



# UUCRV NEWS



Published by and for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley  
 329 School St., Mailing address: P.O. Box 256, Rockton, IL 61072  
 Phone: 815-624-4094 Visit us at [www.uucrv.org](http://www.uucrv.org)

## AUGUST 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>2 Service on ZOOM – look for the email with the link</b> 10:30 am Worship: <b>“Friends of UUCRV”</b> Jerry Paulson 1:00, Senior Sit With	<b>3</b> Judy Stevens Birthday	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9 Service on ZOOM – look for the email with the link</b> 10:30 am Worship: <b>Touchstones: Creation</b> Jerry Paulson, Jodell Gabriel & Lynda Johnson	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Melinda Stogsdill Birthday	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 10:00 – 12:00 Board Meeting	<b>14</b> Connie Matusiak Birthday	<b>15</b>
<b>16 Service on ZOOM – look for the email with the link</b> 10:30 am Worship: <b>Getting to Know You</b> Rev. Marlene Walker	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Cher Zimmerman Birthday	<b>20</b> 10:00 a.m. <b>“Zoom Coffee Chat”</b> with Rev. Walker	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23 Service on ZOOM – look for the email with the link</b> 10:30 am Worship: <b>TBA</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 10:00 a.m. <b>“Zoom Coffee Chat”</b> with Rev. Walker	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30 Service on ZOOM – look for the email with the link</b> 10:30 am Worship: <b>TBA</b> Milli Fleer Birthday <b>Jan Henningsen Birthday</b>	<b>31</b>					

### Birthdays

3 – Judy Stevens    11 – Melinda Stogsdill  
 14 – Connie Matusiak    19 – Cher Zimmerman  
 30 – Milli Fleer    30 – Jan Henningsen



## MINISTER'S MUSINGS

Hello UUCRV!

What a time to be beginning a new ministry together! While we don't officially begin our ministry until August 15<sup>th</sup>, I want to say hello now and share a little bit about me so we can begin to get to know each other.

I have been a UU minister for going on 30 years most recently in Racine, WI. I have served congregations in MD, MA, IL, IA, ID, IN (yes that's all the "I" states) and WI. Most of that time I have been an accredited interim minister. While I have loved being an interim minister the time has come for me to put down roots, live fulltime in my home of 12 years, and minister in the community that is my home. I am very much looking forward to our ministry together and becoming a part of this wonderful community.

A little bit about me. My wife, Gloria, and I have 7 adult children and 9 grandchildren. One of our families, including three of those grandchildren, live here in Rockton and the kids all attend the Shirland School. Truth be told we followed them out here and are so glad we did. We also share our home with the amazing Miss Daisy, a 5 year old Shetland Sheepdog. Our other children and grandchildren are scattered across the country; including Brooklyn, NY, Los Angeles and Belmont CA, Alexandria and Fredricksburg VA, and Chicago and Roselle, IL.

I wish I could tell you that I know how to begin a new ministry in the midst of a pandemic, but I simply do not. None of us do. So many of the in person ways that we have always used to get to know each other and start a ministry together are not possible. And. We'll figure it all out and learn together. To start, my first service with you will be on August 16<sup>th</sup> and I am titling it "Getting To Know You". I am hoping to hear from you during that service what your hopes and dreams for UUCRV and our ministry together are.

Starting on Thursday August 20<sup>th</sup> at 10am I will begin hosting a weekly Zoom Coffee Chat. *Watch for the invite link and come and join me in discussion.* Also watch for future scheduling of more ways we can have small groups and other virtual events to get acquainted. If you have ideas for those, I am open to hearing them.

In the meantime, I'll continue getting settled back into our home, enjoying as much of this summer as I can, and getting ready for our adventure in ministry.

Blessings all,

Marlene

***Members and Friends: UUCRV's new church year began July 1. Since we aren't in the church building, the finance committee is asking you to send pledges and donations to the treasurer, Nina Herzer, 593 Betsy Ross Lane, Rockton IL 61072 or to UUCRV, PO Box 256, Rockton IL 61072. The bills continue to arrive and require payment. Thanks for your gifts which support UUCRV — the church building and our programs. Nina***



## JOIN US FOR OUR WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICES ON ZOOM – HERE’S HOW!

We are holding weekly worship services this time of social distancing using the application which participants can access computer, tablet or phone. Members and receive an email each week with the link for service – check for an email from UUCRV, [uucrockvalley@gmail.com](mailto:uucrockvalley@gmail.com)



during Zoom on their friends the

that arrived sometime before Sunday.

