



The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

www.swuu.org

July 1, 2024

Sunday Services

10:30 AM

6320 Royalton Road, North Royalton
In-Person and On Zoom



July 7

Why do UUs Worship, Anyway?

If we don't all believe in the same higher power, or can't even agree there is a higher power — then why do we participate in worship? What do we get out of it? Hopefully the exploration of these questions will result in a few answers — or maybe we'll just find more questions ...???

-Led by Donna Evans-Deyermond

Worship Associate: Rae Brewer

Focus Collection: Cuyahoga Valley National Park

July 14

Question Box Sunday

The hymn "We Laugh, We Cry" sings of the many stages of life and it concludes with a great truth, "even to question, truly is an answer." Come this Sunday for a celebration of questions and answers, during which our minister will do her best to respond to your submitted questions!

-Led by Rev. Ali Peters

Worship Associate: Deb Celinski

July 21

This I Believe

In Unitarian Universalism, we covenant to learn from each other in our free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Come this Sunday to honor this commitment. Our beliefs and journeys may differ but we connect in this community of faith for support and challenge, bound together by our shared values.

-Led by Rev. Ali Peters

Worship Associate: Cynthia Mondia

July 28

Find Yourself

We all go through changes in life, and often find that what is the hardest to overcome are not the physical obstacles, but the obstacles in our mind. Renewing the way we view the world, ourselves, and our situations is sometimes all we need to reach our goals - but how can we really do this?

-Led by Rev. Ian Anderson

Worship Associate: Ken Ellis

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Message from your Minister Report on General Assembly 2024

Beloveds,

Every year Unitarian Universalists from around the country gather in June for the Unitarian Universalist Association's annual General Assembly (GA). This is an important time for connection with the larger UU movement and for delegates from all UU congregations to conduct the business of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). This year's general assembly was held completely online – a format that we'll see every few years moving forward, in order for it to be more accessible.

When it came down to business, this general assembly was a big deal! Here is some of what occurred:

1. Delegates voted to approve the proposed revisions to Article II of the UUA by-laws! At SouthWest UU, we have explored this proposal at length over the past couple years and now it is official. With these revisions, we as Unitarian Universalists proclaim a set of shared values with LOVE at the center. I encourage you to read through these revisions here: <https://bit.ly/4cFyXmw>
2. Delegates voted to affirm three "Actions of Immediate Witness" (AIWs) for our UU Association this year. These AIWs name three urgent social justice priorities for our association to take action on: Solidarity with Palestinians; Centering Love Amidst the Ongoing Impact of Covid-19; and World on Fire: Humanitarian Work and Climate Change. I encourage you to read each of the statements on these AIWs here: <https://bit.ly/3xBqH80>
3. Delegates voted to pass a business resolution entitled "Embracing Transgender, Nonbinary, Intersex and Gender Diverse People is a Fundamental Expression of UU Religious Values." I encourage you to read this resolution here: <https://bit.ly/3VLAAlI>
4. Delegates also voted to pass a responsive resolution, "UUA General Assembly Support for October 7 Hostages." I encourage you to read this resolution here: <https://bit.ly/4eEURrH>

I invite you to read more about all that happened at this year's GA here: <https://bit.ly/3znonSL>

If you are ever interested in serving as a delegate to GA or getting involved in the wider UU movement in some way, I hope you will let me know! This beloved faith of ours would not exist without our collective participation.

With love and gratitude,
Rev. Ali



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Focus Collection for July: Cuyahoga Valley National Park

by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

Every summer we designate Cuyahoga Valley National Park as the recipient of our July Focus. We are lucky to have the only National Park in Ohio in "our own backyard." Landscape is preserved along the Cuyahoga between Akron and Cleveland. The "Crooked River" gives way for 33,000 acres of forests, hills and open lands. The park provides something for everyone. Besides hiking, there is golf, historic train rides, biking, and winter sports. The Children's Education is always expanding. In May 2024 the Junior Ranger Angler Program was developed. Park Partners and Community Based Organizations will host in park fishing clinics, set up gear libraries and more in hopes of providing children and families more experiences. We are hoping that you will donate to this Local Treasure. We will request that money is used for Youth Education. Thank you for your generosity.

Urban Hope Outreach Update

by Jan Wehn, Social Justice Committee

The 2nd Sunday in June (June 9th) was not only a beautiful day, but a very enjoyable one at Urban Hope. Debby Gorencic, Nancy Peltola, Valerie Powers, Joyce Gilliland and I visited and served a wonderful crowd. We had pizza, two beautiful salads, chips, bars, hardboiled eggs and gourmet, homemade desserts. It was greatly appreciated. The mood was mellow and the guests enjoyed the camaraderie. We are so grateful for the donations, and that we can splurge on pizza! It is a special treat. Thank you all for your generosity. Let us know if you would like to come along. Next visit is Sunday, July 14. The storefront is closed in August, and will resume in September.

Women's Fellowship Gatherings

by Susan Paxson, Membership Committee

If you have never attended one of our fourth Friday night dinners, you are in for a treat. We have not had a gathering in two months, because no one was able to host. Many SWUU women have attended these gatherings and a number of you have hosted. We always have a good time. I just want to put it out there as an opportunity to create space for wonderful fellowship in a smaller size group than what we usually have at coffee hour after church. If you are interested in hosting, you make all of the decisions about how the evening is run. You can host in your home, at church, or in a restaurant. I always recommend pot luck because then no one person has the burden of making everything! The only other thing you would want to do is send the details to our office so it can be advertised on Thursday news and in the order of service announcements. You can also put a post out on the swuulist to remind people of the event and ask for an RSVP. Please let me know by email so I can sign put you on the calendar as the contact person! Please call me with questions if you might be interested. Now is a good time to host, because we have three new women who joined and they might want to attend this month's gathering on July 26th!

