


The Forum



A Southwest Unitarian Universalist Publication

www.swuu.org

June 1, 2026

Sunday Services

10:30 AM

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



June 7

Life is Reason

Why did we evolve to become social creatures? Why do we choose to gather in places like this one? Why is Project Hail Mary the best story of all time? I can only answer that last question objectively; the rest, I will do my best to share for your consideration the conclusions I've drawn after much pondering. NOTE: I will do my best to refrain from including major plot spoilers for Project Hail Mary, but I will be expounding on its main themes and messages so if you want to avoid spoilers, this is your warning!

-Led by Eli Butler

Worship Associate: Janet LaBonne & Deb Celinski

Focus Collection: The LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland

June 14

Church Picnic at North Park!

Come gather with us at North Park (3595 Grafton Road in Brunswick)! We will have a short worship service outside at 10:30 and afterwards we will enjoy a picnic potluck, games, fellowship, and fun! Bring a picnic dish to share and your own beverages. There are picnic tables in the pavillion, but you may also want to bring a lawn chair or picnic blanket. **Please note that there will be no worship in our SWUU building on this Sunday.**

-Led by Rev. Ali Peters

Worship Associate: Valerie Hura

June 21

Pride Sunday

Come this Sunday as we honor Pride with a service of love for all LGBTQIA+ beloveds. Those who wish to will be invited to receive a glitter blessing -- a recognition of the sacred beauty inherent in every person. During this service we will also officially welcome new members to our SWUU community! **And we hope you will stay after the service for our Annual Meeting.**

-Led by Rev. Ali Peters

Worship Associates: Rev. Kirk Jusko & Deb Celinski

June 28

The History and Philosophy of the Three Sisters Planting Method

For centuries Indigenous people across the Americas have used the Three Sisters Planting method. The Three Sisters Planting Method has grown to be more than just crop management. Learn how The Three Sisters and their symbiotic relationship has shaped tribal views in the Ohio region.

-Led by Kristi Campbell, Three Sisters Intertribal Organization

Worship Associate: Mike Gold & Kirk Jusko

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Message from your Minister

Flourishing Together

Beloveds,

Happy June! There is so much going on during this month of June, isn't there? For one, it is Pride month! I hope you'll be able to join SWUU in marching in Cleveland Pride on June 6 – reach out to Susan Paxson to RSVP. We also have our annual Pride worship service on June 21 and then we will be at Brecksville Broadview Heights Pride Fest on June 27 (keep an eye out for a signup sheet where you can sign up to help represent SWUU at our Pride Fest table).

As I'm looking forward to these events in June and considering this month's worship theme, "Flourishing Together," I'm finding I have a song stuck in my head. It's a song from a concept album called Risk Hallelujah that is still currently in development. The writer, Orion Johnstone, hopes to make the album a full-fledged musical. Risk Hallelujah is a queer re-telling of the life and ministry of Jesus, where everyone in the cast plays Jesus at one point or another throughout the album. And y'all know I'm a UU who loves talking about Jesus! I stumbled across an EP for the album last year and have been enjoying some of the songs on repeat ever since, including this one:

Excerpt from "Sermon on the Mount" by Orion Johnstone, from *Risk Hallelujah*

Always already sacred
Always already whole

If Adam and Eve could be cast out
Then was it really Eden?
I ask you was it really Eden?
If sinning stems from honest doubt
Was it really Eden?
If Lucifer could fall from grace
Then was it really Heaven
I ask you was it really Heaven?
If it's less about love, more about saving face
Was it really Heaven?
If Anyone at all can be cast out
Then was it truly Justice?
I ask you was it truly Justice?
If an eye for an eye is what it's really about
Was it truly Justice?

Everyone is welcome in the garden
And we can tend that garden here and now...

Tearing down Empire within and beyond you
Starts with this bread and this love
Years from now they'll say that I made a
miracle
But WE are making the miracle
we are MAKING the miracle
WE are the miracle
we are the MIRACLE

Everyone is welcome in the garden
And we can tend that garden here and now
Hallelujah!
Everyone is welcome in the garden
And we can tend that garden here and now

Everyone is welcome in the garden. May we tend that garden here and now,
Beloveds. Hallelujah!

With love and gratitude,
Rev. Ali

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Focus Offering for June: The LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland by Nancy Peltola, Social Justice Committee

The LGBT Community Center is a leading nonprofit advocacy, service, and training center located in the Gordon Square neighborhood on the west side of Cleveland. The Center and MetroHealth are united in their shared commitment to the health, safety, and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community. MetroHealth developed a broad strategy to strengthen and expand services across its Pride Network, including at clinics in Brooklyn, Brecksville, and Cleveland Hts., plus a new Pride Clinic at the West Park Health Center.

An Access Advocate at The Center will help people by scheduling appointments and explaining available services in a place where LGBTQ+ individuals feel comfortable already. This year Metro and The Center also partnered to offer mobile medical and dental services at the Gordon Square and East Side locations.

No wonder SWUU has been proud to dedicate our June Focus Offering to the Center for many years! Your gift changes someone's life for the better, as it has for 50 years, by ensuring that advocacy, nutritional and education programs, and legal advice remain in place for the next 50 years. Your donation can be put in the offering basket, mailed to SWUU with LGBT Center on the memo line, or use the Vanco app indicating Focus Offering. You can join the **Pride in the CLE** annual event to celebrate our vibrant LGBTQ+ community on Saturday, June 6, 2026 from 11AM - 6PM. Begin with a march at Public Square and make your way to Malls B & C, St. Clair Ave. for live music, vendors, and performances. Contact Susan Paxson for details about this event.

