

UUCRV NEWS

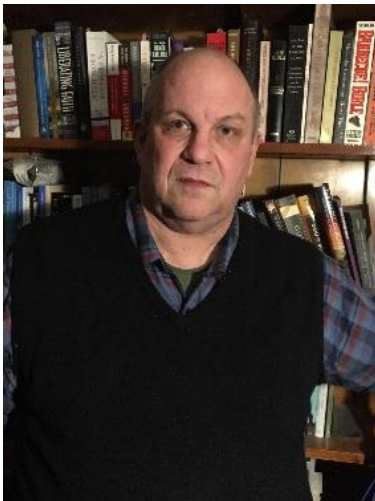
Published by and for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley
P.O. Box 256, Rockton, IL, 61072 Phone number: 1-815-624-4094
Visit us at www.uucrv.org



June 2018

Monthly Schedule

- 6/3 – “*Wearing White Identity*” Allen Harden
6/10 – Rev. Misha Sanders
6/13 - 10:30-11:30, “Mindfulness of Nature Meditation” Susan Busker
6/15 – 11:00, Membership Committee Meeting
7:30 – Campfire Sing Along
6/17 – “*Living as Congregation, Loving in Congregation*” Allen Harden
6/20 - Small Group Discussion on Touchstones topic “*Beloved Community*”
6/24 – Annual Congregation Meeting
6/29 – 7:30 – Campfire Sing Along
7/1 – **Short Service and Potluck Church Picnic @ Nygren Wetlands
7/8 – Allen Harden
7/13 – 7:30 Campfire Sing Along
7/15 – Animal Blessing Service
7/22 – Allen Harden
7/27 – 7:30 Campfire Sing Along
7/29 – Lynda Johnson



Minister’s Musings

This month will end with our annual meeting. For most of us, it will feel fairly routine and for some, it might feel like a chore. But we should be aware of how special this is in the world of Churches and Denominations. That we, as a congregation, really do make all of our decisions is special, and Congregational Polity is a hallmark of Unitarian Universalism. You chose to hire me to work as your Minister this year, you chose to form as a congregation, you chose to buy your building, to raise and spend your own money. There is no hierarchy, no Bishops making our choices for us, no denominational authority over us. The Unitarian Universalist Association does coordinate some activities for us, but has no real authority over us, and it also is democratically governed by its member congregations.

Governing ourselves is a privilege, and from my point of view, UUCRV has handled this privilege well, and in a gracious and responsible way. It is not always easy to corral a bunch of independent-

minded, free-thinking people, and get them to agree on a path. For the most part, this is what you have done, and you should hold your accomplishment with pride. And you have defined the mission of your congregation to embrace the interests of yourselves, the congregation, and the broader community.

Part of our annual meeting will be seeking to create a covenant, to formally accept the work that was done by many of you last year to decide how we expect to relate to each other and to create a community that lives up to the standards of our shared values. These expectations form a framework for being a church and congregation. But they don't tell us what to do.

I would like to ask each of you to spend a bit of time reflecting on what this church community might be, what we might do. We are all good at recognizing things that need work or could be improved. But I ask you to step out of the box framed by regular day-to-day life, and think of things that would make you happy and proud to be associated with UUCRV. Things that enrich and enhance your life, our lives, and the lives of those around us. What role would you like to see the church play? I eagerly anticipate some feedback.

In love and faith,

Allen

Committee Information

Membership: I want to thank all the members on the membership committee for having a great church year 2017-2018. We as a committee, I think, worked well together and got things done smoothly and successfully. The members on the committee were Dianna Kevari, Marla Wallace, Wendy Edgington, Diane Busker, Paulette Lucas, Jackie Shair. Also Susan Erbe, although not on the committee, has been very helpful in keeping our delicious breads in stock for visitors, and Susan Busker for keeping our visitor bags and information for them in stock. Many others in our church have been helpful as well in helping with events and supplying treats for our coffee hour. Thank you everyone. Our committee is going to have our next meeting on Friday, June 15 at 11:00am. at the church conference room. If anyone would like to join our committee or has any ideas they would like to suggest for the new church year please feel free to come or share your idea to any committee member to be discussed. At this meeting one of the things we will be discussing are trying to come up with a new idea or two for the new church year.

Thank you.

Dianna Kevari – Chairperson

Worship: Special thanks to Christopher Sims & Jerry Paulson for putting together truly remarkable services on 5/22 and 5/29!

We are pleased to have Allen speak to us twice a month during July and August. Currently, the committee is figuring out the other Sundays. *August 12 is not accounted for yet.* If you are interested in speaking – or putting a service together – please let me know.

