



UUCRV NEWS



Published by and for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley
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February, 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>This month we are supporting Caritas by making food or monetary donations to once again provide food for homeless teens. Spring break is just around the corner and there will be an increased need for food for these young people when they are not able to eat at school. Thanks for helping our young neighbors!</i></p>						1
<p>2 10:30 am Worship: <i>On Marginalized Peoples</i> Rev. Allen Harden</p> <hr/> <p>12:00 pm Worship Committee meeting</p> <hr/> <p><i>Mariah Gomez's birthday</i></p>	<p>3 6:45 pm – <i>Whose History is it Anyway?</i> webinar</p>	4	5	6	7	8
<p>9 10:30 am Worship: <i>“Generosity”</i> Wendy Edgington</p>	<p>10 6:45 pm – <i>Whose History is it Anyway</i> <i>webinar?</i> <i>Grant Heckel's birthday</i></p>	11	<p>12 6:00 pm – Small Congregations webinar</p>	13	<p>14 <i>Christopher Sims's birthday</i></p>	15
<p>16 10:30 am Worship: <i>Conversations</i> Rev. Allen Harden 12:00 pm Meeting re: Religious Education for Children and Youth</p>	<p>17 6:45 pm – <i>Whose History is it Anyway</i> <i>webinar?</i></p>	18	<p>19 10:30 am – Touchstones Small Group: Generosity</p> <hr/> <p>3:00 pm - UUCRV Service at Highview in the Woodlands</p>	<p>20 Please send in articles for the March Newsletter!</p>	<p>21 <i>Marty Gabriel's birthday</i></p>	22
<p>23 10:30 am Worship:</p>	<p>24 6:45 pm – <i>Whose History is it Anyway</i> <i>webinar?</i> <i>Zoey Kevari-Zimmerman's birthday</i></p>	25	26	<p>27 <i>Dianna Kevari's birthday</i></p>	28	29

Minister's Musings - Reverend Allen Harden



This month, I am spending much of my day trying not to get too caught up in the ongoing impeachment drama playing out in Washington. I need to remind myself that the mere fact that it is happening is a good thing, a process by which our government is (maybe) attempting to take some responsibility for how it behaves in the world. I fully expect that the Senate trial will be brief and will acquit the President without looking at evidence. And even if they are shamed into hearing witnesses, I doubt decisions will be influenced by the testimony.

As an optimistic sort, I hope that this show is a wake-up call to bring some Americans back to the idea that principles and values matter in governance. Our executive is clearly self-serving and is an embarrassment. Our legislature is split into lock-step partisanship. And we are responsible, because we elected all of these people; many of whom are puppets to causes I find abhorrent, distasteful, and wrong. So, will America wake up and start paying attention? I found hope in 2018, and expect that trend to continue this election season. That is our job.

Whatever your individual politics, or those of the people around you, we need to make sure that the integrity of our government tops every candidate's priorities. Not just lip service, but taking on a responsibility to do better. If we actually make progress in this direction, then we will have gained something of value from all of the recent trials and shortcomings.

We need our leaders to believe they must answer to moral imperatives, to conscience, to the law, to right and wrong. We must demand this, loudly and clearly. How we run our nation and behave in the world is a MORAL issue. And as I hinted, I am optimistic that this presidency has shaken people enough to bring them to question what is wrong. That would be progress.

Other than this, I am fine, thanks. I still sort of like wintertime, and find pleasure in trying to stay warm when the world around me isn't. I love the beauty of snowy wonderlands contrasted with stark leafless trees and naked landscapes. I love the play of light, the muted colors in the sky. I always seem to get a lot done in winter. Some of you aren't fans, but I won't apologize.

As we all nest indoors more than normal, use the extra time alone in good ways. Read, write, and think. Breathe. Pretty soon we'll be back to the seasons where life gets busy.

Committee Reports

Worship: Our service themes and speakers calendar is completed through the middle of March. Among some of the discussion points brought up at the last meeting were: How to get people to enter the sanctuary quietly. Especially once the bell has sounded. Still too much noise and talking when trying to get the service started. A list of members names were brought up as possible group speakers for the 1/26 service on what brought you to UUCRV and what kept you coming back. The Dec 29th service dealt with developing a vision for UUCRV. This was the start of a necessary process for our future.

Physical Plant & Ground: Our Gratitude - Thanks to the unknown benefactor who saw to the repair of the damaged fence at the corner of School Street and Highway 75. Inquiries were made of the usual suspects, but no one admitted to the deed. In fact, I didn't even realize it was done until someone drew my attention to it. Now I notice it every time I pass by. Did you notice it? Check it out.

(P.S. If you did it and want to remain anonymous, please tell me and I won't tell another soul).

Ray Herzer

Small Group Discussions??