You will need to download the Zoom application first. You can start this process by clicking on the blue link in the email and agreeing to the install.

During the join process you will be asked several things:

- Your name will be requested to identify you to the other members at the meeting.
- You will be asked if you want to use your computer’s camera, if it has one. If you want to be seen by others during the service click to allow. Otherwise you will be displayed by name only.
- Next you will be asked to use the computers audio. You will want to select that so you can hear us, and we can hear you.

Once the install has been completed the application will start and you will begin to join the worship service. You should see other members who have joined the service.

Before the meeting, you will want to locate the microphone icon to allow you to mute the microphone on your device. This is important for the others listening to the service as any conversations you have with others in the room or any sounds you make, even shuffling papers, are picked up by the microphone and can make listening very difficult for others. It should look like this at the bottom of your computer screen. Similar icons may be located at the top of your tablet.



You, or the Host, can unmute the microphone when it is time to talk to each other, such as when Checking In or sharing Joys and Concerns.

If you would like to watch a video tutorial on Zoom you can see one created by Foothills Unitarian in Colorado at: <https://youtu.be/o-UM1JWwzZo>

**Hope to see you on Sunday!**



**Unitarian Universalist Advocacy Network of Illinois**

**FAIR TAX IN IL**

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020 @ 7 PM**

*With fmr Senator Daniel Biss. We will also explore how to communicate about the Fair Tax based on our values.*

Daniel Biss began his career as a mathematics professor at the University of Chicago before becoming an organizer and then elected official. He served as a member of the Illinois House and Illinois Senate

and ran an insurgent grassroots campaign for the Democratic nomination for governor, coming in second in a crowded field.

His campaigns and legislative service have all featured a strong commitment to public engagement, political reform, and economic justice.

Here is the link to register for this event: <https://tinyurl.com/ywkbz8h4>

*Co-Sponsored by UUANI, Vote Yes for Fair Tax and IL-League of Women Voters*

## Touchstones Project Theme for August: Creation

The creation account in Genesis is read in divergent ways. For some it is a literal, historical narrative. Closely related to this is Genesis as theology as it describes the origin of the earth and humanity in terms of God. More liberal approaches regard it as either ancient science representing the state of knowledge about the cosmos, both its origin and purpose, or as a mythic history that attempts to articulate a symbolic representation of historical time.

Given what we know about how the universe, the planet earth, and our own species came into being, the account of creation in Genesis is incredulous if we take it as galaxies formed and stars were born, the so-called luminaries. Finally, we human beings were created out of the stuff of this planet, whether we call it clay or star dust. Unitarian Universalist minister Ralph Helverson spoke of impassioned clay, by which he meant the clay of our humanity. He wrote, "Deep in ourselves resides the religious impulse./ Out of the passions of our clay it rises./ We have religion when we stop deluding ourselves that we are self-sufficient, self-sustaining, or self-derived.",,,

...The spirit/nature split that arose in Western religion devalued this world in favor of a supernatural realm. The reality is that the earth is our origin and our destiny. In very radical ways, we are in this world and of this world. We do not need to go to the mountains or the ocean to get back to nature, because we are never apart from nature. More importantly, everything that we do touches the earth. Our touch is either an embrace that caresses the earth or an attack that violates it. The earth's future is our future. The question is, "What future will we have together?"

Thomas Berry wrote, in his 1988 book *The Dream of the Earth*, "Through human presence the forests of the earth are destroyed. Fertile soils become toxic and then wash away in the rain or blow away in the wind. Mountains of human-derived waste grow ever higher. Wetlands are filled in. Each year approximately ten thousand species disappear forever. Even the ozone layer above the earth is depleted." Ironically, the concern about the greenhouse effect and global warming is not recent. Svante Arrhenius, a Swedish scientist, claimed in **1896** that fossil fuel combustion may eventually result in enhanced global warming because of a relationship between atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations and temperature.

