



Summer Services

10:30 in person and on zoom

Theme - What's Love Got To Do With It?

At this year's General Assembly a new set of UU values was passed by a vote of about 80%. The last section (C-2.5) emphasizes that we as individuals and as a congregation do not have a creed and are free to relate with these new values as we will. Let us discuss the new values this summer in a format similar to what we did last summer both on Zoom and in person. Love is at the center of all the new values and will be underlying each of our discussions which will be led by Rev. Brendan Hadash.

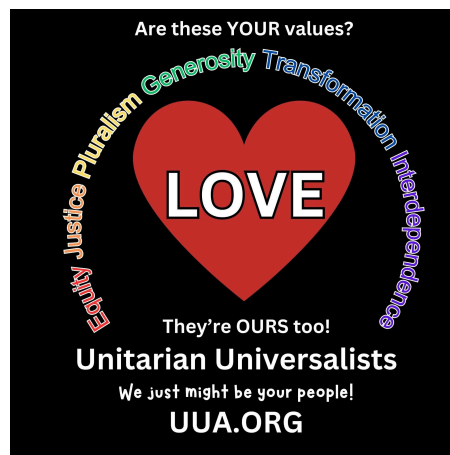
August 4 Love and Pluralism

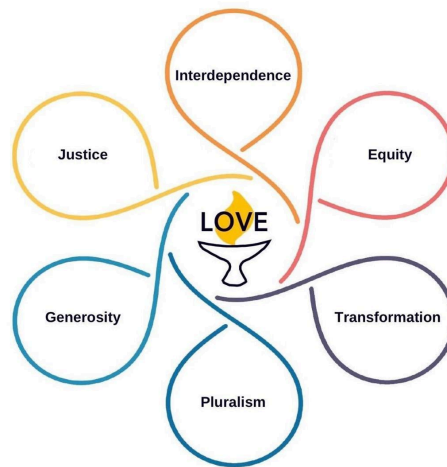
August 11 Love and Interdependence

August 18 Love and Generosity

August 25 Possible outside interfaith Service with Rev. Jay Sprout and Rev. Ann Hockridge at United Community Church

Sept. 1 Rev. Barnaby - Where Does That Leave the 7 principles?





Minister's Letter for August 2024

The ergonomics of my computer setup here in Middlebury Aren't on the same page as my illness. That makes it hard to spend significant time at the computer typing, so I am doing more and more work in dictation mode. It leads to some very interesting mistakes, which I normally edit out before sending my messages off. But for the purposes of this letter, I've been thinking about the first creation story in the Bible and how God speaks what is important into existence. I wonder if there is leeway for various kinds of small mistakes. Maybe That's what happened and why at the end of every day of creation God looks over what has been done and says that it is good. or in the case of the last day of creation when humans are created God says it is very good. When creation rests on language We know the first draft will contain all kinds of little errors, and perhaps even some big ones. but That doesn't mean it isn't good.

and so, by speaking this letter into existence, I am relearning the essential lessons of listening with open minds and Open Hearts, and of the need for forgiveness, which A reading in our hymnal calls the final form of love.

I'm going to be sending you this letter in the form that at first appears through my dictation. I think it will be close enough To Standard English for you to get the gist. maybe it will remind all of us of all of the situations where we don't actually need to seek perfection to create things that matter.

Less than perfection is on my mind a lot these days. as I write this with all the health uncertainty Surrounding me this summer,, I'm worried that my ability to be

with you in St Johnsbury is going to be severely compromised, at least for a while. and so much of ministry as I understand it is related to presents.. that's p r e s e n c e. h

Here again the Bible is a help. The whole story from humans being expelled from Eden on can be seen as one long message that whatever is divine in existence is more interested in being present to humans and all life through every imaginable condition than the Perfection of Eden. our Universalist forbearers put that at the very center of their religion: God is going to make sure that all humans are in God's presence throughout eternity by Saving everyone From Damnation.

Already though, my illness is teaching me that each development opens at least as many paths as it closes. it's teaching me to put my faith in our ability to make a way together where sometimes it looks difficult. for instance, do you you Ministry for life, that's letter you letter u Ministry for life is organizing a [Revival](#) for congregations all across the nation for the end of September. if I was confident I was going to be with you on September weekends, I would be working hard this month to encourage our congregation to be among the sponsors and to participate. but I worry that that's a lot to push on you without me being able to be there leading many of the activities.

but then I step back and I realize that the work Of deepening our connection to the need to address climate change Has to be fundamental to Who We Are this year. and if we take all of the materials the climate Revival folks are putting out there for us as prompts rather than specific programs we have to follow, we will be swimming an opportunities to learn and to act together for our benefit and for the wider community.

and so, as I write to you I'm thinking of him number 108 - that's h y m n - quote my life flows on in Endless song End quote, with its beautiful line that are - that's our - singing hails a new creation If we keep the spirit of song with us, and put love at the center, whatever we speak and do into creation together, will be something worthy of the preciousness of Our Lives.

Blessed Be, Rev Barnaby

Our Summer Donee is HeadCount. (We are using the same donee for both July and August.)

HeadCount is a national nonprofit organization that works with popular musicians to increase interest in democracy and associated policies such as free and fair elections. It is best known for registering voters at music events and has assisted in signing up over 1 million voters since 2004. Headcount was founded in 2004 by Andy Bernstein and Marc Brownstein with a focus on civic engagement, voter registration, and voter turnout utilizing the love of music. Some of HeadCount's Activity includes the release of public service announcements starring Jay-Z and Dave Mathew's, as well as a compilation album featuring Pearl Jam, Wilco and Phish.

For the 2020 election, the organization registered roughly 400,000 voters. Since its launch 20 years ago, HeadCount Has been largely volunteer-driven. The volunteer teams set up tables at concerts at which they register voters and disperse information related to political issues and upcoming elections. Through its high volume of volunteerism, HeadCount keeps its operating costs low while reaching a very large number of people. In any given year, The organization sets up these tables at 500 to 1,500 concerts or more. www.headcount.org

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.

The Caring Network

The rains, flooding, and heat this summer have been devastating for many of our Vermont and New Hampshire communities. Some of our members and friends have been particularly hard hit. If you or anyone you know need assistance, please reach out to the Caring Network. We are available to offer support to anyone in our loving community who might need a helping hand, a bit of financial assistance, a listening ear, a prayer, or simply a kind thought.

Please feel free to contact any one of us. Rest assured that any information shared with the Caring Network will remain confidential.

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Musings of an ex-Moderator, August 2024

Long have I felt that the month of August is a rag-tag month, coming along after joyous June and jaunty July and before the invigorating coolth of serene September. In my early youth I watched my dad wielding his scythe in the field, the thought of which brought the Bard to mind:

You sunburnt sicklemen, of August weary,
Come hither from the furrow and be merry:
Make holiday; your rye-straw hats put on
And these fresh nymphs encounter every one
In country footing.

Ah, fresh nymphs! Must be love he's talking about, and, struggling with the definition of love, another 17th century great, Sir John Suckling, opined:

“
But love is such a mystery
I cannot find it out;
For when I think I'm best resolved,
I then am most in doubt.”

That is I today. But although the all-encompassing love deliriously dictated by the UUA eludes critical me, my care, concern, and compassion for this beloved community in St. J. is strong and enduring.

D. Partington