“...** Church Picnic & Potluck at Nygren Wetlands

We will meet at the Nygren Wetland Preserve, 3190 W. Rockton Road, Rockton at 10:30 a.m. for a brief service followed by a potluck picnic and hike/tour of the prairie in full bloom led by Jerry Paulson and others. Bring a dish to share and your own drinks; plates and silverware will be provided. Wear sturdy shoes, a hat and long pants, and bring sun screen. Kids are welcomed. We will have an ATV for those who have disabilities. Call Jerry for questions 815-222-4414...”

(submitted by Jerry Paulson)

Many kudos to my hardworking and dedicated committee. We had many innovative and interested services this church year. Special thanks to members/friends who participated in the services.

I would also like to welcome two new committee members, Kara Becker and Christopher D. Sims! If you would like to be part of this collaborative committee, sign up for the coming church year!

Wendy Edgington – Chairperson

Notice of Annual Meeting and Agenda

On June 24, 2018, we will be holding our Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley. Anyone is welcome to attend, though only members can participate in voting. The Agenda will be as follows:

- Call the Meeting to Order
- Presentation of Annual Meeting Agenda
- Acceptance of Minutes from June 2017 Annual Meeting
- Committee Annual Reports
- Vote to Adopt Covenant of Right Relations for UUCRV
- Presentation of Slate for Board of Trustees for 2018-2019 and Vote
- Presentation of Nominating Committee for 2018-2019 and Vote
- Presentation of Draft Budget for 2018-2019 and Vote
- Recognitions
- Closing Words

This meeting will take place immediately following the service in the Sanctuary. A potluck will take place in the Garden Room following the meeting – all are welcome!

Green Corner

END OF THE GREEN CORNER

This will be the end of the Green Corner column. This was my choice. No other factors entered into this decision other than the reasons given below:

The Green Corner column was started about 12 years ago when there was a desire on the part of the congregation to become an accredited Green Sanctuary. Unfortunately, enthusiasm waned, and all that was left was this column.

It seems to me that the church is now focusing on other areas, and that is fine. A small church can only do so much. So the column is no longer serving its original purpose of reporting on the progress towards a Green Sanctuary.

My thanks to those of you who said kind words to me about columns you liked. I tried to add a touch of humor to suck you into reading them. I hope I succeeded. Ray Herzer

(Editor's Note: I believe I speak for many when I say that your witty, informative and thought-provoking articles will be greatly missed, Ray.)

June Birthdays

8 – Laurel Burke

10 – Beth Ingle

19 – Susan Busker

30 – Betsy Green

**Any church, no matter how small and poor, will find a way to live
if it is committed to a mission it sees as crucial.** – David R. Ray

in The Indispensable Guide for Smaller Churches (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2003, p. 169)

David Ray says that “Many churches of all sizes are primarily focused on their own internal and institutional life.” (p. 169) Peter Steinke, in a video I watched recently, said that it is not uncommon for churches to spend 90% of their efforts on internal matters.

But for what does a church exist? I believe that one reason, of course, is to provide for spiritual growth and “soul care” for its members. This fortifies us to carry out our mission. So, we do need to focus on our internal life. And there is work that must be done to maintain our building and programs, both financially and through labor, so some of our focus must be institutional. But how are we carrying out our mission in the world outside our walls? What percentage of our time is focused on the needs of people in our communities and in the world?

What in our mission calls us to focus outside our walls? How can we create community in the larger community? How can we invite others to celebrate worship with us? What are we doing to seek justice and truth? How are our actions in the world guided by love?

In the coming months, I will be asking each committee in our congregation to consider how their committee supports each of the four components of our mission by their actions. What are you currently doing to support our mission? Some might be obvious, such as Membership might cite ways they help create community and Worship likely would say they help celebrate worship.

But what about the other parts of our mission? What might your committee do to expand your role to help the whole congregation achieve the mission? What could the Membership Committee do to seek justice and truth? What might Building and Grounds do to create community? What could the Religious Education Committee contribute to celebrate worship? What might the Finance Committee do to help the congregation live guided by love?

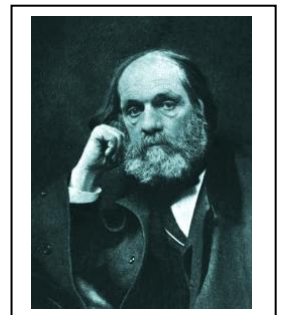
Is *mission* a part of the working vocabulary of our church? I would like to encourage it to be. Every time we think of taking an action I think we need to be asking ourselves, how does this help us to achieve our mission? Ray says that “Genuine mission is less a program and more a way of life. When mission becomes a way of life, a church looks at itself as a people who can make a difference in the lives of others.” (p. 170)

I do believe that we are a church that makes a difference in the lives of others. How can we expand this to make more of a difference in the lives in our communities? I don’t have the answers, but I encourage discussions, so we might discover the answers together.