Unitarian Universalist minister Jacob Trapp observed that the human species acts as if it alone is invincible, while other species are driven into extinction. Trapp wrote, "If we are to survive, we who are an endangered species, we shall have to learn to walk in harmony with each other and with our natural environment. To respect the human by respecting the non-human." Trapp noted that the original sin was not the human transgression against God brought about by eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge. "The fall of humanity," Trapp asserted, "is our alienation from nature, from other creatures and, thereby, from ourselves."

Creation did not end on the sixth day as the story in Genesis would have us believe. It is a continuous process and we have become co-creators with nature. Our appropriate role is not to

dominate the earth, but to use our creativity to allow us to live human lives with dignity and meaning within the earth's ecological means. The first step in changing our relationship with the earth is to awaken in us and in all humanity a reverence for the earth. It is this sense of reverence that reminds us that the earth is a sacred place, that it is our home, our dwelling place.

If we take seriously our seventh principle, "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part," and our sixth source, "spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature," then Earth Day must become the holiest day of the year, and a symbol of our commitment to a spiritual practice of living as if the earth mattered. Better yet, every day should be Earth Day. If we take seriously these religious values, then we are called to be a blessing to this planet, our home, our only home, and not a curse. If we aspire to be the pinnacle of creation, the species through which the universe became aware of itself, then we need to use our intelligence to conserve, not just consume. If we are to conserve, then we must usher in an ecological age in which our technology is placed in service of the entire earth, and not just our species. If we are to usher in an ecological age, then we must demand of government two things that are currently very rare: leadership and courage.

This is where creation meets creativity. Given the reality of climate change and other planetary challenges, it is only human creativity that can save us as we create ways of living and being that heal the earth, and therefore, heal our alienation from the earth. In the end, the responsibility for the earth belongs to each one of us." (expert from August 2020 Touchstones Journal)



Photo by Charlein Gracia on Unsplash

### ***What the Turtle Taught Theodore*** by Rev. Gary Kowalski

In his autobiography, Theodore Parker relates that as a child, four or five years old, living on a farm in Roxbury, he was walking through the fields one day absent-mindedly swinging a stick through the tall grass. This was many years ago, in the days before the Civil War. It was summertime. He stopped to watch the water bubble along a creek. Then he noticed a turtle sunning itself on a rock.

He'd seen other boys use their sticks to strike a turtles and other animals. It was part of what children thought was fun, just as some children still like to bully and hit those who are weaker than themselves. Often children and grown-ups too are copycats — mimicking the behavior of others who seem bigger or stronger than themselves. Young Theodore wanted to be like the other, older boys he'd seen, so he raised his stick into the air, taking aim and preparing to knock the turtle into the water.

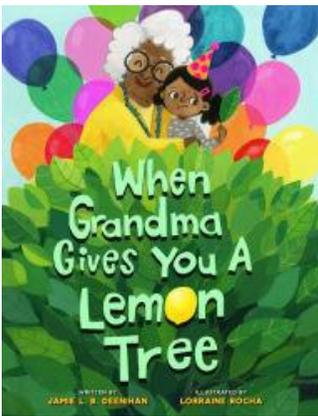
Then something stopped him. Something seemed wrong about the situation. He looked again at the turtle, quiet, peaceful, enjoying the summer day just as he liked to feel the warmth and

light of the sun. Had the turtle ever done him any harm? Was the turtle so different than himself? Slowly he lowered his stick and walked home, thinking about what had happened.

When he arrived home, his mother was there to greet him, and he told her about the incident. She listened carefully to Theodore, and listened especially carefully when he related how some strange force inside had stopped him from hitting the little animal. “Theodore,” she said, “that force inside you was the voice of conscience. Always pay attention to it. Always follow what your conscience tells you. It’s your moral compass that points you in the right direction. And if you honor your conscience, you’ll never go wrong in this world.

