



# The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

[www.swuu.org](http://www.swuu.org)

May 1, 2019

## Sunday Services

10:30 AM

6320 Royalton Road, North Royalton



**May 5**

*Becoming*

This is our Coming of Age Service when we honor those youth from this congregation who are completing a year of discovery and discernment leading to their personal Credo Statements. Come for this celebration of them and their becoming. Featuring: Bella Porter, Olivia Miller, and Jonathan Morgenstein

-Led by Rev. Kristen Rohm, and Jenni Papp, DRE

Focus Collection: Urban Hope

**May 12**

*Hearts Wide Open*

Come and celebrate the journey together, honoring our shared ministry these five years. We will make manifest the Mystery that the more we love, the more our hearts are broken open, the better able we are to love again. We will share fond memories, some Seussical silliness and glance toward the future. Please bring one of your favorite memories written or drawn on a piece of paper.

-Led by Rev. Kristen Rohm

Worship Associate: Mike Gold

**May 19**

*The Persistence of Flowers*

We come in a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes, a varied bouquet of beautiful UU's. Come join in our annual Flower Communion service, celebrating the real and metaphoric inspiration of nature's garden. If you are able, bring a flower to contribute, and plan to take one home as a symbol of our interconnectedness.

-Led by Ellen Hansen-Ellis

Worship Associate: Dan Paxson

**May 26**

*Transition, Change, and Grief*

Memorial Day marks a seasonal transition; this church is going through a leadership transition with a beloved minister leaving. Each of us faces changes large and small. Join us for a service encouraging healthy reflection and grieving during life's many transitions.

-Led by Andrew Franz, Ministerial Intern, UU Fellowship of Wayne County

Worship Associate: Deb Celinski

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## Message from your Minister

### **Mystery**

*“The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious—  
the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science.  
”*

- Albert Einstein

Friends, this is my last message to you. One of my wise mentors told me that he saw the newsletter as a chance to send a monthly love letter. I have kept that in mind as I maneuvered to make time to write ‘one more thing’ each month. This is my chance to say to all of you that you are loved, you are enough, you matter. You are so very precious and important to me. I thank you for your trust and for the ways you have invited me into your lives and your hearts. It has been an honor to serve and to love you.

Our theme this month is Mystery and isn’t that a wonderful word and idea. For me it is one of the best descriptors for the Holy, for All That Is. I find it enticing and engaging, it draws me closer, it makes me curious. And so I ask what does the Mystery mean to you? What engages you and draws you closer?

I invite you to be curious about what you want to carry forward from our time together. What do you want to continue of what we created together during our shared ministry that has become part of who and what SWUU as a community is about. Maybe it’s lighting the chalice to begin all our meetings to remind ourselves we gather to do sacred work. Or Greater Cleveland Congregations and anti-racism work. Maybe it’s ritual and participatory worship. Or youth worship associates and youth led worship. Maybe it’s redefining words like god, prayer and salvation for ourselves and using these words in our shared life based on what they mean to us now rather than what they might have meant in different times and places. Or Covenant Groups. Maybe its....something else that is important to you. Be intentional about what you want to hold on to and continue into your shared future.

The most important thing I want to leave with you is the certainty that you are beloved, that in your imperfect and messy humanness you are fabulous and beautiful. Find your center and live from that place, for what you are here to do and what you have to offer this aching world is necessary and needed. Continue your spiritual practices so that you grow in kindness, compassion and service. Be good to one another and welcome the stranger. Laugh and cry, sing and dance, hug and celebrate!

Know that you are loved,  
Rev. Kristen

# The Forum

## **Focus Collection Review and May Focus Collection**

by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

At our last Social Justice Meeting we realized it was a time for review on our Focus Collection Process. Each month we choose a non-profit, local organization that needs financial support. Over the years, we have focused on organizations that support our UU values. We tend to repeat collections for the same group over the years. It is our goal to choose agencies that benefit social, sexual, and environmental causes, non-violence, and our neighbors in need. We introduce the chosen group the first Sunday of the month, and collect the money all month. It is important to know that all checks need to be designated "FOCUS COLLECTION." Any cash collected on the first Sunday of the month will go for the Focus Collection without being marked. Cash donated the remaining Sundays go to our general fund. Let me know if you have any questions.