Susan Busker
UUCRV President

Unitarian Universalists in History – Edward Everett Hale

*I am only one,
But still I am one.
I cannot do everything,
But still I can do something;
And because I cannot do everything,
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.*



I have the above quote in a framed print hanging in my living room. I found it at Farm and Fleet and at the time did not know that the words were those of a Unitarian minister, Edward Everett Hale. I just knew that the words reflected my UU values. I think it also speaks to being part of a small congregation – we cannot do everything, but that cannot stop us from doing something.

Hale was born in Boston in 1822 to a family that was involved in the founding of the town and of the American Republic. He was the grandnephew of Nathan Hale, Revolutionary War hero. When he was 4 weeks old he was christened in the Brattle Street Church, his introduction to Unitarianism.

Hale wanted to be a minister for as long as he could remember, but first worked as a teacher of Latin, and as a journalist writing about local politics for his father's newspaper. In 1839 he began training for the ministry, choosing to be privately tutored by two ministers rather than attending theology school. In 1842, he appeared before the Boston Association of Ministers, and after sermonizing for them, they voted him into ministry.

Not feeling ready for a parish (he was 20 at this time!), he spent the next few years preaching in a variety of locations including New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. In 1845 he was ordained and installed as minister of the Church of the Unity in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Hale came to be known as one of the most prominent American Unitarian ministers of the last half of the nineteenth century. According to his son and biographer, he thought of church "as one of the active social factors in American Life, working by whatever personal or institutional means suggested themselves, toward the up-building of the community in which it existed." His philanthropy to the poor became a hallmark of his ministry and he influenced the formation of hundreds of "Lend-a-Hand Clubs" worldwide.

When Congress opened the Kansas and Nebraska territories for settlement in 1854, Hale urged non-slave holders to emigrate to keep these states "free" and helped form the New England Emigrant Aid Company. During the Civil War he worked to improve the health and medical situation facing wounded soldiers and urged military enlistment. To promote patriotism, he composed his most famous short story, "The Man Without a Country," which was published in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

In 1856, Hale returned to Boston accepting the position of minister of the South Congregational Church, a position he held for 43 years. He, along with Henry Whitney Bellows, worked to unify the denomination's divisions which led to the National Conference of Unitarian and Other Christian Churches. This proved to be one of the most significant organizational developments in the American Unitarian movement.

In 1903, Hale became the Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, a post he held until his death in 1909. Source: From the biography of Edward Everett Hale written by Alan Seaburg posted October 28, 2014 in the Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography, an on-line resource of the Unitarian Universalist History & Heritage Society www.uudb.org Susan Busker

Promise and the Practice of Our Faith for Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU)

On May 20, the worship service message was provided by Christopher Sims speaking on Black Lives Matter and Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism (BLUU). If you missed this service, you can read Christopher's essay on our Facebook page and check out the following flyer to learn more.

This service along with our pledge to BLUU were both posted to the UUA website. We will collect for BLUU again at the June 3rd service if you haven't had an opportunity to contribute.



What is “The Promise and the Practice”?

In our faith, we who identify as white, are being called to listen to the lived reality of black Unitarian Universalists in our midst. As a faith, our anti-racist intentions have not always been borne out. Now is the time for change!

“It’s a turning moment; a choice to listen deeply to the stories of our movement that have not been heard, and taken to heart, by all Unitarian Universalists. It’s a lamenting of what our Unitarian Universalist tradition and congregations have lost by being unable – or unwilling – to center people of color (or even, at times, to merely include them). The Promise and the Practice is a celebration of our shared commitment to live into a new chapter in the story of our UU faith.” – Rev. Erick Hewitt

In our commitment to diversity and embracing the leadership of people of color, white Unitarian Universalists are still learning to decenter our whiteness so that people of color are brought from the margins to the center. As a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association we have covenanted to support the work of the UUA and rely on their support in return to help us to live out our faith in the world. How might black UU leaders teach us to be better members of our faith and even better citizens in our community? How might people of color be truly welcomed into this faith? This opportunity for learning will not be comfortable, but our discomfort can serve as both a gesture of hospitality to voices that have not been heard enough, and a sign that we are growing in the right direction. When you feel discomfort, and you will, practice being curious and allow that feeling to lead you into new learning.

The UUA is asking that we align our theology with our finances. If our congregation achieves the goal of \$10 per member for a total of \$360, our contribution will be matched dollar for dollar, doubling the impact that this small congregation strives to make.

