipated. And yet, here we are.

Here we are, beloved community, as strong as ever. Dare I say, **stronger** than ever. We've had to be creative in figuring out how to be "together" without a brick and mortar structure to envelope us. We've had to learn to use virtual platforms like Zoom and familiarize ourselves with forms of technology we never even knew existed prior to the pandemic. (Or maybe that's just me?) We've had to figure out ways to support one another from a distance, and we've done so beautifully! We've replaced in person hugs with handwritten notes sent in the mail, pretty painted stones left anonymously on doorsteps, and texts or phone calls simply to say, "Hello, I'm thinking of you." Those who are musicians have recorded some beautiful musical pieces to enhance our virtual worship services. Those who can sew have generously made cloth masks for the community at large, as well as for members of the UUS:E community who can't so much as sew a button. (Again, maybe that's just me?) We've worked hard, with diligence, determination, and love to support one another through this challenging time of instability and losses of all types, and I believe this has made our community stronger than we've ever been.

When will we be able to gather together again at UUS:E to worship, sing, learn, play, read, meditate, light a chalice, drink coffee, make music, and share hugs? At this point, we just don't know. But it's fair to say it won't be anytime soon. While this is

disappointing, I urge you not to despair, but to persist. Let's persist in creating, supporting, and nurturing beloved community in new ways. Let's redefine church as a community of people who share a vision, as opposed to a physical building where they meet. Let's rethink Religious Education as something that happens every day, at home, around the dinner table, at bed time, explored, learned, and practiced through the stories we tell, the decisions we make, and the way we treat one another, as opposed to something that takes place solely on Sunday mornings from 11:00 – 12:15 on the Garden Level. Let's continue to work for social and environmental justice, to care for the vulnerable, to cultivate our gardens, share our harvests, rally for fair and equitable treatment for People of Color and our LGBTQ siblings—even if it means we have to find new and innovative ways to do so. Join a letter writing campaign encouraging people to vote, support a political candidate by phone banking or text banking, organize a drive by demonstration, or perhaps even don a face mask and attend a socially distanced outdoor protest—but only if you feel safe doing so, of course.

The point is, we were Unitarian Universalists pre-pandemic, and we will be Unitarian Universalists post-pandemic, but in order to do that we must remain Unitarian Universalists **in the midst of this pandemic**. We were Unitarian Universalists together, and we can and must be Unitarian Universalists apart.

I'm up for the challenge! I hope you'll join me.

With love,
Gina



The Policy Board Column

A Message from Rob Stolzman

It is autumn and the Policy Board is looking forward to a new church year at UUS:E. We realize that it will be challenging and quite unlike anything we've had before but we've seen and heard the love that we have for our community and we are hopeful that we will continue to come together to support one another in these trying times. Our entire staff has been hard at work, planning and preparing for how to navigate the next year. Our committees have been striving to do the same. And we are confident that together we will rise to meet the challenges posed by COVID-19 and continue to make a positive difference in our world.

If you are looking for a way to help, please consider jumping in as we figure out how to conduct an online holiday fair and winter auction for the upcoming year. We have dedicated volunteers who have already started the planning process for these events but they need help. If you have any knowledge or experience with online auction or sales platforms, or advertising on social media, please let me or Reverend Josh know and we can get you in touch. These are our big annual fundraising events and we need to adapt and evolve to the current moment to make them successful. Any and all help is appreciated!

We also had a very successful year last year with our relationship with Trinity solar. Trinity has informed us of their current commitment to give UUS:E \$1500 for every referral that leads to the installation of a solar system. They also have a fiscal incentive package for the owner of a home that installs solar with them as well. So if you are considering solar for your home, please reach out to David Luchetti to get information on Trinity's program. Again, Reverend Josh or I can help you get in touch with David.

Thank you for all you do for UUS:E. I've had to remind myself regularly over the last six months not to get too isolated and to reach out and connect. Please keep your connection to UUS:E strong! We are here for you and for each other.