Theodore Parker grew up to become a Unitarian minister, in fact one of the greatest leaders our faith has ever known. He became a champion of the defenseless who needed defending. He was a hero in the fight to end slavery in our country. He prayed to “Father and Mother God” and fought for women’s equality and their right to vote. He and wife never had children of their own — but he felt a sense of kinship with the whole family of creation, people of all sexes and races who had been made in the image of the holy. And it all started one summer day when he was just a child — a child who saw a turtle and decided to do what was right.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/what-turtle-taught-theodore>



***When Grandma Gives You a Lemon Tree*** by Jamie L.B. Deenihan, author and Lorraine Rocha, illustrator (2019)

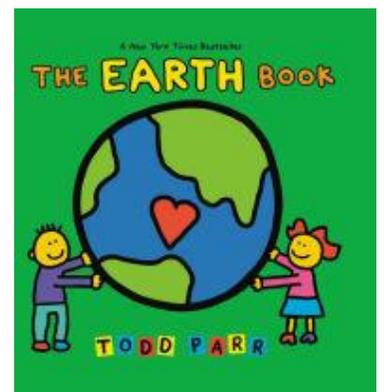
“This charming tale, told in playfully instructive second-person prose, is a cheerful addition to any shelf. A little girl has thoughtfully distributed a detailed birthday list to all family members, so when Grandma arrives at the party bearing, of all things, a LEMON TREE, disappointment oozes from the vibrant page. The girl soon realizes, however, that growing something out of nothing can be an incredibly rewarding experience. Even better, the end result is, quite literally, LEMONADE (delicious recipe included!)”

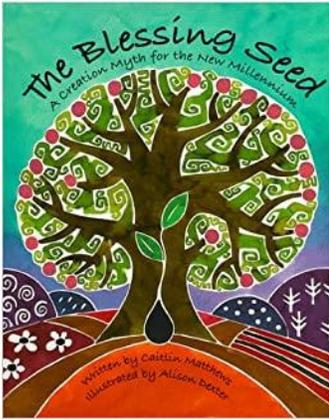
**Video Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGy2oeXVeUE> (3:48)

***The Earth Book*** by Todd Parr (2010)

“The Earth Book is definitely inspiring. ‘I take care of the earth because I know I can do little things every day to make a BIG difference....,’ This book also includes a poster with tips/reminders on how kids can “go green” every day, such as bringing your own bags to the grocery store, planting a tree, turning off the faucet when you brush your teeth, and using both sides of the paper. It’s printed on recycled materials with soy ink, too.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpEc5nHqO2c> (2:56)



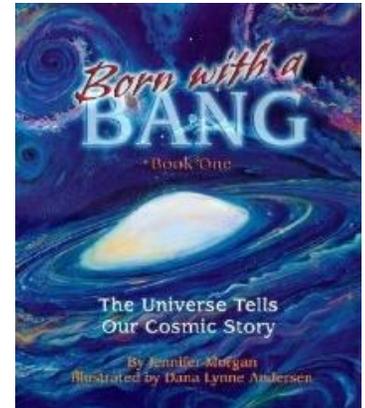


***The Blessing Seed: A Creation Myth for the New Millennium*** by Caitlin Matthews, author and Alison Dexter, illustrator (1999)

“A modern reinterpretation of the traditional Christian story of creation tells how Man and Woman are amazed by the many animals and plants with which they share their home and eventually eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.”

***Born With a Bang: The Universe Tells Our Cosmic Story*** by Jennifer Morgan, author and Dana Lynne Andersen, illustrator (2002)

“Lots of people have gotten very excited about this book and its sequels. It succeeds at telling the amazing story of the universe and the creation of Earth with scientific accuracy but without diminishing the mystery and wonder. The three books together tell OUR STORY. As cosmologist and author Dr. Brian Swimme said: In the magic of this story . . . suddenly, we have the feeling that we BELONG.”



Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2klOCdhqUfl> (11:15)



★ ★ ★ **UU THE VOTE**

Dianna K., Cher Z. and I (Wendy) attended a Zoom meeting with the director of UU The Vote, Wisconsin Chapter, Nora Rasman. Nora is a plethora of information and *motivation!* She can be contacted at [NRASMAN@UUA.ORG](mailto:NRASMAN@UUA.ORG) for more information.

