



# Zoom

## May 4 ~ May Day - Jean Metevier, Guest Speaker

**May 11 ~ Mother's Day: Back to the Future?** The holiday began as an anti-war protest. Rev. Barnaby reflects on whether our appreciation and reverence for motherhood would deepen if we returned to its roots.

## May 18 ~ Mary Ready, Guest Speaker

**May 25 ~ Memorial Day As A Humanist Easter:** Rev. Barnaby reflects on the stories we tell to justify, honor, and cope with our losses when our conflicts spin out of control.

***Our May Donee is: NVRH***

NVRH has embarked upon the largest renovation and expansion to its clinical space since its original construction in 1972. This exciting project – totaling a community investment of more than \$28 million – will add more than 8,300 square feet to the West Wing of the hospital, creating a greatly expanded Emergency Department to include a Mental Health Support Area, and improved spaces for Laboratory and Pharmacy.

We will share our May collections with NVRH in consideration of the “Village of Mothers”, Pregnancy and Postpartum support group.



## ***Chalice Letter from Rev. Barnaby - May 2025***

Minister's Letter for May, 2025, Chalice in the Mountains

Dear Congregants and Friends,

There is just this month and the June Chalice letter for me to send to you as part of capping off my two-year interim ministry with UUCStJ. That moved me to look back to my first two letters to you in 2023. The one I sent you at the end of my first month in your pulpit began with this prayer by Rev. Lisa Friedman:

“Let us be glad that we’re not given just one wish in our lives  
but many.

Let us be grateful not for wishful thinking,  
but for the discipline of the thoughtful wishing  
that can lead to change.”

I then shared some wishes I took to be thoughtful that I had for our time together and made it very clear I wanted to hear from you about your wishes.

The last sentence of the prayer really jumps out at me now – we have been plunged into a moment in our nation’s history where it’s clear that change itself isn’t the goal. We know that thoughtful wishing can still lead to destructive change because life is more complicated than we can fully comprehend. And it’s even clearer that thoughtless or hateful wishing invites disastrous change.

Everything leads to change, some of which there’s no turning back from. But Spring affirms for us that the opportunities and possibilities generated by change are more abundant and, often, more pleasantly surprising, than we foresee. For two years, a theme of my faith has been that UU’ism is moving forward in positive ways. Our gait can be halting. We can fall and we can end up at dead ends. But we still seek a Way that hitches our perspective to Martin Luther King Jr’s vision of building an inclusive, just, compassionate and beautiful Beloved Community

I’ve learned a lot from you about what our world and actions look like when we put loving mindfulness and actions at the center of our lives. And about how hard that is to sustain! Nevertheless, there are many things

always unfolding around us – in part because of what we have been doing together – that embolden me to be hopeful about your future without me.

Because it is Spring, the Universe itself testifies to this. I invite you to hold close this image from Hafiz, a 14th century Persian poet who often shared his reasons for joy and gratitude.

**“Even**

**After all this time,**

**The sun never says to the earth,**

**“You owe Me.”**

**Look at what happens**

**With a love like that,**

**It lights the whole sky.”**

Blessed be, Rev. Barnaby

***A note from your Moderator:*** The 2025 Pledge Drive is still in progress. If you can offer a pledge for the next fiscal year and have not yet done so, please let us know soon! Thank you, and thank you for everyone who has already submitted a pledge.

**Free Covid test kits are in!** You may pick one or more up at the meeting house for personal use. If you need a test quickly because you aren't feeling well, the [Caring Team](#) will get one or more delivered to you.

***An invitation to serve on the nominating committee*** A nominating committee is being set up for the election of officers at our annual meeting. Any members interested in participating in this process should contact Jay Kramer or any other board member.

***Want to Help Select our Donees?*** Our Donations team needs up to three more participants in the process of recommending groups we should support, which month is the best to spotlight them, and even ways we can get to know them better through worship or social action activities as we

share the donation. Get in touch with Rev. B right away if you think this small group activity could be up your alley.

## ***Musings of an ex-Moderator, May, 2025***

In his inspiring sermons and in weekly messages to us, the Rev. Mr. Barnaby Feder frequently stresses the centrality of Love. This theme is also embraced by the UUA, and our own congregation asserts that “Love is the doctrine of this church,” even though we proudly profess to be non-doctrinal, unlike our Christian brethren and sisters. Naturally, being an un-enlightened man, I’m a bit obtuse in the finer points of Love, even after joyfully cooperating decades ago in producing eight children.

My friends know that in 1953 I picked up an MA from Rutgers, which at the time had sunk from Ivy League status to become the State University of New Jersey. My Profs. were superb teachers. A later member of the faculty, Helen Fisher, Ph.D, produced at least five major publications on love; I, a bibliographer, recommend her *Anatomy of Love*.

Now, permit me to present my amateurish Natur-Anschauung—and this derives from my studies at the New England Wildflower Society. I think that everything in Nature that is not a rock, struggles to preserve and propagate its species. Undoubtedly our dear friend Henry, in his sauntering to Fitchburg observed evidence of this universal law of Nature. Over eons of time plants and animal life evolved and perfected ways to propagate their species. Human beings, blessed with a brain, agree, but also differ because deliberate human contraception limits propagation. We are unique in the animal kingdom, with the possible exception of female ducks.

Be aware when you stroll in the woods, or in a field, all around you rampant reproduction is happening. Even while dining, consider the ear of corn you munch: during the summer, as the corn plant is maturing, male cells, carried on summer zephyrs land on the tips of a tassel and travel the long length of that silken thread down to the egg, which is fertilized and grows into a juicy kernel, along with hundreds of its sisters lined up in regular rows on the cob. Enjoyable? The same process, with refinements perfected through the alembic of time, is the basis of the all-embracing love that we endorse in our services. Hallelujah!

D. Partington

## ***The Caring Network***

Dear friends, The Caring Network offers support to anyone in our loving community who might need a listening ear, a prayer, a helping hand, a bit of financial assistance, or simply a kind thought. We continue to hold each of you in our hearts. If you or anyone you know needs assistance, please feel free to contact any one of us. Any information shared remains confidential.

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