


The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

www.swuu.org

February 1, 2021

Sunday Services

10:30 AM

6320 Royalton Road, North Royalton
Join Us On Zoom!



February 7

Beloved Community

The theme of the month is "Beloved Community," a phrase made famous by Rev. Martin Luther King Jr to describe an ideal world, a world free of what King called the "triple evils" of poverty, racism, and militarism. Join us as we welcome Black History Month by looking at what it means to be a people of Beloved Community.

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Rae Brewer

Focus Collection: Journey Center for Safety and Healing

February 14

St Valentine and Lent

Happy Valentine's Day! Our friends the Christians are preparing for Lent, a time of austerity. Before Lent, we celebrate the feast of St. Valentine and we celebrate Mardi Gras! Bring your beads and feathers as we joyfully give thanks for our Beloved Community!

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Mike Gold

February 21

Untold Histories

All are welcome to join us as we remember the unremembered this Sunday. We all learn a bit every year during Black History Month, but what about all of the people whose stories have been lost? Let's celebrate and honor the untold histories of Black History Month. .

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Ken Ellis

February 28

Castes

According to Isabel Wilkerson, the USA is ensnared in a caste system equal in breadth and influence to the Indian caste system. What is this system and why haven't we ever heard of it before? Join us as we close out Black History Month with a look at our own history as Unitarian Universalists and our place in our caste.

-Led by Rev. Meg Mathieson

Worship Associate: Anastasia Birosh

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Message from your Minister

Beloved Community

Every Sunday morning, a small miracle occurs: we create a holy and beloved community together.

The Soul Matters theme for February is “Beloved Community.” This is a familiar phrase for most Unitarian Universalists, as we ministers tend to quote the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s phrase frequently and with gusto. No doubt the good people at Soul Matters purposely chose this theme for February in order to coincide with national Black History Month. We can recognize, therefore, with gratitude our opportunity to look at our own congregation and consider ways to become ever more open and welcoming to all.

Regarding Beloved Community, Dr. King said, “Our ultimate end must be reconciliation; the end must be redemption; the end must be the creation of the beloved community. We have before us the glorious opportunity to inject a new dimension of love into the veins of our civilization.”

What a joy to have this opportunity that Dr. King has set before us! And so this month we ask ourselves how we might begin to “inject a new dimension of love” into our congregation, our local communities, and ourselves. I joyfully invite you to join us on Sunday mornings at 10:30 as we physically form our own beloved community again and again.

Don’t miss the small miracle that actively injects a new dimension of love into all of us every week. We make this virtual space holy by our presence, and it is not the same without you. Every week I learn more deeply that we need each other more than we know.

I look forward to seeing and speaking with you.

With so much love,
Rev. Meg

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Focus Collection for February: Journey Center for Safety and Healing by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Imagine my surprise when I wrote to my contact Carol at the Domestic Violence and Advocacy Center for Children (DVACC) and learned that they had changed their name! I'm embarrassed that I had not heard about it. The new name reflects "that we are there to walk alongside those affected by domestic violence and child abuse. Every person's journey is unique as they find a path for healthy, thriving relationships." Please check out their new website: <http://www.journeyneo.org>.

Carol reported that last year's donations helped children to sleep in a safe place and have safe visits with parents. Victims were provided therapy, both individual and group. Children go to programs where they learn about personal safety. Clients increase their safety through advocacy.

COVID 19 has seriously impacted victims served. It is important to always realize that while many of us are safe at home, others are isolated at home with an abuser. Therapy requests have increased 80%. The center is still dealing with major funding cuts such as \$840,000 from United Way and COCA (Victims of Crime Act).

I encourage you to look at the website for more information. If possible, please donate to this important cause. Please send a check marked February Focus Collection to church 6320 Royalton Rd, 44133 or through the Vanco Website. Thank you for donating to this valuable organization taking care of the most vulnerable in our society.

