

November 2020

Uniter



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SILVER SPRING
10309 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20903
301-273-9745 · Fax 301-434-4051
www.uucss.org

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WORSHIP SERVICES

**Music begins at 10:30 AM / Service at 11:00 AM
Zoom Coffee Hour at 12:00 PM**

How to Join Worship

- A. Join the Livestream by visiting the church's [YouTube](#) page at
- B. Join the sign language interpretation on [Zoom](#)
- C. Attend virtual coffee hour on [Zoom](#)

Having trouble tuning in for worship?

Please email Melinda Yalom at administrator@uucss.org with your name and phone number. She will connect you to a volunteer who can help.

November 1: Come What May, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt (NOTE:Eastern Standard Time Begins Today)

As Election Day draws near, people around the country are anxious to know who our next leaders will be. Join us as we reflect on a story by John Lewis, pray together for this imperfect and hurting nation, and remember our work as people of faith and conscience.

November 8: Love Calls Us On, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

There is a lot to heal in ourselves and this country. This week in worship we will breathe in peace and breathe out love, reflect on the importance of movement during the healing process, and notice how truth, love, and justice are calling us on.

November 15: Tending Wounds Time Can't Heal, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

Whether physical or emotional, some wounds need more than just time to heal. In this service we'll explore healing as a journey rather than a destination.

November 22: Giving Thanks in All Things, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

The practice of gratitude is perhaps most important during difficult times. Join us this Sunday for a service of thanksgiving, harvest hymns, and to install the Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt as our minister.

November 29: The Challenge of the 8 th Principle, Bruce McConachie

As we consider the implications of adding the proposed 8th principle to our congregational covenant, enacted drama can crystalize challenges and advance possible solutions. In this service, the UUCSS Players will perform a short zoom play, Beginning the Journey, to explore how we can support each other to combat systemic racism.

INSPIRE

Minister's Column by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt



Our worship theme for the month of November is “healing,” and I can think of nothing more poignant for us to delve deeply into right now. It’s often said that elections are divisive, but this year more than any other I think the election is simply magnifying divisions that have long existed. The current administration has deepened those divisions by violating democratic norms and safeguards in order to implement their agenda. So, if we are to be a people about healing, I think we must be about healing what Parker Palmer calls “the heart of democracy.”

In his book Healing the Heart of Democracy, Palmer identifies five habits that help in this work:

1. An understanding that we are all in this together
2. An appreciation of the value of “otherness”
3. An ability to hold tension in life-giving ways
4. A sense of personal voice and agency
5. A capacity to create community

All of these are themes that are echoed in our Unitarian Universalist principles, our worship services, religious education curricula, and work for justice. They are the theological context for many of the virtual events and gatherings that have been filling up our church calendar. They are among other habits that will be explored in great spiritual depth during the Jubilee Virtual Training that you can learn more about later in this issue of the *Uniter*. They are also the habits of many of the people whose writings we will be reading during *Reading, Resilience, and Resistance*, the adult religious education class I’m leading starting this month.

I lift up the intersections between Palmer’s habits to heal the heart of democracy and our faith not so we can pat ourselves on the back, but because I think it shows just how relevant our faith is in this moment and this work. Each of us came to this congregation for different reasons, each of us stays for others. But I hope we all give to and care for this church so that it will be here to guide, support, and sustain our children and their children when divisions grow and crises arise again.

In the midst of busy work and family, church, and volunteer lives, I hope you are able to enjoy the unfolding of autumn all around us, and whatever sense of togetherness you can over Thanksgiving. I look forward to meeting and getting to know those of you I haven’t had a chance to connect with yet.

May we find courage for the days ahead. May we find hope in living out our faith and values. May we find healing together in community. In my ministry with and among you, I find all those things, and more.

Message From Carl Miller, Board President



Thanks to everyone for their tenacity and creativity as we continue to press ahead during uncertain times. The board met on September 23 to discuss plans for the near future. Among other things, we approved the new Shared Ministry Launch Team to assist Rev. Kristin during her first year at UUCSS. (Thanks to Catherine Buckler, Dorothy Hale, Carol Hamilton, Jan Kretz, Dina Raley, Jean Snell, and Sharon Snyder!)