This Spring, we will again offer discussion and sharing in smaller groups. I am trying to get a handle on interest and best times, so your input is vital. A new twist is that we will experiment with groups that meet through computer video conferencing as well as traditional sit-in-the-same-room groups. . Some of us cannot travel, others find it inconvenient to drive to the church at odd times, and this would allow you to participate from home.

Meeting by computer conferencing is now routine in business and education, and is easy, accessible, and free (to you). Most of you have a computer sufficient for this purpose if you are connected to the internet. We can provide tech support to get you started. Online discussions can't bring all benefits of physical meetings, but they are surprisingly engaging.

We can organize regular discussions and classes, book-reading groups, or one-time discussions; on a wide range of topics. I have a few suggestions, and seek more.

- A second Touchstones small group, meeting by computer conference once each month to consider the themed material. This would mirror the small group that physically meets at the church, and is designed for those who can't travel or who are unable to attend the Wednesday sessions.
- A reading group on the UU common read. This year it is *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Beacon Press 2104.
- A forum for discussion of important issues in the Stateline area. These might involve electoral politics, local government policy, schools, development plans, land management and preservation, environmental issues, or any hot-button events.
- Reading and discussing any book that a few of us feel engages our spiritual/moral growth, or that touches our principles.
- Discussions in areas of interest. Previously, I have engaged in discussions of personal theology and of aging. Both were rich, partly because of the topics and partly because we are interesting people who like being engaged and stimulated.

Please respond to Allen by email: uucrvminister@gmail.com or by phone: 773-288-2394
Indicate what interests you, and when/how you might like to meet. My current suggestions are:
Computer conferencing: Tuesdays (morning, afternoon, or evening), Wednesday afternoons.
In-the-flesh meetings: Fridays (morning, afternoon, evening), Saturday mornings.

BIRTHDAYS

1 – Mariah Gomez 10 – Grant Heckel 14 – Christopher Sims
21 – Marty Gabriel 24 – Zoey Kevari-Zimmerman 27 -Dianna Kevari



#VOTELOVE #DEFEATHATE #UUTHEVOTE

Friday, April 17, 2020, the Unitarian Universalist Action Network (UUANI) will be hosting an event in Rockford, IL. (See the Regional Assembly article)

All who are interested in taking an active part in the UU the Vote campaign, plan to attend. As I receive further information, it will be passed on. Wendy Edgington

Social Justice Work for CARITAS
Community Resource Center in Beloit

In November we collected food and money in excess of \$300 to provide meals for homeless teens over their winter break when they are not in school and able to get their meals from the school food program. Spring break for these teens is just around the corner so we are once again asking for food items or money to provide food for them. There is a shopping list if you want to buy the food yourself or you can place a monetary donation in one of the envelopes provided in the basket on the table as you enter the Sanctuary.

Thank you for helping our young neighbors in need!



**UUANI Social Justice
Corps:**

I attended the UUANI Board Retreat in Rockford on January 17 & 18, 2020. The business meeting was basically a 2019-year end assessment.

Exciting news it that **Social Justice Leadership Teams** now exist in Carbondale, Elgin, Rockford, Rockton, Third and Unity Temple!

In attendance was Rev. David Pyle, Congregational Life Consultant/Regional Lead for our MidAmerica Region! I spoke with him about the importance of not only MidAmerica, but UUA trying to be more inclusive regarding small congregations. I hope that UUCRV will build a useful and resourceful relationship with Rev. Pyle.

Unitarian Universalist Action Network of Wisconsin is currently in the formation process! We have high hopes that it will be in place very soon!

Vote Love is one of our major focuses for 2020. I will share information with you as I receive it!

Respectfully submitted by Wendy Edgington.



February Shopping List

Homeless teens rely on meals at school for their nutrition, but need help when school is closed for spring break. Caritas supplies about 100 students per week. Can you please help by donating some of these items?

- Mac & cheese cups (with pull-tab tops)
- Soup cups (with pull-tab tops)
- Spaghetti and meatball cups (with pull-tab tops)
- Baked beans cans (with pull-tab tops)
- Little cereal cups or boxes (low sugar)
- Granola or cereal bars
- Fruit or applesauce can or cups (with pull-tab tops or peel-off lids)
- Small bags of nuts
- Pudding cups
- Packs of crackers (with PB or cheese)
- Juice boxes
- White or chocolate milk boxes (that don't need refrigeration)

♥ Happy Valentines Day ♥

News From Your UUCRV Social Justice Leadership Team

Your UUCRV Social Justice Leadership Team has talked about how to include all our members and friends in our social justice focus on the environment and the climate crisis. Each month we will share some brief information in our newsletter with actions that everyone can take to help make a difference in healing our Earth. While these ideas might seem simplistic and even obvious, the most important action we can start with is educating ourselves and others about the science of climate change. And the most powerful action we can take is to influence our legislators to make decisions that impact our environment in a positive way.