Our May Focus Collection will benefit Urban Hope which is the Social Justice Committee's monthly center of interest. As you know, we visit the 2nd Sunday of most months to take substantial healthy snacks. We also take meals twice a year on the 4th Sunday of the month in October and April. We appreciate your generosity with all of the food donations and the holiday clothing drive. Just like any other social agency, Urban Hope needs financial support as well. We pay for a Peace Keeper and monthly rent for the facility. Urban Hope also provides a Community Garden for the 4th graders at Kentucky School. The children meet once or twice a week to tend the garden and participate in crafts. Money is needed for supplies for this important project. We will NOT be collecting any food for the month of May, and so we will appreciate a financial contribution. Thank you!

## **Urban Hope Dinner — April 28**

by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Our Urban Hope dinner was a complete success. Nancy, Denny, Chris, Debby, Jan & Scott served. We had a beautiful selection of food, and everyone was grateful and pleased. One of the guests had music in the background, and it set a positive and easy tone. The day was beautiful, and that certainly helps with everyone's mood. Last minute donations were a bonus. Nancy and Denny's contributions were over the top and delicious. Leslie came through with a last minute casserole that was a hit. Chris Wolf prepares a fruit platter that rivals a wedding buffet. Also thanks for the relish tray, salad, extra fruit and desserts. We hope others would like to join us sometime. We never leave without agreeing that it was a wonderful way to spend an afternoon. We will NOT be serving in May, although Jan, Scott & Debby will serve at the Memorial Day Cookout. We will be asking for donations again in June. Please read the Focus Collection article which goes into more detail. Thank you.

## **Cooks' Night Out for May**

by Sharon Eckert

We took a few months off due to so many church functions, but we are getting back to it now that the weather is getting better! I picked **Amici's** Italian Restaurant and Lounge at W130 & Roylton Rd. The dining room is somewhat small. We will meet there on Thursday, May 30 at 6:30pm. The food is basic Italian, nothing real fancy, and dinners start at \$10 with full bar service. Please RSVP by Tuesday, May 28<sup>th</sup> so I can make a reservation. Hope to see you there!

# The Forum

## Board Happenings

by Dan Paxson, SWUU Board President

With Rev. Kristen leaving our congregation, the board was asked to participate in an exit interview with our CER Congregational Life Consultant, Rev. Renee Ruchotzke. This took place on April 23, and when it was over I felt really good about these past 5 years of ministry with her, and with the amazing congregation that we are. We have accomplished much together, and we are really poised for continued growth in every sense of the word. I think board member Sarajane Willson summed things up beautifully when, in answering the question, “Imagine you were writing a screenplay of congregational life during this ministry. What would be the story?” she said, “It would be a musical, with a happy beginning, lots of uplifting songs, a glorious ending with a standing ovation, followed by a bittersweet epilogue that hinted at a sequel.”

April seemed to place us at the comma between ‘uplifting songs’ and ‘a glorious ending’. We have been spending much of the month tying up loose ends. Our new office administrator, Kristen Cimera quickly learned the ropes of our various systems and has even found some ways to make them work better. Our new music director, Ryan Bergeron came on board at the end of the month, and made it immediately clear that we are in good hands in the music department. Kristen has been working with us to pass on a host of resources that she has used regularly, and which should be part of the board’s library. The worship team has been preparing a summer of meaningful Sunday services. And the finance team has been working hard at completing a successful pledge drive. So far they have received pledges from about 75% of the expected pledgers, and things are looking good. For those that haven’t yet pledged, we ask that you do so both soon and generously, or as our motto for this year says, “until it feels good”.

All in all, this seems like a really healthy way to wrap up one ministry and prepare for the next. As always, I feel grateful to be part of such a giving, resilient, and can-do community. You turn transitions such as this from wrenching to “we’re doing fine” experiences.

★ ★

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**SWUU Earth Alliance Presents**

**Paris to Pittsburg**

★ The SWUU Earth Alliance will be showing the movie, "Paris to Pittsburg," at ★

★ church on Friday, May 3, at 7:30. It is a film from Bloomberg Philanthropies, ★

★ Radical Media and National Geographic, and highlights some incredible stories ★

★ about what people all over the country are doing to demand and develop real ★

★ climate change solutions in their hometowns. Please come. Cookies and discussion ★

★ included. All free. Bring a friend! ★

★ ★

# The Forum



## Would you like to submit something to The Forum?

- ◆ Write as if the reader is new to SWUU
- ◆ Include first and last names, and area codes
- ◆ Include a contact person, phone number, and email if possible
- ◆ Include the city in which the event is located
- ◆ Avoid or explain insider terms and abbreviations
- ◆ Explain Who, What, Where, and When (How and Why are often helpful as well.)
- ◆ Encourage volunteering and participation gently.