We also give the green light to this year's annual Church Auction. We are extremely grateful to Linda Barrett, Emily Harris, and Emily Tien for organizing this event that is always so varied, colorful, and vital to our community each year. After discussion, we decided that we will allow limited in-person events to be sold at the auction. The pandemic is taking us into new territory (again) and it's important to remember as always that safety is "on us." Please be cautious, read the rules, and don't let your guard down.

There is much else to look forward to in the near future, including the online Jubilee Anti-Racism Training in mid-November. We will also be holding a short virtual minister installation for Rev. Kristin during one of the upcoming services. This will give us a chance to welcome her again and formalize her relationship to the church. (We will save most of the fun stuff for a later event when we can all be together in person.)

Meanwhile, we've got the November election coming up, and the continued global unfolding of the COVID-19 pandemic. I wonder what the future looks like after that. What lies on the other side of all this cabin fever and political fighting? I don't know. Foresight is in short supply these days.

I will finish with the words of someone who is older and wiser than I am.

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.
--Wendell Berry

Is there a poem or a quote that speaks to you during these times? I invite you to share by commenting on the #ShareWithUS post found in the [UUCSS private Facebook group](#).

LEARN

Message From Marsha Thrall, Interim Director of Religious Education

One of the goals given to me, upon acceptance of the position of Interim Religious Educator, was to implement an action plan to integrate social equity and anti-racism education within the Lifespan Religious Education program.

Charles Alexander, UUCSS member and champion of the things that can make us all better UUs, has this to say about the importance of social equity and anti-racism education, within the UU context:



When Dr. King called on faith-based organizations to join him on the march to Selma, UUs were there. UUs have put their bodies and lives on the line to assert our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person and quest for justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.

Ibrim X. Kendi postulates that at any given moment, each of us is either racist or anti-racist. To be anti-racist, one must actively work to undo racist structures, systems, institutions, policies, and practices. Failure to take deliberate and decisive anti-racist action allows the racist status quo to remain in place, and by virtue of inaction, is racist by default. As we evolve as a faith community, we are being called to move beyond our quest to be not-racist toward becoming an anti-racist faith. All of our institutions must evolve to better support racial justice, and it is critical that UU Religious Education start teaching children and adults how to embrace anti-racism.

We recently decided to start the process of adopting the 8th Principle, which calls us to dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions. The 8th Principle calls on us to become anti-racist as individuals and as a congregation. If we are serious about adopting the 8th Principle and embodying the spirit of the ideals it stands for, we must start with education, we must start with Religious Education. Through our Religious Education program, we can raise anti-racist children, help adults move from non-racist to anti-racist action, and set the stage for our faith to once again walk on the right side of history.

Our first lesson, curated from resources provided by The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University, was on October 18, 2020, and was both well attended and engaging. And in working with the youth at UUCSS on this day, I was filled with hope that our children and youth will lead the way in creating a more just and more equitable society where the worth and dignity of every human is upheld and respected.

Starting November 7, we are extending RE opportunities to all who want to learn more about the community resources that will be used in the 8th Principle discernment process. This will be a Town Hall conversation about the wealth of resources available through the King Institute at Stanford University. Watch the all-church email for more information regarding this conversation.

Religious Education Activities--for Children and Adults

Youth Religious Education

At UUCSS, we offer religious education for all ages. If you are not yet registered, you can do so for the following ages on our website at <https://uucss.org/children/>

- Pre-School (Ages 2-5) Parents of Preschoolers (POP!)
- Kindergarten through 1st Grade - "Love Surrounds Us" from Tapestry of Faith
- Grades 2 through 4 - "Love Will Guide Us" from Tapestry of Faith
- Grades 5 through 6 (Middle School A) - "Heeding the Call: Qualities of a Justice Maker" from Tapestry of Faith
- Grades 7 through 8 (Middle School B) - "Building Bridges: A World Religions Program" from Tapestry of Faith
- Grade 9 - Coming of Age (COA)
- Grades 10 through 12 - Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU)

Adult Religious Education - Soul Matters Small Group Conversations

1st Sundays of the Month, 1:00 - 2:30 pm

Want an opportunity to delve more deeply into each month's worship theme? Need some space outside worship to share and reflect with other people? Then these conversations are for you! Join us the first Sunday of each month (except for January and April when we'll meet the second Sunday) as we use the Soul Matters Small Group Ministry approach to explore each month's theme. Whether you can make it to just one of these conversations or to all of them throughout the program year, you are welcome to join us. *Links to each Zoom conversation will be available in the all-church emails.*

Reading, Resilience, and Resistance, Led by Rev. Kristin Schmidt

1st Tuesdays of the month, 7:30 - 9:00 pm and 3rd Sundays of the month, 1:00 - 2:30 pm

In these uncertain days when so much injustice is being laid bare, many are seeking wisdom and inspiration to help guide our living. Join us to explore and experience the words of people who have persisted and even found joy while living through tumult and oppression. We will use a sacred reading approach designed to help us engage deeply with each text and with one another. Reading selections for this class have been curated by IDRE, Marsha Thrall.