What can I do about the climate crisis?

❖ Educate yourself about the climate crisis:

- We will be providing regular handouts like this to share current information about the climate crisis.
- Check our Facebook group for postings about the climate crisis, including videos and articles as well as links to websites.
- Attend community meetings on local and state environmental actions – we'll let you know about events in our area.
- For more information you can go to websites like:
un.org uumfe.org 350.org climate.nasa.gov/ www.ipcc.ch/about/climaterealityproject.org

❖ Have conversations with others about the climate crisis and share information.

- Talk with other members at church about what you have learned and about what you are experiencing regarding climate change.
- Expand your conversation to family, friends, co-workers, the person sitting next to you in the dentist office.
- Find a community bulletin board where you can post an informational handout about the climate crisis.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.

❖ Contact your legislators about your concerns regarding the climate crisis and demand they take action!

- Call, write and/or visit your legislators and share what you have learned and what your concerns are about the climate crisis. Share information and ideas to help address the crisis. (More about this later!)

Unitarian Universalists' Roles in Black History

There are a number of examples of a "Story for All Ages" on the UUA website that help all of us learn about Black History, including black Unitarian Universalists and the role Unitarian Universalists have played in black history in this country. You might read and share these stories as a family to learn about people of our faith.

One of the stories, "Theodore Parker and the Crafts" by Polly Peterson, is about a Unitarian minister and the life of two runaway slaves, William and Ellen Craft. Parker was an abolitionist and wrote and preached extensively about the abolition of slavery and the rights of blacks.



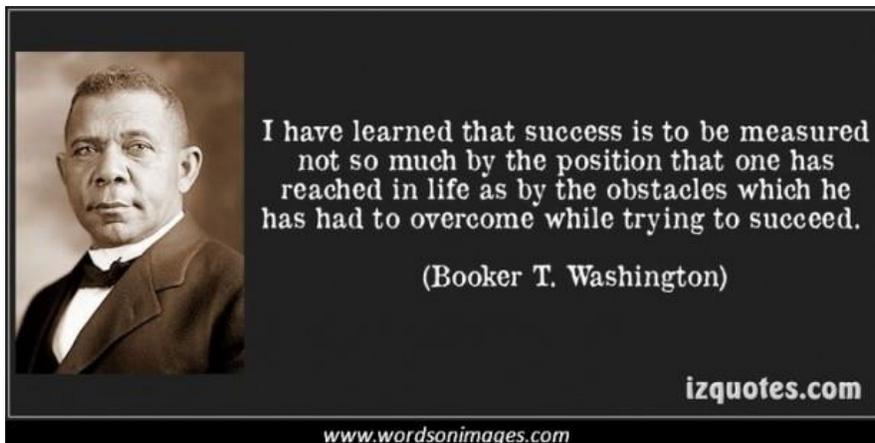
Excerpt: "Until the time of the Fugitive Slave Law [passed in 1850], abolitionists had been very unpopular, even in Massachusetts. Now, Theodore Parker, who had been despised by many for his radical views, suddenly became enormously popular. Every week, his sermons and speeches were heard by thousands of people and read by many more. One person who read everything by Theodore Parker that he could get his hands on was William Herndon of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln's law partner. Herndon often passed along Parker's writings to Lincoln, who expressed his admiration. In one sermon, Herndon had underlined the following words that he thought would interest Lincoln: "Democracy is direct self-government, over all the people, for all the people, by all the people." To read the entire story go to:

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/newuu/workshop4/parker-crafts>



Another story, "John L. Cashin: Witness for Justice," is about a black Unitarian Universalist, John L. Cashin, Jr., who played an important role in the civil rights movement. He ran for mayor of Huntsville, Alabama and governor of Alabama even though he did not expect to win. At the time he ran (1970) there were no black elected officials and few blacks could even vote in elections.

Excerpt: "So, with so little chance to win, why did John L. Cashin run for mayor, and then for governor? Well, John was an activist who understood the power of public witness. And he had made a promise when he was 11 years old, to do whatever he could to get Blacks involved in the political process and to speak out against the injustices that kept them away. Every time John Cashin put his name on a ballot and his picture on election posters and flyers, he caught the dreams of other African Americans in Alabama. Campaign speeches gave him a chance to make some noise for justice, and speak out against laws that were not fair to African Americans." To read the entire story go to: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapes/try/children/signs/session15/288119.shtml>



A Story from Touchstones Project on Generosity

The Touchstones theme for the month of February is generosity. Our second Unitarian Universalist Principle asks that we covenant to promote and affirm “Justice, equity and compassion in human relations.” The children’s version of the Principles says it this way: “We believe that all people should be treated fairly and kindly.” Join in our worship service and small group ministry this month to explore the concept of generosity and how we practice it in our lives. Share this story with your family and together discuss its meaning.