With love,

Rob

Green Sanctuary News

As I write this the Democratic Convention is happening, all of us are worrying about voting issues, how to get through the next few months, how to ensure everyone gets to vote in November, how to turn our country around, including issues of climate, social and environmental justice. Many are worrying about schools and how or whether to send kids back, how to protect parents and grandparents, teachers and so many others from the virus.

So take a deep breath, give thanks for cooler weather and some recent rain, for friends and family and loved ones near and far, and for each day that we still have to try to make a difference in small and large ways. Below is a Green Tip from Paul Cocuzzo about a cool composter he recently made.

Green Tip



This is a tip from Paul. Thinking of making your own compost bin? One way to do it is to use some type of barrel or drum such that you can roll it instead of having to reach in with a garden fork to turn the compost. The downside is you do not

have the option of allowing the bottom to be more decomposed and pull compost from there for your garden, because there is only an opening at the top. The upside is it is so easy to stir.

I thought I was going to use a 30-gallon trash can, but I found for about the same price I could get this 30-gallon barrel made to transport hazardous waste containers. It's just like an unusually hefty trash can, but with a screw top! I bought it, drilled holes in the bottom and sides, and I had a compost bin.

Of course, if you can find a barrel of some kind that is not being used, instead of buying one, that is even better for the environment and your budget.

Here is a link to see some barrels, including the one I used. If you don't like Amazon, there are lots of other places to get barrels:

<https://www.amazon.com/s?k=hazardous+waste+barrel>

Books, Classes, and Discussions

Adult Religious Education



Book Lovers

The Book Lovers meets second Tuesdays at 3:30 on Zoom. Ask Martha Larson

(marlar@wordshard.com) for the Zoom sign in.

- September 8: **Oil and Marble: A Novel of Leonardo and Michelangelo** by Stephanie Storey

Book Discussion: An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States

by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

Mondays, September 14 and 28 at 7 PM

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz' 2014 Beacon Press title, **An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States**, was selected as the 2019 – 2020 Unitarian Universalist Association "Common Read." As such, the UUS:E Social Justice / Anti-Oppression Committee is hosting a multi-session book discussion. Two discussion sessions have been scheduled for Monday evenings, September 14th and 28th at 7:00 PM using Zoom. For login information, watch the regular UUS:E eblasts, or contact the UUS:E office at 860-646-5151.

In **An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States**, Dunbar-Ortiz offers a history of the United States from the perspective of Indigenous peoples and reveals how Native Americans, for centuries, actively resisted expansion of the US empire. Spanning more than four hundred years, this classic bottom-up peoples' history radically reframes US history and explodes the silences that have haunted our national narrative.

Purchase **An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States** through the UUA's bookstore, InSpirit at <https://www.uuabookstore.org/An-Indigenous-Peoples-History-of-the-United-States-P17699.aspx>. If you require financial assistance in making this purchase, please contact Rev. Josh at minister@uuse.org.

Membership News

Intro to UU

Would you like to know more about Unitarian Universalism and Unitarian Universalist Society: East?

The Rev. Josh leads a seminar where you will learn more about the UU faith tradition, including a brief history and background of our theology and UUS:E. It provides a great opportunity to meet others who are interested in finding out more about Unitarian Universalism, share our stories about what brings us together and to find out how to get involved in the life of our society.

Our next Zoom virtual **Intro to UU** class will be held on Sunday, September 20 from 1 to 3 PM.

To register for this class, please contact Annie Gentile at 860-646-5151 or uuseoffice@uuse.org.

There's no cost or obligation. Please RSVP by Thursday noon, September 17, 2020.

If you have any questions about UUS:E, please contact our Membership Co-Chairs, Sylvia Ounpuu or Carolyn Gimbrone at membership@uuse.org or Rev. Josh Pawelek at 860-652-8961, or minister@uuse.org.

UU the Vote:

Why?