Everyone is encouraged to attend every session but this is not necessarily a cumulative class. We know that for many of us during this pandemic our schedules are not always our own, so if you have to miss some sessions that's ok. *Links to each Zoom conversation will be available in the all-church emails.*

CONNECT

EVENTS

Recurring and committee events can also be found on the Church Calendar at: <https://uucss.org/calendar/>

Sunday, Nov. 1: It's time to change your clocks! Eastern Standard Time begins today. Remember to "Fall back" by adjusting your clock backward one hour.

Sunday, Nov. 1, 1:00 - 2:30 pm. Soul Matters with Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt.

Nov. 1-15. Submit items for the Silent Online Auction! More info is in the Wild and Crazy Auction update!

Monday, Nov. 2, 7:30 pm. Online Men's Group.

Wednesday, Nov. 4, 7:30 pm. Defending Democracy after the Election, a zoom meeting for all UUCSS members to discuss next steps once the election is over. See the Committee Updates section below for more from Defending Democracy.

Saturday, Nov. 7, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Church yard cleanup.

Monday, Nov. 9, 7:30 pm. Online Men's Group.

Nov. 13-15. Jubilee Anti-Racism Virtual Training. This virtual workshop, led by experienced facilitators, helps participants understand what is involved in nurturing a multicultural community and working against racism in all of its forms. Get more info on planned activities for the weekend at the bottom of this Events section.

Sunday, Nov. 15, 1 - 2:30 pm. Reading, Resilience, and Resistance with Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt.

Monday, Nov. 16, 7:30 pm. Online Men's Group.

Nov. 23, 7:30 - 9:30 pm. Women's Book Group via Zoom. All interested readers are welcome! Please contact Deborah Weiner at dweiner04@gmail.com for further information and the Zoom link. We meet on the fourth Monday of the month via Zoom (NO MEETING IN DECEMBER). The November book is: Major Pettigrew's Last Stand by Helen Simonson.

Monday, Nov. 30, 7:30 pm. Online Men's Group.

Dec. 6, 7 pm. Men's Book Group. We are reading Wild Swans by Jung Chang, a family history, recounting the lives of three female generations in China. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Richard Lorr (rlorr4@gmail.com), get the book and the Zoom link, and come to the next meeting!

Jubilee Anti-Racism Virtual Training

Learning Together About Systemic Racism

Acclaimed Program | Experienced Trainers

Hosted by UUCSS & The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Frederick

Do you wish to deepen your understanding of how race and ethnicity play out in our institutions and our daily lives? Are you ready to take a leading role to nurture a multicultural future in the face of opposing cultural currents? Come Join Us for this Life-Changing Weekend!

Friday, November 13 - 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Saturday, November 14 - 9:00 am to 8:30 pm

Sunday, November 15 - 12:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Weekend Online Activities: The training includes presentations, discussions, videos, exercises, small group work, and shared meals. This 2 ½ day workshop is open to anyone who wants to journey toward making a stand against racism. Church members and church leaders of any faith, as well as non-church members are all welcome!

Our Goals are: → To develop a shared analysis of racism and its individual, institutional, and cultural manifestations, and → To begin to apply this common understanding to the history, culture, and institutional structure of our society, and to envision the next steps in taking action.

Agenda Topics Include: → The history of racism and resistance to racism in the Americas → Defining racism → The effects of racism on people of color and on white people → Dismantling racism → Claiming and shaping an anti-racist identity

Enrollment is limited so sign up today! \$160 per participant.

<https://www.uua.org/central-east/calendar/jubilee-1120>

Discount for multiple members of the same household. Scholarships are available.

