



October 2020

Uniter

LGBTQ+ History Month

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SILVER SPRING
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In this Issue...

WORSHIP SERVICES

INSPIRE

[Minister's Column by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt](#)

[Message From Carl Miller, Board President](#)

LEARN

[Join Religious Education](#)

[Youth Religious Education](#)

[Racial Justice Religious Education](#)

[Adult Religious Education - Soul Matters Small Group Conversations](#)

CONNECT

EVENTS

[Annual UUCSS Auction!](#)

[Put UU Values into Action this Month](#)

[Volunteer Opportunities](#)

[Volunteer of the Month](#)

[Charity of the Month](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

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 <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-ggwJDOg70yLJT3aTCjuA>
- B. Join the sign language interpretation on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/993079449>
- C. Attend virtual coffee hour on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/98100391882>

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.

October 4: Organizing Over the Long Haul, UUA President, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray

In the midst of global pandemic, rising authoritarianism, and uprising, lives hang in the balance and the future of democracy is on the line. In response, Unitarian Universalists are answering the call of our faith, building powerful partnerships to mobilize our communities to #VoteLove and #DefeatHate in the 2020 elections. Join us, as we explore the intersections of faith, justice, and democracy in this collective virtual service.

October 11: The Power of Our Stories, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

This Indigenous People's weekend we will reflect on the power of the stories we tell, the ways we choose to tell them, and how listening to different characters in the same stories can help us change not only our own perspectives but the world around us.

October 18: Queer History Month Service, The Rainbow Alliance Team

There have always been queer people, and many cultures around the world accepted and supported their queer community members. We will be looking at some famous figures you might not have know were LGBTQ+ as well as looking at current queer activists and their movements. We have always been here along with our straight allies and community members, and we would like to further unify all of us in the work towards justice and equity in our communities.

October 25: Remembrance Sunday, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

As people all over the world prepare to honor the dead in different ways, we will remember our ancestors and those in our families and communities whom we've loved and lost. Everyone is invited to send a picture or two of a friend or loved one you'd like honored during this virtual service to minister@uucss.org. Please include the names (and birth and death dates if you have them) in your message.

INSPIRE

Minister's Column by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt



October is a busy month here at church! Religious Education classes for people of all ages have begun, the Auction team is hard at work preparing our first-ever virtual auction, the Membership Committee is gearing up for another year of leading all of us in welcoming newcomers, and work continues toward planned capital improvements.

In this issue of the Uniter you will find information about Adult RE, including a new monthly Soul Matters Small Group Conversations.

Also, please mark your calendars for the remaining Share and Support Zoom Conversations to connect with others facing similar life challenges. Check your all-church emails for more information about these and other opportunities for connecting, learning, and growing together.

Given all that's happening, and all of the change and ongoing challenges imposed by social distancing, it seems timely that our worship theme for the month of October is "Deep Listening." Many of the Sunday services this month invite us into deeper listening--to our ancestors and to the stories we choose to tell about ourselves and our country. I'm excited to share that we will have the opportunity to listen deeply to the leadership of the Unitarian Universalist Association on Sunday, October 4, as we join in experiencing the same worship service with hundreds of other congregations across the country. The service is being offered by UU the Vote, a non-partisan program of the UUA. It also means that the crew of staff and volunteers who work so hard every week to create, produce, and stream our virtual worship will get a much-needed break!

As we take advantage of all that this congregation and our lives offer to us this month, let us also remember to listen deeply to the Earth's wisdom. As the leaves begin to turn color, as we enjoy costumes and pumpkins and sweet treats, and as many harvests are gathered, may we remember that the different kinds of seasons in our lives are always transitioning one into the next, and that they each have their own lessons and blessings.

Message From Carl Miller, Board President



We are now stepping into the new church year. Our new board met for the second time at the end of August. Our discussion covered:

- The approval of hiring our RE coordinator Lindsay Cowett (yay!)
- Some proposed changes to the procedures for congregational meetings.
- The formation of a ministerial launch team for Rev. Kristin.
- Church and building usage.

