

UUCRV NEWS

Published by and for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley
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Visit us at www.uucrv.org



April 2019



Monthly Schedule

4/7 – In lieu of a service, Lynda Johnson will lead a group discussion.

- **Allen Harden's Ordination** in Chicago, 3:30 p.m. (Bus leaves UUCRV at 12:15, returns approx. 8:45)

4/14 – Guest speaker **Greg Rajsky** Buddhist/Environmental Theme

- 12:00 Board Meeting *Please note the change in the date!*

4/17 – 10:30, Small Group Discussion

4/20 - 10:30-12:00 Book Discussion *In Later years: Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging* by Rev. Bruce T. Marshall. Allen still has a copy available. Participants should read the Introduction and Part I (p 1-89).

4/21 – Rev. Allen Harden, Easter and Earth Day. *Resurrecting our Ecosystem.*

4/28 – Connie Matusiak hosts a poetry service to honor National Poetry Month. Contact Connie if you like to share a poem. *Please give Connie a copy of your poem by Sunday April 14th. We will include a section of poems celebrating the Earth with Earth Day in mind. Let Connie know if you have any questions or would like her to suggest a poem.*

Minister's Musings



I have been somewhat distracted this month by the process of planning my ordination. I sincerely appreciate the honor you bestow on me by deciding that I deserve to be a Unitarian Universalist minister, and I am eagerly looking forward to the service and ceremony that occur just next week in Chicago. But, one oddity of the UU ordination is that I end up planning my own party, which takes a bit of effort. (see more on Ordination in separate article, and please feel free to come as there is more than enough room on the bus!).

But separating from the ceremony for a moment, I am also facing the fact that with this event, all formalities of becoming a Minister are finally accomplished, and my goal of the past 8 years is reached. I have been so caught up in the process of getting to this point; with Seminary, and Internship, and Chaplaincy, a job search, and preparing for the MFC and finally being admitted to fellowship. It is time for me to stop, and reflect, and to think “OK, I am here, so what do I do now?”

Fortunately, I [am] finding that most of what I am called on to be as a minister feels fairly natural and right to me. I sense that I am where I should be in my life and that the all of these choices got me on

track to thrive. I do understand this vocation as a calling, I am just less clear than some of my interfaith colleagues about who is doing the calling and where it comes from.

I find that I truly love working in this congregation, and that my energies are charged by your aspirations, your vitality, your care about yourselves, your care for one another, and your commitment to a better world. Yes, we are small – but we can be mighty. And I am pleased to be continuing my ministerial discernment with you as we build our future.

Sunday Services

April 21 for Easter and Earth Day: Resurrecting our Ecosystem.

I never bought into the idea that we are inherently evil, and that we must redeem ourselves from a state of depravity and original sin in order to find salvation and peace. But, I do know that we must find a way to mitigate our more recent history of defiling and altering our planet and its environment, else these real sins may threaten our very existence. How might we work to restore planetary balance and resurrect our planetary home?

May 5 How do we know right and wrong?

No religious text or teaching has ever been an authoritative source for our morality. So, the claim that religious instruction is the necessary vehicle for imparting a sense of values and ethics is fatuous and self-serving (for the religions). But how do we know right, wrong, and the basis for moral judgement? I have some ideas.

ALLEN'S ORDINATION:

Yes, there is plenty of room left on the (very comfortable) bus.

Sunday April 7, depart from UUCRV by 12:15. Pick up a few wonderful UUs in DeKalb, and reach First Unitarian Church in Chicago about 2:45. The Ordination service will begin at 3:30, with a formal processional of clergy and participants. In most ways, this is a church service, with a few ceremonial events added. I am excited about the program and the music.

A few highlights:

- Rev. Dr. Lee Barker, the outgoing president of Meadville Lombard Theological School will offer the sermon, titled “To Do the Things We Love”;
- my teaching pastor, Rev. Linda Slabon, will offer the prayer;
- a long-time friend, Rev. Nan Hobart will present the “Charge to the Minister”; and
- Maggie (my granddaughter) will light the chalice;
- and oh, so much more.