The Fox and the Lion, a retelling of a Sufi wisdom tale

Once there was a woman who prayed to understand what path she should take in life. One night, after praying, she dreamed of walking in the woods. The next day, she journeyed to the woods, searching for the answer to her prayers. It was quiet and peaceful. Then she saw a patch of red fur: It was an injured fox, lying in the shade of a large tree. Before she could reach the fox, she heard the nearby bushes rustle and out came a lion, with a fish in its mouth. Frightened, the woman hid herself and watched as the lion laid the fish near the fox, turned around, and left the way it came. As she watched the weakened fox eat the fish, she said to herself, “There is my answer! The Great Provider—who takes care of the fox—will also take care of me. I do not have to do anything. I will be taken care of, if I just have faith.”

The woman went back home, happy to have her answer. And, indeed, she did not do anything. She did not go to work. She did not feed herself. She did not even bathe. She became hungry sitting in her house, so she went to town to see if she would be provided for there. Yet no provisions came. People avoided her. She grew weak from hunger. She fell into a restless sleep and dreamed that she was back in the woods.

“Oh, Great Provider!” she implored in her dream. “You took care of the little fox, but you will not provide for me?”

The Great Provider replied, “You are mistaken. I do not want you to be the fox. I want you to be the lion.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/chorus/workshop8/fox-lion>



“Your time is the greatest gift you can give to someone.” *Unknown*

“Poor people share with the heart.” *Haitian (on generosity)*

Small Numbers, Infinite Possibilities

We are always on the lookout for resources to support our small, but mighty congregation. This year the Board elected to sign up for “A Year of Learning and Connection for Smaller Congregations” led by Regional UUA Congregational Life Staff. The description of the webinar series is “We know that small congregations are sharing the Love and Grace of Unitarian Universalism with their people and their communities every day. We also know that small churches can be faced with big challenges. Together we can help small congregations reach toward their greatest potential.”

A number of members have participated in three webinars so far this year, including:

- October – Smalls Making a Big Difference
- November – Right Sizing Your Congregation’s Operations
- January – Stewardship and Sustainability for the Long Haul

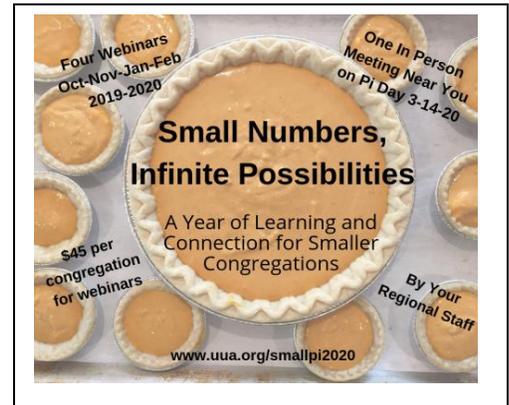
There is one more webinar to come, “Being Beloved Community” in February followed by “Pi Day” in March when we will have an opportunity to meet in person with leaders of other small congregations.

Those members who have been participating in this webinar series have been meeting and talking in order to answer these questions:

- * What are we already doing that is helping members of our community grow and deepen?
- * What can we stop doing or change that depletes us rather than feeds us?
- * How might we help “grow souls”? How might we measure how well we are doing?

How would you answer these questions? Share with Wendy, Paulette, Denny or Susan any ideas you might have regarding our small congregation.

These types of learning opportunities are critical to our continued growth and our ability to thrive as a congregation. This is one of the reasons the Board and Finance Committee are working to increase our financial support to both the UUA and MidAmerica Region to pay what is often referred to as “Fair Share.” What we get in return can be invaluable to not only us, but also to supporting our UU values in the world.



MidAmerica Region

MidAmerica Regional Assembly in Rockford, IL April 18, 2020

Please save the date for our upcoming, Regional Assembly (RA) which will be held at the **Unitarian Universalist Church, Rockford, IL, on Saturday, April 18, 2020**. Our keynote speaker will be [Taquiena Boston](#), Special Advisor to the UUA President for Institutional Inclusion, Equity, and Change. The day will feature worship, the annual business meeting, lunch, keynote presentation, workshops, and a presentation from members of the [Commission on Institutional Change](#). On Friday evening, April 17, the UU Church in Rockford will graciously host an evening gathering for those in town. Reverend Matthew Johnson, minister of the Rockford Church, will be in touch with clergy about a regional Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) gathering on Friday, April 17.

[Read more details on RA2020 and Register...](#) For more information contact midamerica@uua.org.

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