



The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

www.swuu.org

September 1, 2019

Sunday Services

10:30 AM

6320 Royalton Road, North Royalton



September 1

Who Are We?

The theme for the month is Covenant. Today, as we reflect on Labor Day, we remember and honor Unitarian and Universalist participation in the Labor movement in the United States. Join us as we reflect on what it means to be liberal in an illiberal age, and explore the pitfalls of liberal fundamentalism. What is our inherent, unspoken covenant in this community?

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Leslie Van Kuren

Focus Collection: Minister's Discretionary Fund

September 8

Where Do We Come From?

Join us for our Ingathering service as we mark the first Sunday of a new church year. You are encouraged to bring a small vial or jar of water as we celebrate water communion. We will be looking back over the past year and taking stock of all of the lessons we have learned. How has the past year formed us as individuals and as a community? How is this reflected in our covenant?

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Mark Jackson

September 15

Where Are We Going?

We invite you to join us as we dive ever deeper into our monthly theme of Covenant. This week we will look to our ancestors in faith. Ancient peoples revered a female deity; how do these ancient faith traditions impact our beliefs and our shared covenant today?

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Ted Macosko

September 22

Finding a Story Worth Living

All of us are formed by multiple stories. The stories we allow to guide our lives make all the difference as to whether we're creating a truly good life for ourselves and others or one of superficiality and harm. Discerning the difference is crucial!

-Led by Rev. John Gordon, Baldwin Wallace University Chaplain

Worship Associate: Adrienne Ellis

(continued on page 2)

The Forum

(continued from page 1)

September 29

Creating a New Covenant

On this Rosh Hashanah, we recognize the Jewish New Year and begin to prepare ourselves for Yom Kippur, the high Jewish holy day. We look to the feminine saints of all traditions, especially Hebrew and Sufi holy women. What can holy women teach us all about covenant?

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Mike Gold

Message from your Minister

Covenant

September brings with it a new church year, a new R.E. year, and so much excitement! I would like to invite you and your loved ones to our annual Ingathering Service on Sept 8 at 10:30 am. During this service, we draw together as a community after a summer of far-flung adventures (whether they be in body or in spirit!). We will celebrate Water Communion, so you are invited to bring a small sampling of water from your life. Whether you are a longtime member or brand new to SWUU, this is the perfect time to jump into a warm, supportive, liberal faith community.

Now is also the perfect time to schedule a one-on-one meeting with me, if you haven't already. I'm enjoying meeting the SWUU community as I serve as the new minister. Making an appointment is easy. The theme of the month at SWUU is Covenant, and in our Sunday services, we will be taking a look at our established congregational covenant and thinking of ways to update and refresh it. Covenant is an important concept for UUs, because we do not profess a religious creed. Instead of following rules which have been assigned to us, we make agreements together about how we will live with one another in what Martin Luther King Jr. called "beloved community." Our common beliefs in freedom of faith and the preciousness of diversity are reflected in the covenants that we create with one another. As ours is a living, changing, fluid faith, we regularly revisit our covenants to refresh them in these changing times. On Sept 29th we will hold a signing ceremony to affirm our refreshed covenant. All are welcome.

I look forward to seeing you on Sept 8th and as many following Sundays as can work for you. The SWUU community is invigorated by the presence of each one of us, especially YOU!

Blessings

Rev. Megan

minister@swuu.org

The Forum

Focus Collection for September: Minister's Discretionary Fund

by Nancy Peltola, Social Justice Committee

During September services, we will collect monetary gifts to benefit the Minister's Discretionary Fund. As is our custom, on the first Sunday of the month, all money not designated as pledges or something else specific will go to this Fund. Throughout the rest of the month, offerings collected must be clearly designated on your check or envelope for the monthly Focus Collection if that's where you want it to go.

The Minister's Discretionary Fund is used to assist members and friends of SWUU to meet their basic living needs, such as buying food, paying a utility or medical bill, or paying for transportation.

In addition, the Fund may be used to provide financial assistance with church-related expenses, such as paying for event registration and fees if you are traveling to a church meeting. Please just ask Rev. Meg if this fund could assist you in participating in an event you feel is important. She has discretionary and confidential use of these funds. A private appointment may be made with Rev. Meg to discuss a special monetary need that a member or friend may have. Thank you for your generosity.