We will then have a reception full of wonderful people and good foods immediately after the service, in Hull Chapel, a room with beautiful amber wood that adjoins the Sanctuary. Then, at about 6:30, the bus will depart, again passing through DeKalb, hopefully getting you back to UUCRV by about 8:45.

Book Group on Aging (Note Change of Start Date)

The book group/small group on aging was going to start on April 13, but this time is in conflict with a meeting of the local small UU congregations, which at least three book group participants plan to attend. Provisionally, the group will now meet first on **Saturday, April 20, at 10:30-12:00**. Note that

this is Easter weekend, and if this new date will not work for you, please email Allen at uucrvminister@gmail.com.

Recall that our focal text is *In Later years: Finding Meaning and Spirit in Aging* by Rev. Bruce T. Marshall. Allen still has a copy available. For the first session, I will assume that all have read the Introduction and Part I (p 1-89).

CARITAS UPDATE

Dianna Kevari, UUCRV's representative to Caritas, would like me to share the following with you.

"...Caritas Wish List

Personal Care:

Feminine Hygiene Products

Shampoo

Tooth Paste

Infant/Toddler Care

Wipes

High School Backpacks

Canned meals with pull tab lids..."

Beloit Farmers Market

We will have a booth at the Beloit's Farmers Market on Saturday, May 11th, 8:00 a.m. til 1:00 p.m. Our theme is a Celebration of Nature's Butterflies. There will be coloring sheets, milkweed seeds, origami butterflies and books to browse. We will need workers. There's a sign up sheet at church. Call Connie with any questions.

Birthdays

23 – Pete Busker

24 – Vesta Ferguson



FURTHER EXPLORATION: The 8th Principle of Unitarian Universalism

The Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU) Organizing Collective encourages all Unitarian Universalists to advocate for the formal adoption of an 8th principle, articulating a commitment for the dismantling of white supremacy, within the stated principles of our faith:

"We the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

Additional information can be found at www.8thprinciple.org. We are sharing a little more information here this month so that we can all better understand this proposed change:

- *None of the other Principles mentions love; by having "Beloved Community" in the 8th Principle, it brings our commitment to love higher in our consciousness, consistent with our Standing on the Side of Love campaign.*
- ✦ Were you surprised that the word love is not mentioned in any of the other UU Principles?
- ✦ We have explored the idea of "Beloved Community" here at UUCRV in the past. How would the 8th Principle bring our commitment to "Beloved Community" higher in our consciousness?

Your Board is looking for your input - If you haven't had a chance to fill out one of the **yellow survey forms** (located on the table at the entrance to the Sanctuary), please do so as soon as possible. Most surveys returned so far indicate people are willing to vote to adopt the 8th Principle, but if there are still questions about this we would like to have an opportunity to discuss this with members further to ensure understanding of this proposed Principle before taking a congregational vote in June.

- Susan Busker

Dear UUCRV Members,
 Your Board is looking for feedback regarding the adoption of the 8th Principle. This has been introduced in a service, with ongoing information provided in the newsletter. The proposed 8th Principle reads: *"We the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."*
 If you were asked to vote today on whether our congregation should adopt this 8th Principle, what would your vote be?
 _____ **Yes**, I believe we should adopt the 8th Principle. Why? _____
 _____ **I'm still unsure**. What would help you to make your decision? _____
 _____ **No**, I don't believe we should adopt the 8th Principle. Why not? _____
Please feel free to discuss this with the Minister or a Board member. We will be having a group discussion about the 8th Principle following our service on April 14th.
 Thank you for your feedback!
 Name: _____ Please return this to a Board member!

Survey on Environmental Justice

Dear UUCRV Members,
 Your Board is looking for feedback regarding choosing a focus for our Social Justice work this year. This does not mean that all of these are not important issues and that we cannot respond in some way to each of them, but it has been recommended that we choose one to help us focus the majority of our resources and energy.

