

October 2021

Uniter



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SILVER SPRING
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Sunday Morning Worship Changes: Live Broadcasting and Hybrid

The month of October will bring many changes to our worship life at UUCSS. On October 10 we will begin live broadcasting services from our Sanctuary, and on October 31 we hope to be able to welcome a limited number of people to worship inside the Sanctuary during the live broadcast. More information about both of these changes and how to sign up to worship inside on the 31st will be shared in future weekly All-Church Emails.

Tune In to Worship Together, Outside!

Beginning on Sunday, October 10, weather permitting, everyone is encouraged to gather outside on campus at 10:00 to tune into the service on their smartphones or other devices with a data plan. You will need to stream the service using your data plan, not the church wifi, since the wifi cannot accommodate that many devices. Some chairs will be provided, but please bring a camping chair or blanket if you can, and the beverage of your choice. Please keep in mind that when at church everyone needs to

- Wear a mask (covering both the nose and the mouth) when not actively eating and drinking
- Social distance from other households/pods
- Use church restrooms one household at a time

WORSHIP SERVICES

Music begins at 10:00 AM / Service at 10:30 AM

Zoom Coffee Hour at 11:30 PM

How to Join Worship

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

Having trouble tuning in for worship?

Please email administrator@uucss.org with your name and phone number to be connected with a volunteer who can help.

October 3: Journeys, Rainbow Alliance

Whether trips to distant lands or traveling to new places inside ourselves, life is full of journeys. In this service led by members of the Rainbow Alliance we will reflect on the ways life is a journey to know and become more fully ourselves. This is also the first week of outdoor in-person Religious Education (RE) for children and youth.

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October 10: More Than A Hungry Coat: Welcoming the Stranger, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt with Maureen Malloy and Pat Scheid

Hospitality is a virtue in many religions, but why is it important for Unitarian Universalists and how can welcoming the stranger deepen our own spirituality? This week in worship we will seek answers to those questions and learn more about opportunities for UUCSS to welcome the stranger. Note: this week we make the shift from pre-recorded services shared on YouTube to live broadcasts of our services through Zoom. Instructions for how to tune into worship on this new platform will be shared in the All-Church Email.

October 17: That Which Holds All: Learning and Growing Together, Dr. Laura Solomon, UUCSS Director of Spiritual Growth

Nancy Shaffer's poem "That Which Holds All" tells the story of a community creating a moment of learning, stillness, and connectedness. As a faith community, we are constantly striving to be in relationship in ways that allow us to learn and grow both individually and collectively. Join us for a time of exploration of the ways we deepen our faith in community.

October 24: The Dynamic Divine, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

This week we go beyond the traditional theism/atheism binary and explore what process theology has to offer Unitarian Universalists in this time and place.

October 31: Remembrance Sunday, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

As people all over the world prepare to honor the dead in different ways, we will remember all 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 service. Please email pictures to Rev. Kristin at minister@uucss.org and make sure to include the names (and birth and death dates if you have them) in your message.

INSPIRE

Minister's Column by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt



Parker Palmer writes that "spirituality refers to the eternal human longing to be part of something larger than one's own ego." I continue to be amazed and inspired by the myriad ways the people of UUCSS connect to those larger things, and the ripples of truth, love, and justice that flow out from each of you into our wider community.

Of course, this precious community is one of those things we are part of, and over the last 18 months we have sustained our connection to one another largely through computer screens. I'm so glad to be gearing up now for programs and gatherings that will allow us to enjoy in-person worship and fellowship--at last.

My gratitude goes to so many who have worked very hard to gather input from all of you and/or planned for the church year ahead:

- The Board has brought our COVID-19 guidelines into alignment with the UUA's recommendations, which will allow us to move forward with larger outdoor and limited capacity indoor programming as long as our COVID Act Now risk level goes no higher
- Dr. Laura Solomon, our Director of Spiritual Growth, has gathered input from many of you in her work to tailor our religious education programming for children and youth to this unique time for families
- Michael Holmes, our Music Director, has expanded choir and other opportunities to make music beyond the virtual sphere
- Our amazing tech volunteers are putting the finishing touches on equipment that will allow us to broadcast worship services and other events held in the Sanctuary

Just as the leaves prepare to show us how beautiful change and letting go can be, our church is moving into this time of innovation and transition. But even as we may feel excited about in-person connection, we may feel challenged at times to let go of the way things have been. We feel anxious about how worship broadcast live from the Sanctuary will feel, if pieces of it will ever feel as fulfilling as worship did in the "before times." We may miss things about the pre-recorded services that can't continue in exactly the same way when we shift to hybrid worship. These feelings are to be expected. All change, even change we really want to happen, can bring loss, a sense of disequilibrium.