One piece of news is the board has approved the use of the church by Silver Spring Nursery School for the coming school year. (The school has COVID-19 safety protocols in place.) This was a complicated decision, as is every consequential decision during the pandemic. We will be having further discussions at the September board meeting about future policies for the church grounds and buildings. We also plan to talk about leadership development for the coming year and the upcoming church auction.

Right now is always a good time to say thanks to the amazing team that puts together the online services each Sunday. In the midst of so much uncertainty (locally and globally), it is great to see how our shared artistry still shines through.

So, here's a question for everyone: What brought you to UUCSS?

This is probably not an easy question to answer, particularly when speaking with a community that emphasizes freedom of choice as much as Unitarian Universalism does. Reasons can be complicated.

When I was a kid, these decisions were simple (because adults took care of them). And actually in our case, we grew up about half a block away from a church: Brookmont Community Church in Bethesda, MD. It was a non-denominational neighborhood church and a wonderful place. They had evening services upstairs and musical events and theater performances downstairs. It was a small church, affectionately "old" in many ways, and everyone knew one another.

In 2016, I moved back to Maryland after being away for 19 years. After Andrea and I found a house to rent in Silver Spring, I went looking online for the nearest Unitarian Universalist church, and found quite surprisingly that it was about 8 minutes away from us. It was fun to discover a place as active as UUCSS that also has the "neighborhood church" feel. I remember the warmth of the people we met the first few times, and I remember the music.

That's the short version of my story. We'll all be back together again some day. I hope this message finds you well.

What brought you to UUCSS? We'd like to hear your story. The private [UUCSS Facebook group](#) has a post where you can add your own personal story (in the comments).

LEARN

Join Religious Education

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)

Racial Justice Religious Education

The Racial Justice Task Force is partnering with Religious Education at UUCSS to facilitate reading and discussion of Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum's "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race."

Sign up for the second conversation about the book here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040C44ADAC28ABFC1-religious>

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.

Stay tuned for even more adult religious education opportunities in next month's Uniter.

CONNECT

EVENTS

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

Sunday, Oct. 4, 1:00 - 2:30 pm. Adult religious education: Soul Matters Small Group Conversations via Zoom.

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 1:00 - 2:30 pm. Support Conversations via Zoom: Retired People. Facilitated by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, with Lay Minister Jim Paoletti.

Wednesday, Oct 7, 7:00 - 8:30pm. Religious Education and Racial Justice Task Force Book Group. Join the second conversation about the book *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?: And Other Conversations About Race*. Sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040C44ADAC28ABFC1-religious>

Saturday, Oct. 10, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Church yard cleanup.

Sunday, Oct. 11, 2:00 pm. LGBTQ+ Poster Making Party! We will be hosting a party for folx to make their own protest signs for any social justice movements they support. We can drive poster supplies to folx who request it, so everyone can participate. Contact rainbowalliance@uucss.org for more information.

Sunday, Oct. 18, 12:00 -1:00 pm (after the worship service). LGBTQ+ Terminology Workshop. This workshop will discuss queer terminology that we know quite a few people (including within our community) can get confused and frustrated by. We also cover different pronouns, LBGT vs. queer vs. SGM, “newer” identity terms, and, probably most importantly, how one should react when corrected or told they have offended.

Sunday, Oct. 18, 1:00 - 2:30 pm. Support Conversations via Zoom: People Living Alone. Facilitated by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, with Lay Minister Beverly Schnitzler.

Sunday, Oct 18, 7:00 pm. Men’s Book Group via Zoom. We will discuss Octavia E. Butler's enduring novel *Kindred*, which was published in 1979 and has sold more than 450,000 copies. An account of a young African-American writer who finds herself shunted in time between her Los Angeles, California, home in 1976 and a pre-Civil War Maryland plantation where she meets her ancestors and is forced into slavery and concubinage. She makes hard choices to survive slavery and to ensure her return to her own time. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Richard Lorr (rlorr4@gmail.com).

