



Volume 24 | Issue 2 October 2020 Unitarian Universalist Congregational Society of Westborough

## October Worship Schedule

Worship Theme of the Month: **Deep Listening**



### SUNDAY OCTOBER 4, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Rev. Laurel Gray

#### The Color of Leaves

Our spiritual heritage is one deeply tied to an experience of awe in nature. As we seek to nurture our spirits as a community, we'll focus today on our Unitarian roots and how they call us to notice and open ourselves to moments of transcendence.

### SUNDAY OCTOBER 11, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) – Bruce Hall & Kala Farnham

#### Moved to Tears by Music

Bruce Hall hosts a music-oriented service featuring selections by our own Kala Farnham and some special guests. We'll also explore how and why music can be so emotional and meaningful to us.

### SUNDAY OCTOBER 18, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) - Rev. Laurel Gray

#### How to Listen

So much of life is spent with people talking past each other. Being listened to deeply is a rare experience, but a profound gift. Let us, as a community, consider how we listen and what gets in the way of true connection.

### SUNDAY OCTOBER 25, 10:30 AM

Online Sunday Service on [Zoom](#) - Rev. Cynthia Frado, Minister Emerita

#### Calling All Light Keepers

To be sure, we are entering an unprecedented moment of uncertainty in our country. We are also moving toward the season of darkness as the earth turns once again toward the night. Now, more than ever, we need to listen deeply to the call to carry the torch of hope into this dark night of the soul. May our united flame burn bright.

## *From the Minister*

Dear UUCSW,

How quickly summer shifts into fall. How quickly life changes. As the political tension in our country reaches a fever pitch, we return to this community each week seeking renewal, seeking the sustenance of hope, a place where we might be fully known.

To that ends, we're in the process of setting up small groups – “pods” if you will – to create an avenue for deepening relationships in community. Like I said last month, this is an experiment, but I hope it will be a fruitful one. The goal is to give everyone a smaller group of people to connect with monthly – a group of people you know are thinking about you and with whom you can have deeper conversations about your life. Similar to a Covenant Group, this is a space for deep listening, for reflecting on our monthly themes, and remembering that we are not alone.

Each month, we'll send out a Small Group Ministry packet to the whole congregation. The theme for each month will be the same across worship, small groups, and religious education. That way, we can all be immersed in the same kind of reflection together. These monthly packets contain a wealth of resources that you can use as you like – they include spiritual exercises as well as reflection prompts.

Amidst all the chaos and anxiety of this time in history, and all the ways that affects our particular lives, it is of profound importance that we tap into our spiritual depth as a community. As I said in our first service of this year:

What if the stream of renewal comes not from us, not from our own doing, but as a blessing from beyond us – like a gust of crisp air, a serendipitous encounter – and what if our call is simply to pause long enough to notice it? To slow down for a moment and wonder, to marvel, to notice that we are not alone, that there is life amidst the struggle?

What if we did that together? Trusted that there are others around us who are tending hope when our own well is dry, offering their talent to the great rebalancing of the world, holding faith so they might meet us in our whirlwind of despair and not be blown away?

We do this together.

Blessings,

*Laurel*

[Laurel.Gray@uucsw.org](mailto: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

**Welcome back** to the new church year from the board! We have been attending to some major initiatives, and want to highlight some of the good works being done by and with the help of your fellow congregants.

**Teach Your Children:** The first is that plans for RE are being carefully looked at, to continue to offer quality virtual programs for all our children. The curriculum will be shaped to address a theme-based teaching program. All ages, including older youth, will have activities and lessons around these themes. In addition, Reverend Laurel plans to incorporate the principles from these themes into worship services, in order to create a cohesive and coordinated program. Thanks to the RE task force and the RE committee for all their efforts in supporting our children's needs.