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Board Happenings by Rae Brewer, Board President

Beloveds,

It has been quite the exciting summer so far! In the month of June, we saw the passage of Article II, which changes the way we communicate our Unitarian Universalist faith from principles and sources to values. It has been decades since we last updated this as a faith movement. As a Living Tradition, this change highlights our ongoing commitment to creating space for change and new ways of seeing the world.

Speaking of change... we also now have a settled minister! SWUU members voted on installing Rev. Ali as our settled minister in a unanimous vote. SWUU has not celebrated the installation of a settled minister in quite some time! SWUU members also approved Adrienne Ellis becoming our new vice president, as well as Katie Maslar, Jan Wehn, and Susan Wraight joining the board. We heard from RJAM (Racial Justice Accountability Ministry) at this meeting, as they begin their work of looking at our church through the lens of anti-racism and multicultural diversity. On top of all that, we also celebrated six new members joining our congregation! I (Rae) also began my term as board president on July 1st.

Each new church year brings its own challenges and triumphs. Whatever this church year may bring, I celebrate the growth and joy we have experienced, and the community we share that grounds us amidst it all. Thank you to the marvelous folks who served on the board this past year, and a big welcome to those joining us this year. Here's to a great year!

Blessings,
Rae Brewer

RE Updates

by Carolyn Stevens, Director Religious Exploration

Our All Ages Religious Exploration has some fun stuff planned for SUUmmmer! You can even bring friends! All are welcome! We will still start off in service!

- o **July 14** - SCIENCE SUNDAY-let's question and experiment through science! We will be getting dirty so dress accordingly!
- o **July 21** - Tye-Dye Mania- we will be creating AMAZING masterpieces! Feel free to bring an item to tie dye and we will also have items available to dye.
- o **July 28**—Olympic Celebration-We will be having our own SWUU-lympics. Please wear tennis shoes!

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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 on our website calendar.

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

Get Connected!

If you would like to receive The Forum via email, or if you would like to join a newsgroup focused on issues of importance to SWUU, or if you would like to receive our weekly newsblast, e-mail connect@swuu.org and tell us which you want.

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

New Faces, New Friends

by Carol Jordan, Membership Committee

There are lots of new faces at our Sunday morning services. Six of them became members at last Sunday's service. Have you met them?

There are families with their children, several couples from neighborhood communities, singles looking for a new faith home and when the children come for A Story for All Ages, you'll see brothers and sisters.

If you person you don't know by name, and introduce yourself. If you go down for the Fellowship Hour, if you see someone standing by himself or herself, invite them to sit with you. Remember the first time you came to SWUU? You may have been greeted warmly by one of our greeters at the door. When you came up the stairs and wondered – where do I go now? Where shall I sit? Will I take someone's special place? Hmm, all those people are going forward to drop something in the bowl. Will I feel out of place? I remember the first time I came to this church. I found a seat at the back. In a few minutes Sue Szabo (you longtime members will remember Sue) tapped me on the shoulder and introduced herself. She said the minister, Kristen Rohm, had alerted her that I would be there. That made me feel so welcomed, and I knew that someone was looking out for me.

Before the service or afterward, in the lobby, or at the Fellowship time after the service -- step forward and greet a new face – you'll soon have a new friend.

Join us for the Blueberry Sundae Fest!

Sunday, July 21!

by Danelle Baker-Miller, Hospitality Committee

Plan to join the Hospitality Committee on Sunday, July 21 immediately after the service in the Fellowship Hall for the **Blueberry Sundae Fest!** This celebration of summer will feature vanilla ice cream, homemade blueberry topping and shortbread cookies. For those with dietary restrictions, the cookies are nut-free, and gluten-free and dairy-free options will be available upon request.



To help us plan, please sign up in advance so that we can get an accurate count for food. A sign-up sheet will be in the gathering space outside the sanctuary. The cost is \$5 per person or a maximum of \$15 per family. On Sunday, July 7 and 14, Gayle Doucette and Sherry Spencer will be accepting payments, but guests can also pay at the event. We can accept cash or checks made out to SWUU. Hope to see you there!

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Thank you to those from SouthWest Unitarian Universalist Church who marched at Pride in the CLE on June 1: Ellen Hansen-Ellis, Ken Ellis, Lydia Avery, Betsy Clark, Kirk Jusko, Kent Williams, Nancy Matsko, and Rev. Ali. Deb Celinski was there to cheer them on, along with Sarajane Willson, Judy White, and Dina Chatelain.



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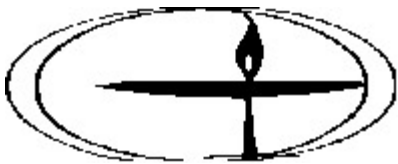
Sharing and Caring

Pat and Brian Woodside are happy to report that Pat's latest and hopefully last surgery was completed Saturday, June 29. We want to thank everyone for all the kind wishes and support we received. Now for recovering and moving on!

Sue Wraight will be undergoing elective surgery this week.

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

**Southwest Unitarian Universalist Church
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North Royalton, Ohio 44133**



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