For more information contact: Phyllis Ryder at UUCSS: phyllisryder@gmail.com

Why You Should Come

“Jubilee reached my soul and brought to life for me how racial justice work is grounded in the spiritual work of Unitarian Universalist faith. The expertise and wisdom of the facilitators made teachers and students of all participants. And I came away unafraid to look upon the white supremacy and racism in myself, our denomination, and our nation. The weekend long commitment which at first seemed daunting, ultimately seemed like not long enough. I left wanting more.” --UUCSS member Al Nathan, former Jubilee participant

Annual UUCSS Auction



Leaping lizards!!!!

It's time to submit your auction donations!

(Donations accepted from November 1 - 15)

Here's how to submit donations:

1. Go to: bit.ly/UUdonatepage to donate your item!
2. Click on donate item
3. Complete ONE (1) donation form for EACH item/event
4. Have a photo/image ready to upload for your item (photo of item or google image/clipart)
5. Be sure to consider the COVID 19 safety rules* in planning your event

Can't think of anything to donate? Here are some donation ideas that members are just wild about...

- Prepare food & deliver
- Beverage tasting--in person or drop off beverages & zoom
- In person food or happy hour
- Themed dinners--deliver specialty food, then do a cooking lesson on zoom
- Gift baskets
- Pet Sitting
- Activities--golf, kayaking, hiking, dance lessons, geocaching, bocce, game night, Netflix party, dance, craft, story telling, reading a play together
- Yardwork/Gardening
- Mask making
- Building a spiritual home
- Tours--geology, gardens, historic area
- Lessons--craft, cooking, drawing, computer skills, vision board
- Teaching-- current teen vocab, how to create playlist, video editing, playing popular computer games

What do members say they want to purchase?

Childcare | kids' activity | Handyman/room painting | Technology help | Shelving installation | Jewelry making/repair | Learn massage | Learn basic bike repair | Basic estate planning | Help with personal organizing

***Note: Donors and bidders need to abide by [UUCSS Covid-19 Safety Guidelines](#).**

If you have any questions about the auction or would like a digital copy of last year's auction catalog for ideas, please email the Auction Team (Emily Harris, Linda Barrett, Emily Tien) at auction@uucss.org.

Committee Updates

Defending Democracy after the Election

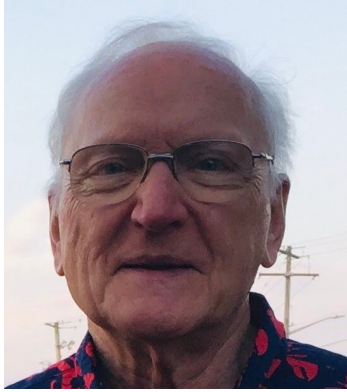
Defending Democracy will host an open zoom meeting for all UUCSS members at 7:30 pm on November 4, the evening after Election Day, to discuss next steps. We assume it is very possible the election will not be decided on Nov. 3 and that it will be wise to prepare ourselves for several possibilities in the days and weeks to come. As this is written in mid-October, it appears that neither Trump nor Biden will likely accumulate enough electoral votes on Nov. 3 to be reliably declared the winner on election night. Too many people are voting by mail in too many states to be counted by midnight on the 3rd. Further, journalists following the Trump campaign have already reported that Republicans plan to challenge the legality of many of the mail-in ballots in subsequent court battles. More dire scenarios are also possible; the President may declare victory before many of the votes are counted and federalize National Guard units to protect his version of electoral “law and order.”

Knowing that we need to be prepared for a variety of scenarios, UUCSS Defending Democracy is forming a UUCSS affinity group to help us mobilize and protect our political rights. An affinity group consists of acquaintances who pledge mutual trust and assistance to enable them to engage in a group project. Affinity groups usually operate through a rough division of labor (research, logistics coordinator, police relations, legal advice, artistry, etc.), and their flexibility and relatively small size allow them to respond with speed to new situations. By Nov. 4, we expect that our UUCSS affinity group will have already engaged in training to prepare for possibilities that may emerge out of the post-election chaos. If you have not been part of the affinity group but would like to join before the election, you can contact Bob Geiger at bobandcath@prodigy.net or 301-593-3319.

Join our zoom meeting for an update on the post-election situation and to learn what you can do to support the work of a UUCSS affinity group. Look for an all-church email to learn how you can gain access to the meeting.