Membership Anniversaries by Carol Jordan, Membership Committee

Seven members of SWUU have reached milestone anniversaries in May. Mary and Tom Brooks joined May 28, 2006, achieving 20 years of membership. Marking 10 years of membership are Dodi Lettus and the Gold family -- Sharron, Mike, Jaret and Andrews, who joined on May 22, 2016. Congratulations to all of these loyal members of SWUU!

Gardening Team News by Sherry Spencer, Gardening Team

Spring 2026-We're down one member on the SWUU gardening team. We recently needed to say goodbye to team member Kent Williams who is relocating to be closer to family in Pittsburgh, PA. He'll be missed for his dazzling demeanor and quick wit, but we understand why he had to leave.

Currently we are a team of just two, and we could use your help! Please consider chatting with **Sherry Spencer or Don Bryant**, if you can spare an hour a week to keep our beloved garden tidy.

SWUU, our church, is an historical landmark in North Royalton. With the creation of our lovely garden, there has been an upsurge in the goal of a beautification element to the downtown area!! Please consider a short stop over to pull a weed out two, wrangle a garden hose or spray-away those unwanted bits 'o green!

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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 23rd of the month unless otherwise noted.

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

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Susan Paxson

The Forum

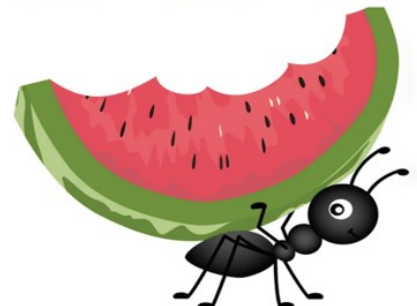
SAVE THE DATE!

Come join us for a summer potluck in the park! We will have FUN, fellowship, games and more, including a short church service and a delicious potluck lunch. Hope to see you all there!



YOU MAY BRING:

- *Picnic food to share*
- *A beverage & tableware for yourself*
- *A lawn chair(s)*



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R.E. SUUMMER

by Carolyn Stevens, Director of Religious Exploration

One of the Unitarian Universalism values is pluralism - "We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology." Smoothie Summer will introduce us to our world's diverse countries, religions, and cultures through the activity of cooking.

June 7 Smoothie Summer-Brazil

June 14 Church Picnic offsite

June 21 Smoothie Summer- Belgium (need volunteers)

June 28 Smoothie Summer- Taiwan (need volunteers)

July 5 Smoothie Summer- Tonga

July 12 Smoothie Summer- Australia

July 19 Smoothie Summer- Cuba

July 26 Smoothie Summer- Egypt

Environmental Justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction. We will be earning our SWUU Good Earth Steward Badges in August!

Aug 2- Climate Change and Our Faith

Aug 9- Tye Dye with Natural Dye and Flowers

Aug 16- Cuyahoga Metro Parks Class

Aug 23- Be a Nature Protector

Aug 30-Building Worm Hotels

THERE IS NO AFTERHOURS RE IN JUNE! We will gather again on July 24th. If you are an adult and are interested in helping with any of our programs, please reach out to office@swuu.org

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An Opportunity From UUC of Kent

by Liz Erickson

Are you a gardener? Would you like to interact with inner city kids for a few afternoons this summer or Fall?

Hello, I am Liz Erickson, from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Kent and I am looking for a few garden-loving adults who would like to work with a group of elementary kids on the Near West side of Cleveland for a few hours on one or two days this summer or Fall. I have been coordinating a kids' garden program with local UU's on a 40' x 20' plot in Kentucky community garden at W. 38th and Franklin on the Near West side of Cleveland since 1999. This season we are looking for **adult volunteers who can spare a few hours on one or two days this Summer or this Fall**

For the summer (June through August) we are looking for help on Wednesdays from 4:30-6:30pm

For the Fall (September) we are looking for help on Wednesdays from 3:15-4:30.

We are only asking for volunteer help for one or two days per person.

What do we do in the garden? Working with the Near West Side Intergenerational School across the street from the Kentucky Garden, we plant, weed, water and maintain the garden plots over the summer and through September, while also cooking garden vegetables on a camp stove, and providing a craft. A special part of the program is the time in September when we work with about twenty K-2 children in the after-school garden club. For them the gardening is extra significant: what we have found over the many years we have run this program is that it brings a joy that seems to remain with them all their lives. As UU's, we are able to bring both a spiritual and practical activity that matters. And our volunteers have said how much it has affected them too!

If you are interested, could you please email me your information and we can work out the days that might work best for you.

Liz Erickson

Coordinator of Kids Garden Program

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Sharing and Caring

Deb Celinski would like to thank everyone for their continued support during her dad's recovery, now that he is home. A special shout out to those who provided meals. They were much appreciated!

Please keep **Valerie Powers** in your thoughts and prayers . Her mother is in the hospital after collapsing this past week. She will be in town with Joyce this week.

Joyce Gilliland is going to be undergoing two brain surgeries on June 4th, and June 15th. She is hoping for some relief for her symptoms related to Parkinson's.

**Please 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.