Social Justice Focus Please circle one!	The Unitarian Universalist Action Network of Illinois (UUANI) will be focusing on:	Possible Local Actions Write your ideas here! What would you be willing to do?
Environmental Justice	Clean Jobs legislation creating jobs, training and economic development for disadvantaged communities, a million fossil fuel vehicles off the road, a carbon-free power sector by 2030 and 100% renewable energy in Illinois by 2050.	
Immigration Justice	Welcoming Illinois legislation to end the criminalization of immigrant communities and expand opportunities for education and healthcare for all.	
Racial Justice	Criminal justice reform , including voting access for prisoners, eliminating prison medical fees, ending cash bond and ending solitary confinement.	
Economic Justice	Fair Tax legislation to reduce income inequality and provide adequate revenue in support of the common good.	

Name: _____ Please return this to a Board member!

Your Board has asked for your input on another topic – a social justice area that we can focus on for the year. Having a single focus was the recommendation of Rev. Scott Aaseng, Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Action Network of Illinois. You will find a **green survey form** on the table as you enter the Sanctuary with four possible choices. By choosing one to focus

on we can possibly make more of an impact than if our efforts are spread across a number of areas. This doesn't mean that there would be no attention to other social justice needs, but with limited resources in terms of people and funds, having a focus makes a lot of sense.

The surveys returned so far indicate that the focus should be on Environmental Justice. UUANI has chosen this as one of their focuses so we would receive support from them for our work. For instance, they have already provided a **petition to support Clean Energy Jobs**. Copies can be found on the table as you enter the Sanctuary – please sign one if you choose and place in the folder on the table. Wendy will mail them all in together to show our support for this work.

UUANI will also be arranging a bus to go down to Springfield to advocate with legislators on environmental justice issues. More information will be shared when available.

We would also like to plan environmental justice activities at a local level including such ideas as:

- 🌍 Creating additional gardens and planting trees on our property to support pollinators, including butterflies and bees

- 🌍 Encouraging others to plant gardens safe for pollinators by not using pesticides and that support them with plants for their young, and flowers for food, by such actions as giving away Common Milkweed seed at our booth at the Beloit Farmer's Market.

- 🌍 Participating in the Great American Cleanup on April 27th organized by Keep Northern Illinois Beautiful.

- 🌍 Providing public screenings of documentaries on environmental issues, incorporating discussion, an action such as writing postcards to legislators, and raising funds for an environmental charity through the sale of movie snacks.

- 🌍 Working with other local nature and environmental organizations to support their efforts, e.g. raising funds to buy an item from the Nature at the Confluence Wish List such as a composting bin.

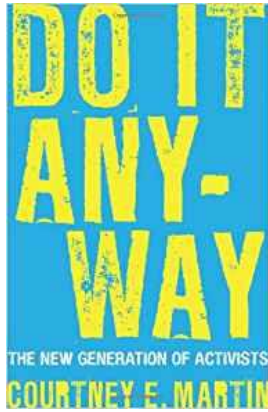
Let us know if you have additional ideas to share!

Susan Busker

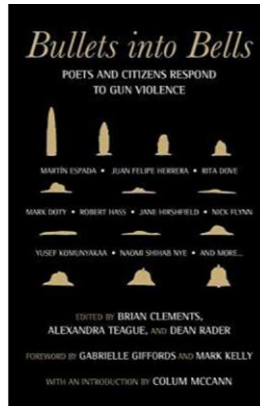


What's new in our Social Justice Library?

Check out these new titles added to our Social Justice Library:



Bullets into Bells brings together poems by dozens of well-known poets followed by a response from a gun violence prevention activist, political figure, survivor, or concerned individual providing a moving testament to the urgent need for gun control.



FOR YOUTH: Girls Resist!, A guide to Activism, Leadership, and Starting a Revolution by Kaelyn Rich offers a handbook for picking a cause, planning a protest, raising money, running meetings, promoting awareness on social media, and being an effective ally.



Do It Anyway, The New Generation of Activists by Courtney E. Martin profiles a new generation of 8 young activists to ask the questions “How do you create a meaningful life?”, “Can one person even begin to make a difference in our hugely complex, globalized world?”

Are you inspired to take up a social justice cause? – *Talk to other members who might also be interested in that cause and find out how you might become involved to make a difference in our community and world.*

* This supports our goal to “Support and facilitate work on the Pillars of Beloved Community” which includes Multiculturalism and Environmental Justice.



2018-19 Officers

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