Friday, Oct. 23, 6:30 pm. LGBTQ+ Movie Night via Zoom (discussion starts at 6:30). We will be watching the movie *Paranorman*, and then coming together to discuss it via Zoom. It is available for FREE on Youtube, so anyone is able to watch it before our discussion. It is rated PG, and fun for the kiddos if they are alright with a few spooky moments. Contact rainbowalliance@uucss.org for more information.

Sunday, Oct. 25, 4:00 - 5:30 pm. Support Conversations via Zoom: Parents. Facilitated by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, with IDRE Marsha Thrall.

Monday, Oct. 26, 7:30pm - 9:30pm. Women's Book Group via Zoom. All interested readers are welcome to join! Contact Deborah Weiner (dweiner04@gmail.com) to get the Zoom link. For October we will be reading *There There* by Tommy Orange.

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 7:30 - 9:00 pm. Support Conversations via Zoom: People Living with Illness and Chronic Pain. Facilitated by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, with Lay Minister Gretchen Wiederrecht.

All Month: Get ready for the upcoming Silent Online Auction! Use this month to think about what you'd like to donate. More info below in the Wild and Crazy Auction update!

Anytime: Learn more about the 8th Principle

The Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) is excited to fully launch our congregational deep dive into what it would mean to adopt the 8th Principle. In case you missed it, [here's a link](#) to info on the 8th Principle and UUCSS so you can learn more.

Save the Date: Jubilee Anti-Racism Training, November 13 - 15

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.

Share and Support Conversations

Regarding the pandemic, it's been said that while we aren't all in the same boat, we are all living through the same storm. During this time, it seems important to offer opportunities for people in the same boats to be able to share about the unique difficulties they are facing and offer one another support.

If you would appreciate some space to listen and share with those in one of your "boats" please join us for the conversation below that matches your life experience or situation.

This month's topics are:

- Retired People
- People Living Alone
- Parents
- People Living with Illness and Chronic Pain

If you don't identify with any of the life experiences listed and would like to suggest another possible group conversation please email Rev. Kristin at minister@uucss.org.

See the Events section above for October conversation date and times. Zoom links for each meeting will be sent out in the weekly all-church emails.

Annual UUCSS Auction!



This Year's Theme: A Wild and Crazy Auction!

The annual UUCSS auction is one of the church's most enjoyable events as well as a terrific fundraiser. This year we will have a week-long online silent auction where donations from UUCSS members and friends are auctioned off to others in the church family. We will be using a highly recommended software program, Auctria, for bidding.

You will find everything from paintings, pottery, and other artistic creations, seasonal events, gifts of time, homemade baked goods, and more. Many members and friends offer special dinners or outings, or offer services or lessons. Each donated event offers opportunities to get to know fellow members and friends better.

Save these dates!

October 1 - 31: Think about what you'd like to donate

November 1 - 15: Enter donation items online

November 23 - December 4: Attend an information session to see how easy it is to BID

December 5 - 13: Silent Auction - Online bidding

Donation Ideas:

Meals

Ethnic Dinners

Activities/Events

Trips/Groups/Family Outings

Services

Workshops/How To

Seasonal Events

Yardwork/Gardening

Childcare

Pet Sitting

Members' Wish Lists

Handyman/room painting

Technology assistance

Shelving installation

Jewelry making/repair

Learn massage

Learn basic bike repair/riding

Class in basic estate planning

Personal Organizing

Note: Donors and bidders need to abide by Covid-19 Safety Guidelines. More information is coming!

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

Put UU Values into Action this Month

November Election

As you know, the country has an important election coming up NEXT MONTH! The social justice teams have made an “All Hearts on Deck” call to help get out the vote (GOTV). GOTV work is extra important this year due to the challenges of voting during a pandemic. As you may have heard, voter suppression exists and marginalized communities are vulnerable. Our congregational efforts are working through two organizations, [Reclaim our Vote](#) and [Vote Forward](#) to reach potential voters. For more information, or if you have questions about how to register yourself, check each week’s all-church email for info and updates. As of this writing, we've sent out close to **2500 postcards**. Together we are strong!