Urban Hope & Focus Collection Reminder

by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Just another reminder that Healthy Snacks will be served on Sunday, September 8th at Urban Hope from 3 - 5. PLEASE sign up your donations on the poster board in the lobby. Any and all food is welcome from fresh fruits and veggies, salads, nuts, crackers, cheese and any pre-packaged foods that can be used for take-aways! Thank you.

Total amounts collected from September to August Focus Collections will be reported in the next Forum. It is important to know that any cash in the collection will be designated for the Focus Collection the first Sunday of the month. For the remainder of the Sundays, please designate Focus Collection on your check or cash envelope. Our non profit community organizations are very appreciative of the money collected. Thank you!

An Invitation to Join Social Justice

by Nancy Peltola, Social Justice Committee

Are you concerned about Social Justice issues? Would you like to learn about some local nonprofit organizations that our church supports through its Focus Collections? Would you enjoy being part of a team that meets every other month for 1 hour, yet makes a positive difference in the lives of others in Greater Cleveland?

Our issues, like our community, are diverse. If you are interested and have a little time or a lot, a member of the Social Justice Committee would love to share more about how you can get involved. It's not a huge commitment, and you could make a real difference, whether or not you attend the 1 hour meetings. Please see Nancy Peltola, Jan Wehn, Debby Gorencic, or Mary Brooks for more information.

Meditation Update

by Bruce and Gay Cady

There will be no meditation on Monday, September 2 and Monday September 9 as we will be out of town.

The Forum

Board Happenings

by Hallie Davis, SWUU Board President

On August 3rd, Rev. Renée Ruchotzke (ruh-HUT-skee), Congregational Life Staff, Central East Region led our retreat focusing on goal setting and roles and responsibilities for Board members and Rev. Megan Mathison. Ellen Hansen-Ellis, on behalf of the Earth Alliance committee, asked about solar panels for the church roof. The board requested that she obtain a quote as a first step.

At our board meeting on August 13th, we prioritized our goals of addressing growth; collecting and synthesizing data related to growth; creating a safety and emergency policy; updating our personnel policies; learning more about becoming a Green Sanctuary and helping Rev. Megan assimilate into our community.

At our next meeting we will examine options for the safe storage of our historic documents archives that are currently in the utility room of the lower level fellowship hall.

Once again, board meetings are open to everyone. Hope to see you sometime!

Adopt a Highway

by Susan Paxson

Won't you consider helping out with our commitment to clean up the entrance and exit ramps from Pearl Road to I-71? We have been designate a "Gold Star Group" because of our long-term commitment to this project. It is good exercise, not to mention helping to beautify this grassy area. We also live out our 7th principle by doing this, and we even have fun. We had 14 people for our clean-up in August, but we often have as few as 5 so we can always use more people, and we are a fun group!

We meet just before 9:00 am in the parking lot nearest Pearl Road for the Islander apartments. (turn east off Pearl right beside the Shell Gas station across from the car dealer) We are finished by 10:00 AM.

Our next clean-up is September 28th. We are always looking for new people to join us. If you have never done this before, you will need to complete a brief safety training at 8:45. Twelve year-olds and older can attend if they have a signed permission form. Talk to Jarrett and Andrew Gold, who helped out in August. Make it a family affair! Please contact Susan if you would like to participate. Hope you can join us!



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 by Thursday morning of each week.

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

The Forum is published on the 1st day of each month. Submissions should be sent to 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

Receive The Forum Electronically!

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

forum@swuu.org

Join the SWUUList

If you would like to join a newsgroup focused on issues of importance to SWUU, e-mail 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

Board Minutes

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

Editorial Team

Dan Paxson
Susan Paxson

The Forum

Evening Book Group by Hallie Davis

The evening book group will be starting a new book on Thursday, September 12 at 7:00 PM. The book is called "The Shack" by Wm. Paul Young in 2007. This is a novel that wrestles with the timeless question, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" You can get the book from the Cuyahoga County Library. We will meet the second Thursday and the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM at the home of Hallie Davis in Strongsville. We read and discuss the book as a group. If you would like to join our group, you are welcome. There is a sign-up sheet in the lobby! For more information and directions, contact me.