**Coping with COVID:** Next are considerations presented by the impact of the pandemic on us individually and collectively. Virtual services have continued throughout the summer due to the strong work of our program committee, lay leaders, and tech support as well as Kala's gift of music. Reverend Laurel and many others are preparing to provide virtual services into the fall. The board is receiving advice from the members of the Re-Opening Panel to formulate the best plan going forward to continue to keep us all safe while maintaining our sense of worship and community. We appreciate the re-opening panel members' guidance and building and grounds committee's efforts to apply various health and safety guidelines. Thank you for your patience.

**Standing Committee work:** In addition, we are uplifted by and always appreciative of the ongoing work of ALL of our standing committees, including the newly-formed Racial Justice Committee, which has been very active through the summer and has plans for the fall which include support of "UU the Vote" as well as book discussions to support our continued learning.

**Money Matters:** Finally, a huge thank you to Lisa Shumway and the recently expanded finance committee, who are focused on meeting the financial challenges brought about by the pandemic. They will be presenting the remainder of the year's budget for a congregational vote at the special meeting after church on September 27. We appreciate your attendance.

We are grateful to you all, who do the work that needs doing.

Thank you everyone for your continued engagement.

*Kim Hall on behalf of the UUcsw Board of Trustees*

### Board Meeting Dates:

- October 1, 2020
- November 5, 2020
- December 3, 2020
- January 7, 2021
- February 4, 2021
- March 4, 2021
- April 1, 2021
- May 6, 2021
- June 3, 2021

## 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](mailto: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.

## Food Collections

Last year, our congregation made and delivered hundreds of lunches to a homeless shelter in Worcester. The need remains, but the pandemic is blocking us from repeating our success of last year. We will adapt to ensure that we can provide at least the same level of assistance to one of Worcester's most vulnerable populations.

Please watch for notices of and support monthly food collections, and, if you would like to do more, please reach out to:

- Ed Walsh ([walshnboro@aol.com](mailto:walshnboro@aol.com)),
- Jerry Breecher ([Jerry@breecher.com](mailto:Jerry@breecher.com)),
- Pauline Sciarappa ([psciarappa@gmail.com](mailto:psciarappa@gmail.com)), or
- Marjorie Fisher ([mfisher2898@gmail.com](mailto:mfisher2898@gmail.com)).

## Take UUCSW Wherever You Go with Our Podcast

Did you know **you can listen to the entire back catalog of Rev. Laurel's sermons on demand - AND hear additional in-depth conversations about UUism, community, healing, anti-racism, and so much more?** It's all available on our podcast, called [UUCSW Reflections!](#)

**What is a podcast?** A podcast is a radio show that you listen to on the internet. UUCSW Reflections is the name of our church's podcast. Each sermon or discussion is one episode of the podcast.

**How do I listen to the UUCSW Reflections podcast?** There are two ways:

1. You can visit the podcast website on your computer.
  - Step 1: Click here: [bit.ly/UUpod](http://bit.ly/UUpod)
  - Step 2: Click the "PLAY" button underneath the episode you want to hear.
2. Or, you can listen on your smartphone using a podcast app.
  - Step 1: Make sure you have a podcast app on your smartphone.
    - If you have an iPhone, you probably already have one called Podcasts.
    - If you don't have one, go to your App Store and download one for free. I recommend the one called Overcast.
  - Step 2: Open your podcast app and find the search bar. Search for UUCSW Reflections.
  - Step 3: Tap on the episode you want to listen to.
  - Step 4: Subscribe! That way, future episodes will appear in your podcast app automatically.

**What's the difference between the "Sermon" episodes and the "Q&A" episodes?** The episodes with "Sermon" in the title are recordings of Rev. Laurel delivering her sermons. The monthly "Q&A" episodes are one-on-one conversations between Rev. Laurel and podcast host Amanda Hall. Together they reflect on themes from the month's sermons and answer questions from the congregation.