**KEEP UP TO DATE ABOUT UPCOMING PHONE AND TEXT-BANKING OPPORTUNITIES:**

- a. Facebook for **Wisconsin** Residents: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/uuthevotewi/>
- b. UU the Vote website: <https://www.uuthevote.org/>

UU the Vote is also conducting an ‘Organizing School’. Though it is currently in session, you can still register & join in. Here is the link: [uuthe.vote/organizing-school](https://uuthe.vote/organizing-school)

## CALLING ALL POETS!

Do you like to write poetry? Yes? I am searching for poems to include in our newsletter. Please, consider sending me one to be included in the September newsletter. Wendy E. – editor?

The following was written by Connie Matusiak:



### ***All things are fragile,***

*not only the web  
or things of glass.*

*Sturdiness, power,  
rock and storm-  
illusions all.*

*In routine and noise  
and movement,  
we may forget.*

*But sitting still  
at gentlest dawn or eve  
all is quite clear.*

*Fragile  
everything  
every single thing  
fragile  
beautifully fragile.*

Millie Fler wrote this one:

### ***A Smile Is Mandatory***

*As I have grown somewhat older  
I find I'm sagging everyplace.  
I look mad or sad or dreary, unless...  
I have a smile upon my face, so...  
In order for me  
To allow you to see  
All my glowing glory,  
The lesson here is very clear,  
A smile is mandatory.*

## Remembering Congressman John Lewis

“Four former presidents honored Congressman John Lewis at his funeral in Atlanta, Georgia, on Thursday, but none could match the eloquence of Lewis himself who wrote a letter to the nation, offering his final words, in the wake of his months-long battle with stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

“While my time here has now come to an end, I want you to know that in the last days and hours of my life you inspired me,” he said, of the recent rallies in support of racial equality. “You filled me with hope about the next chapter of the great American story when you used your power to make a difference in our society.

”“Democracy is not a state. It is an act, and each generation must do its part to help build what we called the Beloved Community, a nation and world society at peace with itself,” wrote the Civil Rights Movement giant in his essay, published in [the New York Times](#) on July 30, the day of his funeral.

“Ordinary people with extraordinary vision can redeem the soul of America by getting in what I call good trouble, necessary trouble.”

“Though I may not be here with you, I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe. In my life I have done all I can to demonstrate that the way of peace, the way of love and nonviolence is the more excellent way. Now it is your turn to let freedom ring.”

“When historians pick up their pens to write the story of the 21st century, let them say that it was your generation who laid down the heavy burdens of hate at last and that peace finally triumphed over violence, aggression and war,” Lewis continued.

“So I say to you, walk with the wind, brothers and sisters, and let the spirit of peace and the power of everlasting love be your guide.”



A close comrade of Martin Luther King, Jr., he was the last surviving person to have spoken during the 1963 March on Washington For Jobs and Freedom. Lewis’ signature achievement was the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He had his skull fractured that same year while marching with King, leading more than 600 peaceful demonstrators across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Alabama in a rally for those rights.

With President Obama at the 50th anniversary of ‘Bloody Sunday’ on the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

A Georgia statesman reelected to the House of Representatives every two years since 1987, Lewis died on July 17 at age 80.” Submitted by Jodell Gabriel

(Copied from *The Good News Network* - <https://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/john-lewis-pens-letter-to-the-nation/>)

## Worth Noting

Many UUCRV members and friends will remember the Reverend Misha Sanders, a favored speaker at our church. Rev. Misha recently lost her brother and sister-in-law to COVID-19. Misha is also going through some serious health issues.

Dianna Kevari did some research and found a mailing address for Rev. Misha. If you would like to send a card to her, she receives mail to:

Rev. Misha Dawn Sanders  
Northwest UU Congregation  
1025 Mount Vernon Highway, NW  
Sand Springs, GA 30327-4207

Please surround Misha with your love and send positive, healing energy and prayers her way.

<p><b><u>2019 – 2020 Officers</u></b></p> <p>President Wendy Edgington 815-865-5364 Vice-President Paulette Lucas 815-601-3225 Secretary Denny Broderick 608-751-0630 Treasurer Nina Herzer 815-624-2283</p>	
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