



The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

www.swuu.org

July 1, 2021

Sunday Services

10:30 AM

~~6320 Royalton Road, North Royalton~~

Join Us On Zoom!



July 4

Happy Independence Day!

During July, we are focusing on the theme of "Journey." Join us as we discover what Independence Day means for us on our Unitarian Universalist journey!

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Ken Ellis

Focus Collection: Cuyahoga Valley National Park Youth Enrichment Program

July 11

Blue Boat Home

As the song says, "All we Kindred Pilgrim Souls" are on a journey together toward wholeness. All are welcome to join us as we explore our shared journey home towards wholeness on this beautiful blue boat.

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: Dan Paxson

July 18

Journey to Diversity

As a people who believe in extending a radical welcome to all, do we embody diversity? This Sunday, join us as we learn a little bit about our neighbors in faith!

-Led by Rev. Megan Mathieson

Worship Associate: anastasia birosh

July 25

Life 101: Ecology as Theology, Decline as Grace

An "eco-theo" worldview — where ecology is the heart of theology — is a defining characteristic of truly sustainable cultures. Exploitative boom and bust civilizations, such as ours, go through an inevitable and unstoppable process of decline. Fortunately, however, there are blessings and joys to be found on the way down! This sermon by bestselling eco-theologian and TEDx speaker, Rev. Michael Dowd, will discuss both and give special attention to the evolutionary purpose of religion and the religious necessity of science.

-Led by Rev. Michael Dowd

Worship Associate: Mike Gold

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Message from your Minister

Journey

Dear SWUU family,

July is upon us, and with it comes all of the trappings of summer. The air is warm, the pools are open, and many of us are succumbing to “summer brain!” Summer brain is when we are ready to take a mid-year break, just lie in the sun (or shade, if you burn easily like me!) and take things a little bit easier.

Our summer worship services will be perfect for your summer brain, as they promise to be a bit paired-down as well. Be sure to join us in our usual zoom room (<https://uuma.zoom.us/my/swuufamily>) on Sunday mornings at 10:30 as we sing a little, share our joys and concerns, and continue to virtually hold one another close in community. It’s the perfect way to start a Sunday morning.

Meanwhile, our Re-Opening Task Force will be hard at work throughout the month, planning the details of safely reconvening in person for services this fall. I’m so excited to see you there!

With so much love,
Rev. Meg
minister@swuu.org

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Focus Collection for June: Cuyahoga Valley National Park Youth Enrichment Program by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Last year with COVID, we skipped the July and August Focus Collection. Now that lives are returning to normal, we would like to continue our support of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Youth Enrichment Program. The park is not back to full programming, and many of the staff are still working from home, but they are eagerly providing programs for youth. These include hiking and fishing, crafts, equipment, and community outreach. Supporting Cuyahoga Valley supports environmental education which is one of our church's missions. Checks can be sent to the church marked July/August Focus Collection. Thank you for your generosity.

Urban Hope News by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Debby, Nick, Eleanor and I packed bags for Urban Hope. Lunches contained Oven Fried Chicken Drumstick, chips, cheese, Rice Crispy Bars, fruit, muffins and cookies. We also took Gator Aid which was a huge hit. Of course, there was a downpour as people were arriving to pick up lunches, but fortunately, the rain ended by 3:30. We had a steady stream of guests and all the lunches were gone by 4:45. We will be supplying lunches on July 11, but the Storefront will be closed in August. We are hoping to resume serving meals in October, but a decision is still pending. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Adopt-a-Highway by Susan Paxson, Coordinator

We have scheduled our second clean-up of the year for **Saturday, July 10th**. If you have never done a highway clean-up with us before, please consider joining us! We meet at 9:00AM in the parking lot of the Islander Apartments which are located on the east side of Pearl road across from Sunnyside Auto dealership and just north of the I-71 Interchange. The turn is next to a Shell station. Before we do the clean-up, we put on our vests, take a bag, and (new this year) sign a release form which ODOT requires for every cleanup. We are usually finished in about an hour so you can still relax and enjoy the rest of your day! There is a short training for anyone who has never participated. If you would like to join us, just text or email and I will come early to do that with any new folks. I hope to see you there as we do our part to take care of the earth and get some exercise at the same time! We would love to have some new faces there! Children and youth 12 years and up are also welcome.

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Reunion Gathering in Richfield Ohio by Susan Paxson, Membership Committee

It has been over a year since Covid hit and our lives changed. Many folks have been asking when we plan to reopen the Task Force is working hard to create a process for this, but the Membership and Hospitality Committees want to invite everyone to an outdoor gathering on **August 15th at 1:00 in the afternoon**. Michelle, Vlad, and Evie Vancisin have graciously offered to host our party at their new property. Our gathering is planned to be after church that day and will take place regardless of where we are in the reopening process.