Submission guidelines apply to articles and Order of Service announcements. Order of Service announcements may be sent to [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org) by Thursday morning of each week.

Articles are edited minimally, only to ensure that these guidelines are met.

The Forum is published on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month. Submissions should be sent to [forum@swuu.org](mailto:forum@swuu.org) by the dates listed in the calendar of each issue.

The Board of Trustees meets once per month. Check the calendar in each Forum for the specific date. Everyone is welcome to attend. Minutes from the meetings will be available for members upon request to the Board Secretary.

## SWUU on the Web

For general information about SWUU, services, sermons, committees and the most up-to-date calendar of events, visit our website at:

[www.swuu.org](http://www.swuu.org)

## Receive The Forum Electronically!

If you would like to receive The Forum via email, contact

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## Join the SWUUList

If you would like to join a newsgroup focused on issues of importance to SWUU, e-mail [connect@swuu.org](mailto:connect@swuu.org) and request to join the SWUUList.

## Sermons

If you would like to receive sermons via email or by mail, contact [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org)

## Board Minutes

If you would like to receive the Board Minutes via email, contact [office@swuu.org](mailto:office@swuu.org), and put "Board Minutes" in the subject line

## Editorial Team

Dan Paxson  
Susan Paxson

# The Forum

## **Pastoral Care News** by Hallie Davis, Caring Team

We begin a new chapter in our SWUU album as we say goodbye to Rev. Kristen and await the Search Team's recommendation for our next minister. Know that we, as SWUU, are the community that helps one another. We say this weekly in our covenant. The Pastoral Care team can assist but sometimes we need to talk to a minister.

Beginning May 13th our SWUU community will have pastoral care from Andrew Franz. He is finishing his Ministerial Internship in Wooster with the UU Fellowship of Wayne County. He is also finishing Seminary at Meadville Lombard Theological Seminary. He is a father and a musician. He has preached at SWUU twice over the past two years. Welcome Andrew! A Caring team member can assist in contacting Andrew Franz.

## **Adopt a Highway** by Susan Paxson

New people are welcome to come and help out with picking up litter in the area around the I-71 interchange at Pearl Road in Middleburg Heights. We have been doing this for over 10 years, but some of our group members have had to step down. It is good exercise not to mention helping to beautify this grassy area. And it's even fun; you never know what you are going to find! Our first clean-up of the year is going to be Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00. We meet just before 10:00 am in the parking lot nearest Pearl Road for the Islander apartments. (turn off Pearl right beside the Sunoco Gas station across from the car dealer) It is a good way to start your Saturday and you will be finished by around 10 to get on with the other fun plans for your day. Twelve year-olds and older can attend if they have a signed permission form. Make it a family affair! Please contact Susan if you would like to participate. If you are new, you will need to complete a brief safety training at 8:45. Hope you can join us!

## **Ministerial Search Update** by Susan Paxson, chair

Your ministerial search team has been busy this last month, getting our packet ready. By the time you read this, it will be up for interested ministers to view. We have also been busy looking over the survey responses. Thank you so much for your participation! I am sure you know we will keep all of your comments in mind as we continue on to the next step. We have reviewed the ministerial records that have been released to us by the UUA. This means that they have expressed an interest in us!

In the next few weeks, we will be interviewing some of these candidates and try to discern which one will be the best fit for our congregation. We will do our best to choose the right minister for us to hire initially for one or two years. Send us all of your positive energy as we all want a good result!

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## SWUU Summer Camp by Ken Ellis

This year's exciting camp-out will be at Hocking Hills State Park. We have a group camp reserved for two nights. The dates are Friday, July 26 & Saturday, the 27th. It is about 3 hours from North Royalton.