Fight Climate Change with Compost

Did you know that over 50% of the trash that goes into landfills, including food scraps, paper, yard trimming, and wood, is compostable? When we throw food in the trash, we are not only wasting a valuable resource, but are inadvertently contributing to climate change. That’s because once food scraps get into the landfill and begin to decompose, they release methane gas into the atmosphere. Methane gas is shorter-lived than carbon dioxide, but 28 times more harmful as a greenhouse gas, so it has an even greater impact on the climate.

Composting creates rich organic matter to add back into the soil. It nurtures plant and animal life, and sequesters carbon. By composting our food scraps, we can help the environment instead of hurting it!

Stay tuned for details on an upcoming UUCSS workshop where you can learn more.

UUCSS Against Beltway Expansion

Our congregation can help block the proposed expansion of I-270 and I-495 by commenting upon the Draft of the Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that is required before highway construction can begin.

Our Green Sanctuary Committee encourages you to take a stand against beltway expansion because:

- MD should be supporting cost-effective, affordable transportation for all commuters, not expensive “luxury lanes” for the rich.
- Studies consistently show that adding capacity to roadways fails to alleviate congestion for long.
- Although CO2 pollution from cars and trucks is one of the primary drivers of climate change and has already caused millions of deaths, the DEIS does not take account of this future impact.
- The financing plans for the project do not account for the cost of relocating water and sewer infrastructure or of mitigating environmental degradation. Widening the highways would destroy many homes and small businesses and hundreds of acres of parklands. Despite promises to the contrary, it is likely that taxpayers will foot some of the bill directly or indirectly through increased water bills.

Add your voice against the expansion - Comments are due Nov 9:

1. Click on CABE495.com, the website for Citizens Against Beltway Expansion.
2. Go to the DEIS Comment Form on the site.
3. Identify yourself and write your brief remarks.
4. Click to send your completed form directly to CABE, which will deliver it to the Maryland Dept of Transportation.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Worship Committee Wants YOU!

Haven't the online services been amazing since March 2020? Are you someone who has said, "Wow, that was so moving," or "Amazing! What wonderful video editing!," or "Shizaam! Everything is so wonderfully integrated and meaningful!"

The UUCSS Worship Committee needs more people to help them stay energized and involved, and to ensure that more voices are included in the execution of Sunday services. This is an appeal to encourage more people to join this important committee.

As a member of the Worship Committee, you can help to shape church policy with regard to our services. Among the important matters we'll be discussing this year are ways to include more children and youth in Sunday services, creative ways to support and provide feedback to Rev. Kristin's ministry, and the ramifications of the church's consideration of adopting the 8th Principle.

Members of the committee also serve as Worship Associates on a rotating basis; this works out to about one service every 6 to 8 weeks for each committee member. Please note that each person will be trained and assisted with all tasks; if you feel hesitant because you don't know if you can do what is asked, please do not worry.

Worship Associates are usually responsible for four or five short chunks of the service: the welcome, chalice lighting and congregational commitment, introduction to the offering, chalice extinguishing, and perhaps a reading. This process involves rehearsing the scripts for these chunks, videotaping yourself reading them on your computer, and then sending the video to the technical director to be included in the complete video of the service. There is also a monthly Worship Committee meeting at 7:30 on the second Tuesday of each month.

Please consider joining us. Bruce McConachie, co-chair of the committee, is happy to answer any questions by email at bamcco@pitt.edu or by phone at 412-519-5681.

Get involved with Racial Justice Task Force Projects

Do you have ideas, questions or thoughts for the Racial Justice Task Force? We'd love to hear from you! Do you have a little bit of time to help us with an upcoming project? Let us know; there are a variety of ways to plug in. Would you like to engage more deeply in the work of re-orienting to the world? Join us! The road is long, but together we will move joyfully forward. Email us at racialjusticetaskforce@uucss.org

Sunday Worship Tech Directors Needed

UUCSS is recruiting additional Sunday Worship Tech Directors to supplement Jake Ryder. Training is available! Please contact Steve Leete at ITChair@uucss.org, and/or Jake Ryder at jacobryder01@gmail.com, if you are interested in taking the first step.

