



Volume 23 | Issue 9 May 2020 Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society of Westborough

May Worship Schedule

Worship Theme of the Month: **Thresholds**



SUNDAY MAY 3, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service

Becoming

It's not uncommon for people to ask if UUs do baptisms. Like all religions, we as Unitarian Universalists have rituals that mark the changes in our lives, which are specific to our theology, principles, and history. Today we'll talk about why it matters to mark these transitions as a community and what these rituals mean.

SUNDAY MAY 10, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service – Ashleigh Swain & Jerry Breecher

Mother's Day

Ashleigh C. Swain and Jerry Breecher discuss how we got to a 21st century Mother's Day and where we go from here and give thanks to those who nurture us. As we are a welcoming congregation, and we know that everyone's story is different, we look to the congregation for examples of those who have provided some sense of "family" for us, whether it is biological, adopted, chosen, or otherwise. There will be a Story for All Ages early in the service.

SUNDAY MAY 17, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service – Reverend Laurel Gray

Bridging

When we planned this year's calendar, today was set to be the bridging ceremony for all of our teens who are

graduating from high school. One of the great losses during this pandemic is all the celebrations that have been cancelled or postponed, celebrations that are meant to mark significant transitions in people's lives. Today we'll do what we can to celebrate our teens.

SUNDAY MAY 24, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service – Jim Kirk

Choices

We are always making choices.
Big choices, little choices.
Individual choices, group choices.
Red choices, blue choices.
Me choices, you choices.
One of the biggest choices we make as a country is to go to war.
As we prepare to honor those who have died for the wars we have waged,
let's explore choice and what that means.

SUNDAY MAY 31, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service – Reverend Laurel Gray

At the Start of Summer

We're approaching the end of our church year and nearing the start of summer vacation from school – both things that look very different than expected. As we transition out of this year, we'll talk about how we have learned and grown together, and how we imagine coming back together in the fall.

From the Minister

Dear UUCSW,

It's wild to think that we haven't been physically together since March 8th. These are incredibly strange times and so much of our lives have been upended. And I've been amazed at how well we've rallied as a congregation. When we switched to doing Sunday services on Zoom, we had no idea how well it would work or if it would really feel like church. And yet, switching to a digital format has meant the blessing of old friends returning, families tuning in across time zones, and all of you getting to see each other's faces. It has been immensely heartening seeing how well we're adapting and how committed we are to being together no matter the circumstances. What a blessing and a privilege it is to be your minister.

As we start to move towards the end of this church year, I want to say a special thank you to our Director of Religious Education Cassie, who will be ending her time with us in June. Cassie and her husband are moving to Pennsylvania to start a new chapter in their lives and we will miss having her among us at UUCSW. Please join me in celebrating all that Cassie has done these last two years and giving her your well-wishes and blessings as she starts her next adventure in June.

This is not the spring we imagined, or would have ever hoped for, and yet here we are, finding our way step by step. Amidst all the challenges and fears of life right now, it's a joy to be on this journey with all of you and a blessing to see how invested you all are in this community. I hope that you feel the love of our congregation as we keep wandering towards a new world. So much has changed, and will continue to change, and I hope that amidst the storm you find some calm in our being together. We will find our way together. Blessings,

Laurel

Laurel.Gray@uucsw.org

*Please note that my days off are typically Monday and Saturday.

I try to respond to emails within 48 hours, but that is not always possible. I appreciate your patience.

Board Matters

Heartfelt greetings and wishes for health and safety to all of you and yours.

The board has continued weekly meetings to meet the challenges of leadership in this time of social distancing. We have been very grateful to all who have made the virtual services happen, and especially gratified by the large number of "virtual attendance" on Sundays at this time when our connections are so important for us all.

How to approach our budget process is something we are working on with Lisa, who has done a great job and given good advice re: likelihood of the need for perhaps two budget approaches, one as if we will be back to business as usual by the start of our fiscal year in July, and a second budget presuming the likelihood that our church will be operating much differently- more to come on how this will look for June.

Another item discussed is that the UUA General Assembly has gone virtual. Judith will be sharing ways she feels our congregation can use this opportunity to participate. Stay tuned.

We are all reflecting on what it means to be part of this church in new ways and in this time of social distancing. Based on predictions and the projected need for 14 days of downward trending in the Covid crisis before making changes, the board remains cautious and has unanimously voted for continued virtual services through May. We will see what the end of the Month of May brings.

As always, please share any suggestions, questions and concerns at any time.