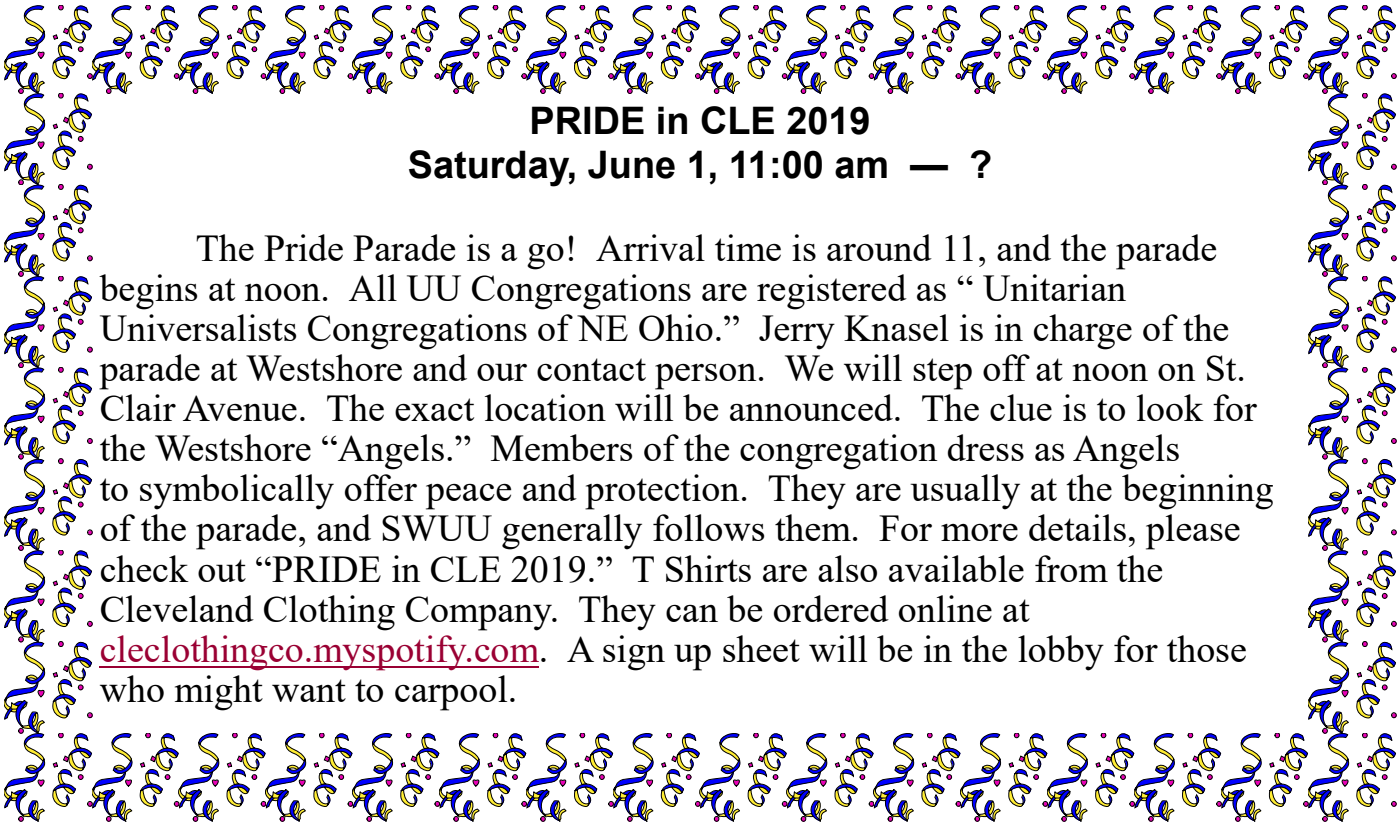
I urge you to look at the website for Hocking Hills State Park. There is more to do there than I can explain in one paragraph. It is a beautiful natural area with deep gorges, high cliffs, and waterfalls. There are many miles of hiking and other activities. Pets are permitted.

The total fee is \$100, divided between campers. So, if we have 20 campers this summer, it will only be \$5/camper. What a deal for so much excitement with great people.

For those who are new to this yearly activity, we have been camping every summer for 30 years. It is a wonderful way to be together with fellow outdoor enthusiasts. It is tent camping. Everyone brings their own gear and food. We cook over a fire pit or camp stoves and Ken & Dan compete for who makes the best morning coffee! There is always pleasant and interesting conversations and laughter.