Urban Hope News by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Thanks to our generous congregation, Eleanor, Nick, and Debby and I packed and delivered 30 lunch bags to our Cleveland neighbors January 10. They included Fried Chicken, Buttered Roll, Hardboiled Eggs, Clementines, Pudding, Bags of Nuts, Cookies & Candy, and Apple Juice. The staff exclaimed how good it smelled, and that it was such a nice treat for the guests. We are not requesting any donations for next month as we have enough money to buy whatever is needed to prepare a full lunch bag. Our next visit is Valentine's Day, and we will add some special treats.

THANK YOU!!!

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Swuu Membership Anniversaries

by Carol Jordan, Membership

Shirley Kowalski celebrated 10 years of membership in SWUU on Jan. 30. She joined in 2011. On Feb. 9 Christine Wolf will mark five years of membership. Wil Avery will observe 30 years of membership on Feb. 24, joining in 1991.

New SWUU Resource

by Ellen Hansen-Ellis, Board President

Someone is always asking me about how we do this at SWUU, or where they can find information about that. I want you to know that the Board has been working on making those answers available and easily accessible to you! You can now go to the SWUU website (SWUU.org) at any time, day or night, and access our new Policy Manual. It has the answers to many such questions, and includes all our church policies, the updated Bylaws, plus our personnel policies. Even visitors to the website can check out how we do things – we have nothing to hide, and everything to be proud of.

Please take a minute to check it out. You'll find it on the home page, on the right side under "Welcome to Southwest UU". This resource is designed to empower all members, and in particular to help new Board members get up to speed on all things procedural. Special thanks go to Dodi Lettus for her hard work updating and formatting the document.

The best thing about it: it has an index! Check it out – you'll be surprised at how easy it is to use, and what you might learn.

SWUU Welcome Session

by Susan Paxson, Membership Committee

On Saturday, February 20th at 10:30, the membership committee invites newcomers to attend a zoom meeting to find out more about SouthWest UU. We are excited to see that new people have found us in our virtual space and we would love to get to meet you even if it is not in person! It will be an informal virtual gathering where we can find out what brought you to our church and you can ask questions you might have about our religious community. It will also be a social time where we can just get to know one another more than we can during services and coffee hour afterwards. You will be able to attend simply by joining with our regular zoom link which is used for services and many informal gatherings. Contact Susan for more information. Hope to "see" you there!

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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 on our website 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

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Seeking Players for Virtual Bridge/Pinochle Game Night

by Susan Paxson, Membership

Carol reached out to me last month as she is new here in town, a UU formerly living in Columbus, and wanting to connect to the community. If you are a player of either of these games, I know she would appreciate hearing from you! Here is her message:

“Calling all experienced Bridge or Pinochle players for virtual game nights using FREE virtual tool TricksterCards.com, which includes video/audio (i.e. needs camera on your device). You do not need to download or install anything on your device. TricksterCards runs in your browser, preferably Chrome. You need not create an account in TricksterCards.com; you may play as a "guest.”

*If interested, contact **Carol Fleming** for more information. Indicate your experience level, preference of which days/evening and times available to play, and contact information. Friendly, casual game nights; however, game night is not to teach how to play beginning bridge or pinochle.”*

Spreading Some Love at SWUU for Valentine’s Day

by Susan Paxson, Membership

Think back to when you were in elementary school. For Valentine’s day we all decorated a bag or box and at school we passed out our valentines to each classmate. The membership committee is planning a virtual version of this activity! Everyone who participates is sure to get a whole lot of love on Valentine’s day weekend. It will be a fun way to connect with each other. Feel free to keep it simple unless you really like to go all out on Valentine’s Day. Get a couple of those packages of 25-30 small cards at the store and write one for each person on the list and sign your name. You can make your own if you want, but don’t stress out over this; it’s supposed to be fun. One valentine is fine for each family. You don’t have to pay postage or mail your cards; just have them ready and in a box or bag (with your name on it) for your contactless pickup by **February 9th at noon**. Someone will come by between then and February 12th Susan will “pass out” the valentines into each person’s decorated box or bag on **February 12th**. In order for the timeline to work, please let me know of your interest in participating by **Wednesday February 3rd** at noon. This deadline is a strict one, so make sure not to miss it. I will try to send a reminder on the Swuulist the day before. Once I know who is involved, I will email the list out to everyone who is going to play so you will know how many valentines to get! The weekend of Valentine’sDay, you will get a special delivery! I am hoping some folks will volunteer to help with pickup of valentines and delivery of the bags. I have some volunteers already but if you would like to help, please feel free to call me. To sign up or for more information, my cell is 216-543-9387 or email me.