In the interest of simplicity and not having to RSVP, not to mention covid safety, we are calling our gathering a BYO picnic. This means bring your own food, utensils, and even your own chair if you can. There will be some chairs there but not enough for a large group. There will be no food or drinks served. Hey, it is even good for the environment because we will have no paper plates or water bottles to throw away.

We hope to try a speed dating style social game with anyone who is interested. Hopefully it will give everyone a chance to visit for a few minutes with everyone else who attends. This is a family friendly event where kids are welcome. There will be lots of space for running around, and a trail in the back for hiking. In the yard, we can play badminton and croquet, and even take a dip in a small above ground pool, if it is really hot. Speaking of heat, Michelle says there are two spaces with shade in the afternoon and a 10 by 10 tent if we need even more shady space.

Since there is only room for 10 cars in their driveway, we are asking that people who are able to walk easily please park at the park next door.

No RSVP needed but we hope to see you there. For any questions or concerns, please contact Susan.

A Bit of SWUU History By Carol Jordan, Membership Committee

The election of Dodi Lettus as president of the Board of Trustees continues more than 33 years of members who have served as president of SWUU since its charter in November 1987. Presidents have been (in order): Lori Torriero, first president, elected 1987, Emily Cassidy, Michael Comber, Dan Paxson, Carol Jagers, Melody Werner, Carol Jagers, John Purcell, Bruce Melville, Keith Mathews, Mike Tucci, Sherry Spencer, Michele Adams, Dan Paxson, Adam Miller, Wil Avery, Deb Celinski, Sherry Spencer, Dan Paxson, Hallie Davis, and Ellen Hansen-Ellis.

Lori Torriero, Emily Cassidy (Emily Heath Wilson), John Purcell, Keith Marthews, and Sherry Spencer are all charter members.

The Forum



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

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.

The Forum

My Invisible Backpack: Democracy is “Showing Up!”

by Don Bryant (him/he), on behalf of the Antiracism Taskforce

Whether it is on Zoom or in person, people notice when we show up, and sometimes they notice if we don't. Showing up for racial justice is so important that somebody named an organization after it, SURJ - Showing Up for Racial Justice, which is white people coming together to talk about, and act on, how they/we can end racism in our communities. SURJ is based on acceptance of the fact that white people established systems of white supremacy resulting in racism and oppression of Blacks, Indigenous, or other People of Color (BIPOC) and white people are the only ones who can end racism. We do this by talking to each other about how to challenge and end racism in our lives and our institutions consistently.

When the news reports about the death of a Black person at the hands of police we may see the family members of the deceased and some neighbors and friends at a vigil, and most of them are African American. When we see a diverse group of people with some white people mixed in, we feel more like it is the community sharing the experience.

Too often some people in neighboring communities find comfortable rationalizations to separate themselves from the police killing or abuse against BIPOC. Some say, “If they wouldn't run, they wouldn't get shot,” ignoring the fact that police should not have the power to take a life when no other life is in immediate danger; and denying that BIPOC are over-surveilled by police. National police protocols state that vehicle chases are dangerous to the community and should be avoided by police. Police intelligence and surveillance capabilities allow them to apprehend any suspects fleeing by car later, thereby avoiding vehicles racing through the streets.

People living outside of city limits might think that is why they moved out of the city and live in a suburban home - to escape the crime of the city. “As long as it's in the city it isn't about us and we are safe,” they might say. Well, it is about us and every resident in the county. Part of the reason white people of privilege can live in the suburbs is because of red lining, the system of racist policies that banks and other institutions have refused to offer mortgages or offer worse rates to customers in certain neighborhoods based on their race or ethnicity, keeping BIPOC out of “white neighborhoods.” While red lining was outlawed through the Fair Housing Act in 1968, various forms of the practice exist today.

Therefore, it is so important for people of conscience to consider joining a vigil or social justice rally led by BIPOC in urban locations. Of course, outer ring folks could also go on a shopping trip to stores or dine at restaurants run by BIPOC. Then there are the urban markets and festivals that white folks might consider attending and supporting for a new experience with some added meaningfulness.

Showing up for racial justice and diversity is what democracy looks like, sounds like, and acts like. If you have heard of the phrase, “divide and conquer,” then it follows that this is exactly what segregated communities perpetuate - someone is going to be conquered, or kept down, and you can bet it won't be white people or other people of privilege. Let us be a part of a unite and empower mission, challenging racial exclusion and isolation, by looking into the eyes of someone who looks different from us and eventually joining hands and walking with them.

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Sharing and Caring

♥ **Carol and Herb Shroyer** sent a message that their daughter, Melanie, made it through surgery well, but now, an infection has set in where the drain- tube sites were, and efforts are being made to control it.

♥ * *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.