This is a great way to introduce children to nature. I hope you will join us in the fresh air, under the green canopy, with the night sounds of crickets and katydids, wake up to the songbirds, smell the coffee wafting in the morning air, and enjoy the company of fellow campers in nature.

Contact Ken Ellis for details



### PRIDE in CLE 2019 Saturday, June 1, 11:00 am — ?

The Pride Parade is a go! Arrival time is around 11, and the parade begins at noon. All UU Congregations are registered as “Unitarian Universalists Congregations of NE Ohio.” Jerry Knasel is in charge of the parade at Westshore and our contact person. We will step off at noon on St. Clair Avenue. The exact location will be announced. The clue is to look for the Westshore “Angels.” Members of the congregation dress as Angels to symbolically offer peace and protection. They are usually at the beginning of the parade, and SWUU generally follows them. For more details, please check out “PRIDE in CLE 2019.” T Shirts are also available from the Cleveland Clothing Company. They can be ordered online at [cleclothingco.myspotify.com](http://cleclothingco.myspotify.com). A sign up sheet will be in the lobby for those who might want to carpool.

# The Forum

## Meet Our New Staff

### Our Office Administrator, Kristen Cimera

Kristen has an MBA and over 25 years of experience in non-profit accounting and administration. In her long career Kristen has worked in health care, academic research, nature conservancy and youth programming learning something from each engagement. Kristen lives in Ravenna with her husband, two teenaged sons and a house full of pets. She enjoys volunteering for local organizations, spending time outdoors and attending live concerts.



### Our Music Director, Ryan Bergeron

Ryan Bergeron is a former professional actor and singer in musical theatre and opera, and now serves on the faculty of the University of Mount Union, where he teaches Voice and Musical Theatre. Ryan holds a Master of Music degree and an Advanced Certificate in Vocal Pedagogy from New York University, where he also served on the voice faculty. He is also a graduate of the Baldwin-Wallace Conservatory of Music.

Ryan lives in Broadview Heights with his partner, Tim; and a large collection of semi-sentient stuffed animals. He is on the board of Trustees of the Broadview Spotlights Theater, where he is heavily involved in both the administrative and artistic operations of the theater. He also makes occasional return trips to the professional stage, as both a performer and a musical director; most recently serving as musical director for the Akron Symphony's "West Side Story" in concert.







# May 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">           All events are handicap accessible unless indicated by a **         </div>						
Week day meetings are held at the church unless otherwise noted						
5 <i>Becoming</i> -Rev. Kristen Rohm & Jenni Papp	6 1:30 PM Meditation	7 VOTE !!!!	8 10:30 AM SWUU Walk at Paw Paw Picnic Area 1:00-3:00 PM Wednesday Book Group @ Mathews 7:30 PM Covenant Group	9 4:00 PM Social Justice 7:00 PM Earth Alliance 7:00 PM Choir Open House	10 7:00 PM SWUU Puzzle and Game Night	11 3:30 PM Women's History
12 <i>Hearts Wide Open</i> -Rev. Kristen Rohm	13 1:30 PM Meditation	14 7:00 PM Board Meeting	15 1:00—3:00 PM Wednesday Book Group @ Mathews	16 1:30 PM Covenant Group	17 2:00 PM Women's Group	18 9:00 AM- Adopt a Highway Clean-up
19 <i>The Persistence of Flowers</i> -Ellen Hansen-Ellis 3:30 PM SWUU Walk at Brecks-ville Reservation	20 1:30 Medi- tation	21 10:00 AM Membership	22 1:00—3:00 PM Wednesday Book Group @ Mathews	23 1:30 PM Movie and Discussion at Hallie and Bob's	24 FORUM DEAD-LINE 7:00 PM Men's Group	25 7:00 PM Youth Group Meeting
26 <i>Transition, Change, and Grief</i> -Andrew Franz— ministerial intern 12 PM Aging Well	27 1:30 Medi- tation	28	29 1:00—3:00 PM Wednesday Book Group @ Mathews	30 6:30 PM Cooks Night Out at Amici's	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">           All calendar adds/changes/ deletes should be sent to office@swuu.org         </div>	

# The Forum

## Sharing and Caring

*\* send your joys and sorrows to [forum@swuu.org](mailto:forum@swuu.org) for inclusion in the next issue*

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We are happy to mail The Forum to anyone who would like to receive it.