Volunteer for RE—It's Fun!

We are currently seeking volunteers to help with virtual Religious Education for the 2020-21 season. We are in particular need of facilitators and mentors for the Coming of Age program. If you'd like to help in RE, please contact IDRE Marsha Thrall at IDREUUCSS@Gmail.com

Volunteer of the Month

Erica Anderson



Erica Anderson grew up Catholic in northeastern Pennsylvania, but Catholicism had never held much meaning for her. After a time of being unchurched and out of college, she began looking for the community that a church provides. Erica found the UU Fellowship of Centre County in State College, PA, which was much more in tune with her beliefs and values. Erica and her former husband moved to Rockville in 2012, and they visited the UU Congregation of Rockville, but it wasn't the right fit. They explored UUCSS next, talked with Alexa Fraser, and decided to give UUCSS a try. She loved the music, then-UUCSS minister

Rev. Liz Lerner-Maclay's sermons, and an ever-growing web of relationships. She also found a safe space to work out her own spirituality.

Erica has been busy ever since. Her first role was secretary of the Program Council in September 2013. She joined the Sunday support hospitality program that makes newcomers feel welcome in our congregation and began teaching K-1 RE classes in 2017. She's also been an Annual Budget Drive steward. For the last two years, she's been the Children's and Youth Religious Education Committee chair as we have transitioned from the absence of an RE director to welcoming Interim Director Marsha Thrall, and now helping the congregation navigate online RE. She's met these challenges through faith in us as a community. "I think we all get involved because of interests and needs, but we get through things by being open and trusting that we are all living the Seven Principles to our best abilities," she says. May we all find that core trust and love in each other.

Charity of the Month

Showing Up for Racial Justice

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) was created to mobilize white people to work for racial justice in accountable ways. Their work is directed by their accountability partners, which are organizations led by and for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. SURJ MoCo believes in the need for governmental, institutional, and interpersonal reparations. We provide "rapid reparations" for local Black and Indigenous activists and Black queer and trans youth who are experiencing housing and food insecurity. All money you choose to give will be disbursed directly to those who are affected by racism.

There are several ways to make a financial gift to SURJ through UUCSS:

1. Digitally through a tablet or a smartphone. If you haven't already done so, you can download the Give Plus Mobile app from Vanco. Search the zip code 20903 to find UUCSS, and within a few clicks, you can set up your account. During the month of October, you can give to SURJ while in the app by choosing "Special Collections" to join in UUCSS's group gift to the local affiliate.
2. Digitally through text-to-give. Text a message to the number 833-880-1363. The content of your text should be a dollar sign and the amount you want to donate. You will receive a reply with a link to complete your donation on a secure website. To complete your text-to-give donation to SURJ, please e-mail collector@uucss.org to let them know your money is slated for the organization.
3. By mailing a check to the church office, noting in the memo line that the check is for SURJ.

If you have questions, please send an e-mail to collector@uucss.org.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

The UUCSS Yahoo Group is gone - How to join the new Groups.io:

1. **Subscribe to UUCSS.groups.io** by using your email address listed in the UUCSS directory and sending an email to main+subscribe@UUCSS.groups.io
2. **Once approved:**
 - a. Create an account with a password - this is not required by Groups.io, but will make accessing the new group much easier to do this right away!
 - b. Go to <https://groups.io/account>.
 - c. You will be prompted to log in, and after you log in, your Account page will be displayed.
 - d. Set your Display Name to your real name; it is a kindness to other members, like wearing your name tag.

To change your email address - If you don't want it to be your email listed in the UUCS directory:

1. Go to <https://groups.io/account>.
2. In the Email field, enter your new email address.
3. Click Change Email.
4. When you receive a confirmation email from Groups.io, reply to it to confirm the change.

For more information, here is the link to the [Groups.io Member Manual](#).

Questions? Contact the Group Owner: main+owner@UUCSS.groups.io.

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

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FIRST CLASS

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Submissions are due by the 17th of the prior month.
The next issue of the *Uniter* is in November 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**.