**How do I submit topics or questions for Rev. Laurel and Amanda to discuss on the monthly Q&A episode?** Easy! Email [podcasts@uucsw.org](mailto:podcasts@uucsw.org). We won't share your name or identifying info on air.

## Racial Justice Committee

Through the end of the calendar year, the committee will meet monthly in the late afternoon. The first portion will be devoted to business and the second portion will address the racial justice issue, idea, or activity of the day. **It's not too late to get involved!** If interested, contact Jane Walsh at [janenboro@aol.com](mailto:janenboro@aol.com) or 508-393-9206 for meeting schedule. The October meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 – 5:30pm. If meeting time does not work for you, please let Jane know.

**Sample how we have been learning!** Committee members individually watched *I Am Not Your Negro* (2016) then discussed it. PBS.org describes the documentary as envisioning "... the book James Baldwin never finished, a radical narration about race in America, using the writer's original words, as read by actor Samuel L. Jackson. Alongside a flood of rich archival material, ... [it] is a journey into black history that connects the past of the Civil Rights movement to the present of #BlackLivesMatter..." It is available through various services including PBS, Prime Video, Net Flix, YouTube and CWMARS Public Library collection.

**Who is James Baldwin?** "James Baldwin was an essayist, playwright, novelist and voice of the American civil rights movement ... While not a marching or sit-in style activist, Baldwin emerged as one of the leading voices in the Civil Rights Movement for his compelling work on race." In a collection of essays, *The Fire Next Time* (1963), Baldwin intended to educate White Americans on the experience of being Black, while also providing a view of White Americans from an African American perspective. He was born in Harlem in 1924 and died in France in 1987. (Quote and content from [www.biography.com/writer/james-baldwin](http://www.biography.com/writer/james-baldwin))

**Locally, did you know?** The town of Westborough has an active Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The committee is meeting virtually. Their meetings can be viewed live in real time or can be watched after the fact. To view a recording of their September 17, 2020 meeting, go to [westboroughtv.org](http://westboroughtv.org) and then click on Meetings On Demand; or you can use this link:

<http://71.248.188.158/CablecastPublicSite/show/9040?channel=2>

**Save the date!** Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 pm, the book *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson will be discussed. You and your friends are invited to join in!

**Suggestions? Questions?** Contact Jane Walsh, Chair of the Racial Justice Committee [janenboro@aol.com](mailto:janenboro@aol.com) or 508-393-9206 (please leave a message).

# October Calendar of Events

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday                        | Thursday                  | Friday    | Saturday  |
|--|--|-----------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>27</b>  | <b>28</b>                                      | <b>29</b> | <b>30</b>                        | <b>1</b>                  | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| 10:30 AM –<br><a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a><br>& Church Budget Meeting | 6:30 PM –<br><a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a> | 🕒         |                                  | 🕒<br>7 PM – Board Meeting |           |           |
| <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>                                       | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b>                         | <b>8</b>                  | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| 10:30 AM –<br><a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>                            | 6:30 PM –<br><a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a> |           |                                  | 🕒                         |           |           |
| <b>11</b>  | <b>12</b>                                      | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b>                        | <b>15</b>                 | <b>16</b> | <b>17</b> |
| 10:30 AM –<br><a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>                            | 6:30 PM –<br><a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a> | 🕒         | 4:00 PM – Racial Justice Meeting | 🕒                         |           |           |
| <b>18</b>  | <b>19</b>                                      | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b>                        | <b>22</b>                 | <b>23</b> | <b>24</b> |
| 10:30 AM –<br><a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>                            | 6:30 PM –<br><a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a> | 🕒         |                                  | 🕒                         |           |           |
| <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b>                                      | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b>                        | <b>29</b>                 | <b>30</b> | <b>31</b> |
| 10:30 AM –<br><a href="#">Online Sunday Service</a>                            | 6:30 PM –<br><a href="#">UU Knits (online)</a> | 🕒         |                                  | 🕒                         |           |           |

🕒 Rev. Laurel office hours