Is New SWUU for You?

by Susan Paxson, Membership Committee

For those of you who have been coming for a while and are wondering about getting more involved, we invite you to consider taking the next step on the path to membership. Twice a year, we offer a two-session class called 'New SWUU' as an opportunity to meet with other new friends and some of our members. We will share what brought us to SWUU, and talk about the highlights of Unitarian Universalist history and our spiritual way of life. It is also a chance for you to ask us any questions you have about our church.

The first session will be held on Wednesday, October 23rd from 7:00 to 8:30 pm and the second on Sunday, October 27th from 12:00 to 1:30 pm. We hope you can come to both sessions. They will be facilitated by Rev. Megan. This is one of the steps toward membership for those considering joining, but it is also just a way of finding out more about us. If you are unable to attend this fall, the series will be offered again in the spring. If you would like to attend, please email me. Also, please let me know if you would need child care. We hope to see you there!

Women's Group – September Meeting by Hallie Davis

Rev. Megan will lead the Women's group on Friday, September 20th from 2-4 pm at the church. Our meeting begins with the lighting of the chalice and a check-in time (sharing how you are doing). Then we proceed with the program, conversation, and finally, extinguish the chalice.

All women are invited! We look forward to seeing you! Contact Hallie Davis if you need a ride.



Scholarship Awarded

Congratulations to Jenni Papp, our Religious Exploration Director. She received a \$500 scholarship grant from Liberal Religious Educators Association Religious Education Credential Scholarship (LREDA). The scholarship fund supports religious educators with education and training needed to receive Religious Education Credentials from the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).

The Forum

Getting Involved at SWUU

by Susan Paxson, Membership Committee

Now that we are into a new church year, the Membership Committee encourages you to find your niche at SWUU. There are many ways to get involved outside of Sunday services and usually you get to know some of our other members and friends this way. Here is a list of committees and activities with a contact person for each one. Take a look and see what sounds fun or interesting. Get in touch with the contact person to see how you can get involved. If you have an interest in an activity not listed, feel free to reach out to me and we can help you get it started. Chances are, there are other people out there looking for something new as well. Being part of a community feels good when we all share in each-others' lives and share in the work of making church happen. Think about it!

- Adopt a Highway - Susan Paxson
- Wednesday Afternoon Book Group - Sue Davis
- Aging Well - Gay Cady
- Board of Trustees - Hallie Davis
- Buildings and Grounds - Dan Paxson
- Caring Team - Gayle Doucette
- Choir - Ryan Bergeron
- Cooks' Night Out/Ladies' Night Out - Susan Paxson
- Earth Alliance - Dave Slawson
- Evening Book Group - Hallie Davis
- Facebook Page - Joan Rizzo
- Finance - Lydia Avery
- First Wednesday Coffee - Hallie Davis
- Forum Newsletter - Susan and Dan Paxson
- Game Night - John Goga
- Garden Care - Sherry Spencer
- Hospitality - Candy Poissant
- Leadership Development - Phyllis Hall
- Meditation - Gay Cady
- Membership - Susan Paxson
- Men's Group - Mark Jackson
- Religious Education - Jennie Papp
- Social Justice - Jan Wehn
- Swuulist Moderator - Deb Celinski
- Walking Group - Susan Paxson
- Website - Betsy Clark
- Women's Group - Hallie Davis
- Women's History - Sue Davis
- Worship Team - Mark Jackson
- Youth Group - Mark Jackson

The Forum

Sharing and Caring

From **Sarajane Willson**, “Welcome to the world, Kennedy and Baker Cannon, little sister and brother of **Bella and Darby Porter**. Please send growing thoughts to Baker and Kennedy, and comforting energy to Bella and Darby, as they start a new school in a new community.”

Cynthia Mondia is continuing to recuperate at home from her back surgery. She got a positive report at her follow-up visit this week. Cards and calls are welcome! We hope she can return to church soon.

Please keep **Cathy Plude**, one of our long-time members, in your thoughts as she is in room 118 at Mount Alverna Rehabilitation Center in Parma. She is recovering from weakness caused by a serious UTI. Cards are welcome!

Nancy Matsko had cataract surgery this week. She will have her other eye done in September. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

** send your joys and sorrows to 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.