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“Getting to Know You” Interview by Susan Paxson

Candy Poissant and I enjoyed a phone interview since we could not meet in person, and her friendly personality comes through loud and clear. She describes her early years in Parma as being “an only child of an only child” and was raised by two parents and two grandparents who lived with them as well. Her grandparents were quite young and her mom and dad and Grampa went to work, while grandma stayed home to take care of Candy and other things around the house. She also says that growing up, she didn’t cause any problems and was a good kid. Even though she had no siblings, she had a wonderful group of friends whom she met through playing flute in the Parma High School band and in fact they are still close today. Some of her fondest memories from childhood were when she and her family went to a resort called Hazenhurst on Clear Lake in Indiana. It was an old building with a room that had been used to hide slaves in the underground railroad. Here, she learned to waterski and also spent time with friends at a place next door called the Coolie Hut, where they drank soda and danced to songs played on a Juke Box. Sadly, when she returned as an adult, she found that Hazenhurst had been replaced by expensive condos and looks quite different than the fun place she remembered.



Candy started out studying biology in college but ended up switching to Elementary Education which was more suited to her. She had two college roommates with whom she still keeps in touch. As part of a college tour, she traveled in Europe during the cold war, also going behind the Iron Curtain. She went to East Berlin past the guard towers in no man’s land. They slept with their Visas under their pillows. She says she will never forget it. After graduating with her degree, she enjoyed teaching kindergarten and first grade for four years. After taking time off when her kids were young, she got a job working at a chemical company, which she liked as well; in fact she worked for them until retiring after 34 years there. More recently, she has been able to use her teaching skills volunteering with children learning to read and she loves it.

In retirement, it seems like Candy focuses a lot of energy on her grown children, Danielle a Cleveland 3rd grade teacher and Jeanette, a nurse at Cleveland Clinic. Between the two of them, there are three grandkids under 3 and another one due in May. She was spending time with Winnie who is just 7 months before she started day care. If it weren’t for covid, she would spend more time with all of them. But she does lots of face timing and she said her new joy is ordering toys on Amazon! She also likes to read, do needlework, and eat out with friends. She often attends SWUU dinners out, and loves being out in nature. Recently a hawk landed on her back right in her yard. It looked at her and flew away soon after landing. This was one of the highlights of her life!

Candy rarely went to church growing up but she had always been interested in the UU church. When she lived in Broadview Hts, she had noticed our building and when she realized it was UU, she attended. Being an atheist, she was looking for a place where she could be herself and where she could help people. She was excited to join the Earth Alliance because the environment is very important to her. She also jumped in and joined the Hospitality Committee soon after. She felt like she fit in from the first visit. She says she came for the community and we are certainly lucky to have her as a part of it.

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A Great Showing For Our Mid-Year Meeting

January 31st marked our second congregational meeting during the pandemic where we had to meet virtually. The turnout was great! It shows our commitment to maintaining a thriving community, even in these crazy isolated times. Go Team SWUU!



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Sharing and Caring

One of our beloved members, **Sarah Davis** passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on Tuesday, January 19th. She will be sorely missed. The Zoom celebration of her life was on Saturday, January 30th. Many thanks to all who made it happen. For those who were not able to be there, a recording will be made available.

Sue Davis is recovering at home from very early stage breast cancer. She is waiting to see about radiation but she is feeling optimistic.

Please keep **Cynthia Mondia** in your thoughts and prayers as she is continuing to recover from her back surgery at Altenheim in Strongsville. Cards and calls are welcome.

Please keep **Katie Maslar** and her family in your thoughts and prayers as they deal with the unexpected death of her uncle this past week.

** send your joys and sorrows to forum@swuu.org for inclusion in the next issue*

Southwest Unitarian Universalist Church
6320 Royalton Road
North Royalton, Ohio 44133



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