Be safe and stay healthy

Kim Hall on behalf of the UUCSW Board of Trustees

Money Matters in Times of Uncertainty and Pledge Campaign Update

Some of you may be wondering how the Coronavirus pandemic is impacting our church finances. I want to reassure you that based upon a preliminary forecast for the fiscal year-end, it looks like we will finish the year in a positive position, despite losing significant rental income. Thanks to all of you who pay your pledges throughout the fiscal year, those who participated in the online auction, and a number of generous, miscellaneous gifts, our income is projected to be at or above budget. On the expense side, our compensation (our largest expense item) remains the same but we will have some savings from reduced electric and natural gas usage, fewer building and grounds expenses and small reductions in program expenses for RE and guest speakers. The net impact will most likely be a net surplus.

In the next few weeks, we will begin to build the budget for the next fiscal year. This is where there is greater uncertainty, as we do not know, at this point in time, when we will return to "normal" in terms of our renters and programs. The good news is that we just completed our most successful pledge drive ever! As a congregation, we raised \$109,650. While we didn't reach our \$120K goal, we exceeded last year's pledge campaign by \$7900 (or 8%). Thank you to everyone who pledged! If you haven't pledged yet, you can do so on Realm or by sending me an email with your pledge.

We will have more information for you as we get closer to the annual meeting in June. If you are interested in the finances of UUCSW and would like to be a part of the finance committee, we would love to have you, just send me an email.

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Shumway at Treasurer@uucsw.org

Share the Plate

Beginning in January, the Board decided to begin a pilot of a Share the Plate program. This is a way for UUCSW to reach outside its walls and support the important work of a variety of different non-profit organizations. We can do more together than we can on our own, and this is one way of living out our UU principles and creating connections. The Board chose the below organizations for the spring to get us started, and then you will be invited to nominate organizations for the next year.

We are in the process of trying to set up all normal church functions as online operations, but don't yet have a good mechanism for having a digital plate. As always, you're welcome to send a check to the church with "offering" in the memo line, or donate directly to our Share the Plate organization for the month.

- May: UU Mass Action
- June: Pastoral Counseling Center

Pastoral Care

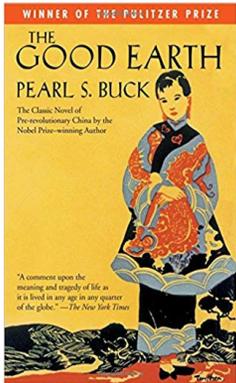
The Membership Engagement Team and Rev. Laurel are always here to support you. We know that caring looks different right now, as we keep physical distance. Rev. Laurel is now, like so many of you, working from home.

If you'd like to make an appointment for pastoral care, or have a joy or sorrow that you'd like included on a Sunday when you're away, you can email Laurel at: laurel.gray@uucsw.org. She can also be reached on her cell phone at 401-932-7855. Feel free to text or call if something is urgent or you just need to check in.

Speakeasy Auction 2020

Our Speakeasy Auction is now fully online! To view, sign up, and pay for all of the wonderful dinners and events our members have donated, click this link: <https://tinyurl.com/uy6p4vt>. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Book Group – May 8th



For **May**, we are reading *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck. Please join us.

The group is open to all. You are welcome to attend.

Because of the pandemic, May's meeting will be online. Please check the Weekly Update for a Zoom invitation or contact [Judith Nicholson](#) to make arrangements for online attendance.

If you are planning to attend for the first time, please email Judith: [Judith: \[Judithteacake@gmail.com\]\(mailto:Judithteacake@gmail.com\)](mailto:Judithteacake@gmail.com).

May Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online) 	7:00 PM – Community Hour (online)		🕒 10:30 AM – Community Hour (online)		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online) 	🕒 7:00 PM – Community Hour (online)		🕒 10:30 AM – Community Hour (online)	7:00 PM – Book Group (online)	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online) 	🕒 7:00 PM – Community Hour (online)		🕒 10:30 AM – Community Hour (online)		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online) 	🕒 12 Noon – May Vista Articles due 7:00 PM – Community Hour (online)		🕒 10:30 AM – Community Hour (online)		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service	6:30 PM – UU Knits (online) 	🕒 7:00 PM – Community Hour (online)		🕒 10:30 AM – Community Hour (online)		
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
10:30 AM – Online Sunday Service		🕒		🕒		

🕒 *Rev. Laurel office hours*

**THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
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Minister EmeritaThe Reverend Cindy Frado

Director of Religious Education.....Cassie Lengel

Music Director.....Kala Farnham

Office Assistant.....Elisa Scully

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Treasurer..... Lisa Shumway

Collector..... Susie Wells

Clerk.....Robin Fleming

Moderator..... Andy Koenigsberg

Historian..... Stacy Spies

Membership John Metzger, Lisa Shumway

DUE DATES

FOR VISTA NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Announcements, suggestions, or questions?

The VISTA is published monthly and submissions are welcome. Please email submissions to:

Andy Koenigsberg at Vista@uucsw.org.

Please put "VISTA" in the subject line.

**June Vista articles due by
Noon, Tuesday, May 19th.**

**For updates visit
uucsw.org**