Before making your decision about giving to this campaign, listen to the voices of some of our black UU leaders:

“Diverse. Multicultural. Inclusive. Welcoming. If I made a list of every single Unitarian Universalist congregation I have served, visited or worshipped at, they would have a few things in common – including the use of these words...I love those words. I want what they promise. But I have been repeatedly disappointed...Words matter. If you and your congregation are not ready to meet the promises you craft, and then share with the world – stop publishing them...Remember: I believe what you say and write. Words matter.” – Rev. Carol Thomas Cissel, Minister of the UU Fellowship of Centre County in State College, PA

“I am a Black woman. When I look around on Sunday morning, I don’t see many people who look like me. In most of the congregations I visit, I don’t see anybody who looks like me. So I guess I shouldn’t be surprised that I don’t hear voices of people who share my experience. But it still hurts.” - Connie Simon, Intern Minister at the Unitarian Society of Germantown

“We are brought here today by the fact that Unitarian Universalism has fallen short of the image that was presented to the world, and to many of those who embraced this religion. But we are also brought here today by the truth that Unitarian Universalism has shifted

course to move toward a place of wholeness: a place that perhaps never existed for us as a denomination...Open your hearts.” – Viola Abbitt, candidate for the UU ministry

Source: The Promise and the Practice of Our Faith, Rev. Erika Hewitt, Minister of Worship Arts, UUA

FYI “Attending the hanging of a Black Lives Matter banner at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Marblehead in Marblehead, MA May 5th thru May 7th has been one of the major highlights and experiences in my almost 17 years being a Unitarian Universalist. It was inspiring, encouraging, and I left the coast of Massachusetts feeling hopeful – I am hopeful we will make strides, as more Unitarian Universalist places of worship will raise Black Lives Matter banners across the nation to engage in more anti-racism/anti-oppression work.

Besides being there to speak, my hosts, the Corzine’s, had a potluck gathering in my honor, showed me the beautiful landscape of Marblehead, and treated me to some delicious food. It is always a pleasure getting to know Unitarian Universalists outside of church, and learning about how they are contributing to their churches as activists and leaders. It makes the heavy work we are doing easier and we become friends in the fight for social justice as we plan, prepare, and accomplish what we set out to do. The Corzine’s belong to a citywide team of activists who are working hard to change the issues in Marblehead. I met many of them the night of the potluck.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Marblehead is a three hundred year old church. For them to have passed unanimously the vote to hang the Black Lives Matter banner made their existence in that coastal community even more relevant and impactful. I was brought there as a speaker to help them focus on the issues. I presented in their Meeting House Series with questions for them, poetry, and my understanding of the issues. A black Cellist, Marshunda Smith, joined me on stage. She performed a jazzy offering in the middle of the presentation. I also engaged her about being a black Cellist. At the end, she and I closed the presentation out with an impromptu collaboration of poetry and classical music. We received a standing ovation. We have much to be proud of as Unitarian Universalists, even in these hectic and challenging times. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.

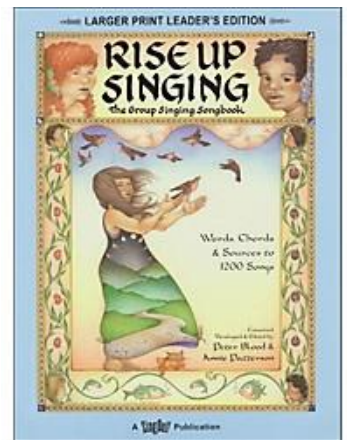
Yours in struggle and love, Christopher D. Sims”

Join in the joy! We will be holding Campfire Sing-a-Longs throughout the summer!

Fridays from 7:30 - ???



June 15
June 29
July 13
July 27
August 10
August 24



- Copies of the book Rise Up Singing will be available to share. This book includes words and chords for songs from a wide variety of genres: the Beatles, Judy Collins, John Denver, Bob Dylan, Stephen Foster, Woody Guthrie, Carol King, Lead Belly, Joni Mitchell, Holly Near, Peter, Paul & Mary, John Prine, Raffi, Pete Seeger, Simon & Garfunkel, James Taylor, the Weavers, Stevie Wonder and many others.
- We will gather at the fire circle and can seat 12 or so on the Aldo Leopold benches.
- S'mores will be provided!

Bring:

- A beverage, if desired
- Bug spray
- A lawn chair (in case extra seating is needed)
- Instruments**, if you have them: guitar, ukulele, drum, percussion, spoons, etc.
- In the case of rain, the Sing-a-Long will be canceled.





2017-18 Officers

President	Susan Busker	815-624-2833
Vice-President	Wendy Edgington	815-865-5364
Secretary	Denny Broderick	608-751-0630
Treasurer	Nina Herzer	815-624-2283



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rock Valley
329 School Street
Rockton, IL 61072

815-624-4094
uucrockvalley@gmail.com

www.uucrv.org