Many of you are familiar with UU the Vote and UUS:E's project of writing letters to under-represented voters in swing states, encouraging them to vote. (If you aren't, it's explained below "What's New.")

What's New

As of mid-August, we've already prepared almost 2500 letters. Over twenty-five people at UUS:E have signed up to write letters. Please join us! Why? I've come up with three reasons. What are yours?

1. Most important, this election faces numerous threats. The President of the United States is doing his best to sow distrust in it. In some places officials deliberately make it hard for people to vote, particularly people of color. The pandemic complicates things, and most recently voting by mail is being targeted by the administration.
2. Greater voter turnout sends an unmistakable message that voters are engaged. It signals to our leaders, other citizens, and the world at large that American voters are not to be taken for granted and that we value our democracy.
3. There are many important down-ballot contests in addition to the presidential election.

UUS:E Participates in UU the Vote

UU the Vote is the UUA's nonpartisan faith initiative to engage people, educate communities, and mobilize voters to protect our fundamental Unitarian Universalist values in the upcoming decisive election. UUA is supporting congregations working for electoral justice at the local, state and national levels with suggestions about ways to act alone or with partner organizations. For more information, check out the spring edition of UU World and go to uuthevote.org.

UUS:E is working with Vote Forward (votefwd.org), a nonpartisan organization that is endorsed by UU the Vote as a partner. We're writing letters now to send in late October to people on lists provided by Vote Forward of registered voters who often skip elections. The lists are nonpartisan and include people of all parties and leanings in swing states. Each letter contains standard verbiage encouraging the recipient to vote. The letter begins with, "I'm writing to you today to urge you to vote and to share my story with you. I vote in every election

because..." followed by enough space for three or four sentences. Reasons can include issues such as health care or a sense of obligation to vote. However, one shouldn't mention any candidates or parties by name. The goal is to increase voter turnout, nurture democracy, and elect leaders who will represent the interests of all segments of society. The letters will be mailed close to the election when they will be most effective.

Before COVID-19 turned the world upside down, our plans focused on letter writing parties at church. Now our strategy has changed to one where individuals write letters at home. Volunteers will be instructed on how to access lists of voters on the Vote Forward website (votefwd.org) and complete the letters. For more information on how to be part of UUS:E's project to UU the Vote, contact Maude McGovern (memcgov@aol.com).

Stop & Shop Cards

UUS:E is still selling Stop & Shop gift cards in increments of \$250, \$100 and \$50.

If you do your weekly grocery shopping or even just occasional shopping at Stop & Shop, buying these cards is a GREAT way to support the church without it costing you a cent. Cards are purchased at face value, and, in return, Stop & Shop gives the church 5 percent of the sales. If you would like to purchase cards, please contact Annie in the office to arrange to drop off payment and pick them up.

Recycling

UUS:E continues to collect and recycle used inkjet cartridges through Planet Green Recycle. Bringing your spent cartridges to UUS:E helps twofold, by both raising cash for the church and keeping them out of the landfill. It's a win-win! If you would like to drop off any of your used cartridges, please contact Annie in the office to make arrangements

UUS:E GENERAL INFORMATION

UUS:E Office Schedule: Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Meetinghouse Office: 860-646-5151

Office Administrator: Annie Gentile email: uuseoffice@uuse.org

Minister: Rev. Joshua Pawelek 860-652-8961, minister@uuse.org

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 10 AM to 7 PM and Thursday 10 AM to 4 PM

President: Rob Stolzman, 907-268-1871, robandtammylee@yahoo.com

Director of Religious Education:

Gina Campellone, 860-875-8468, redirector@uuse.org

Newsletter Editor: Paul Cocuzzo, 978-270-2056, newsletter@uuse.org

Website Coordinator: Carol Marion 860-643-8765, uuse.web@uuse.org

World Wide Web address: <http://uuse.org>

Newsletter Deadline:
The 20th of Each Month

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