Volunteer of the Month

Bob McGaughy



Bob and Bev McGaughy knew their time with mainline Christianity was over when their young son Danny pointed to a cross on a church steeple and said, "That's where the Jews killed Jesus." This led to twenty years at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church that better fit their religious understanding. They moved again when their daughter Ay Hieng could not find a place in All Souls youth religious education. After visiting UUCSS, they immediately knew that this was the right choice for their daughter and themselves.

Bob has been a significant contributor to our music program for many years. As Music Chair, he hired Phyllis Stanley and later as chair of the search committee he recruited Michael Holmes. He has helped plan our Suite Treat musical evenings from the very earliest days. His bass-baritone has graced our choir and he is currently a member of the music committee. These days, Bob devotes himself to the building and grounds, working closely with successive master gardeners beginning with Daisy Grubbs, who also designed our quilts, and now Linda Barrett.

When asked why he volunteers, Bob provided a performance analogy. Musicians need an audience to feel appreciated. When you understand what the church needs and find your space you not only are appreciated but quite often you learn something new. We're glad Bob chose UUCSS for his performance space.

Charity of the Month

Impact Silver Spring

Impact Silver Spring's mission is to advance racial equity, justice and liberation by working for change in individuals, communities, organizations, and systems.

They are a human-centered network tackling root causes of racial and economic disparities, and offer a wide range of events and programs, ranging from potlucks and block parties to classes and workshops, where residents can meet, learn, and build community. From youth attending their sports programs to parents who are looking for ways to improve their family's well-being, Impact Silver Spring's programs are built to foster a strong, resilient community and build leaders with the tools to make lasting, systemic change in our community.

For more information or to donate directly to the center, please go to <https://impactsilverspring.org/> or donate through UUCSS by either (1) using the GivePlus mobile app and select Special Collection or (2) send a check made out to UUCSS and write Impact Silver Spring in the memo line.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Using Chat During the Service--An Experiment

The Worship Committee has been studying ways to improve the weekly Sunday service and to make it more accessible to all visitors and members of the Congregation. The virtual Sunday service has been employing a chat function that parallels the heart of the prepared service: the music, the recitations, story times, and the sermon. In some respects, the chat function provides similar opportunities that Joys and Sorrows used to provide when we had in-person Sunday services.

As an experiment, the Worship Committee is proposing to limit the chat function to specific portions of the service: during the prelude, at the lighting and extinguishing of the chalices, in response to reflection questions posed by the minister, and during a specifically designated time for Joys and Sorrows.

We will begin this experiment in early November to see if it provides a more effective virtual service. We are also interested in hearing your thoughts about this experiment once we have had an opportunity to experience the new format for a few Sunday services. Please send your feedback to worship@uucss.org at that time.

Contacting Rev. Kristin

Since we won't have the benefit of organically running into one another at church during this time of social distancing, I'd like to connect with as many UUCSS members and friends as I can by Zoom or phone!

If you'd like to chat or have a pastoral visit with me, please go to www.calendly.com/rev-kristin-schmidt where you can schedule an appointment.

I check email during my office hours, which are on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 8am-2pm. Mondays are my day off and Wednesdays are my writing days. You can also contact me at 202-780-7164.

I look forward to talking with you!
Rev. Kristin

Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring

10309 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20903

FIRST CLASS

**Staff and
Board President**

Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

Minister

minister@uucss.org

Michael Holmes

Music Director

musicdirector@uucss.org

Marsha Thrall

Interim Director of
Religious Education

idreuucss@gmail.com

Lindsay Cowett

Religious Education

REassistant@uucss.org

Melinda Yalom

Church Administrator

administrator@uucss.org

Carl Miller

Board President

president@uucss.org

Submissions are due by the 17th of the prior month.

The next issue of the *Uniter* is in December 2020.

Send information and visuals to uniter@uucss.org.

Format guidelines for submissions: Text must be in a form that it can be edited, either in a Google Doc (preferred), Word file, or in the body of an email that can be copied and pasted. Graphics must be in a format in which they can be repositioned and resized—jpeg is greatly preferred.

The newsletter is published September–June by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring.

Co-editors are **Lynn Cave** and **Becca Stucky**.

To receive a PDF email version of the newsletter, contact the church office at administrator@uucss.org.

To receive a mailed copy of the *Uniter* for the year, please send **\$24 to UUCSS, Attention: Collector**.