Nevertheless, I welcome the changes coming our way because of how much I look forward to finally being together with you! I eagerly await the wisdom the Rainbow Alliance and Dr. Laura will be sharing with us this month in worship, the community we will create together at outdoor social events, and all of the relationships we will renew and cultivate together in the months ahead.

In faith and affection,

Rev. Kristin

Message From Maggie Hayes, Board President



“Cultivating Relationship” seems the perfect theme for this moment in the life of UUCSS. After 18 months when most of our interactions were virtual, we are beginning to gather in person, to renew our personal and congregational relationships in ways designed to keep us all safe. During our town hall meeting on September 12, members expressed their longing to worship, socialize, and learn together in person – but always with the caveat that we must observe appropriate health precautions.

The Board “cultivated relationships” among its members at a retreat on September 18. Led by Rev. Kristin and Jean Snell, we spent six hours via Zoom getting better acquainted with one another and with UUCSS staff, investigating “big picture” questions about the Board’s purpose and our norms in dealing with one another, and sorting out our short- and longer-term priorities. Later that afternoon Rev. Kristin hosted a social event for us on her back porch.

Our highest priority this fall is reopening UUCSS – not to go “back to normal,” but to go forward to a new reality that fosters in-person relationships while incorporating innovations to broaden our outreach. We’ve established an advisory task force to advise the Board every month on COVID-19 metrics, propose changes to our guidelines, and consider implementation issues.

The Board has changed one provision in the guidelines to clarify that, while congregational singing indoors is not allowed, Michael and our musicians will be able to bring music into the Sanctuary within certain parameters (<https://uucss.org/uucss-covid-guidelines/>). We’re also addressing other priorities, such as our study of the 8th Principle and planning for the financial health of the church.

You’ve heard this before, but I need to emphasize the two things we need from all of you. The first is *patience*, as our transition into new ways of “doing church” won’t always go smoothly. We ask for your tolerance of imperfection as our worship services, RE classes, and other events evolve. The other is *help*, as outdoor gatherings and in-door hybrid events will be more labor-intensive than past gatherings. As Rev. Kristin says every Sunday, “Now our service begins.”

In fellowship,
Maggie
(email us at board@uucss.org)

LEARN

Message From Laura Solomon, Director of Spiritual Growth



Dear Parents and Kids,

It's time! It's time!

I am SO excited to tell you about our plans for children and youth religious education. This plan comes after long conversations with many of you, with Rev. Kristin, with the Board, with Lindsay Cowett (our RE Coordinator), and with religious educators at other churches in the area. I am grateful to everyone who has answered my many questions, helped me learn about past religious education programming, and talked to me about your hopes and concerns as we shape the year ahead.

The plan for this year is a combination of **outdoor, masked, in-person** religious education programming and **virtual** programming. All religious education programming will occur during worship.

The short and easy version is this: we will meet **in-person** on the FIRST and THIRD Sundays of the month. We will meet **virtually** on the SECOND and FOURTH Sundays. There are a few fifth Sundays, and information will be shared about them as needed.

Of course, we know that ultimately it will get cold, and there may be COVID-related reasons why we need to move virtual for a few months. My hope is that this will be an easier way for us to transition to entirely virtual religious education when needed, and also easier to transition to fully in-person classes when the youngest among us are vaccinated and it is safe to do so.

Please make sure to register your children for RE here: <https://forms.gle/c3XqiXmHxQwi5mAg9>

And if you are interested in volunteering for RE, please let us know here:

<https://forms.gle/1xUSFW8oTdLbBwtm6>

Some more detailed information follows, and you can expect more communication in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions at DSG@uucss.org.

Looking forward with excitement!

Laura

RE Schedule

First Sunday: In Person

PreK-8--Children's Chapel on the monthly theme (October: Cultivating Relationship)

9--Coming of Age

10 - 12--YRUU

Second Sunday: Virtual RE programming

Pre-K-1--Tapestry of Faith: "Wonderful Welcome"

2-4--Tapestry of Faith: "Signs of Our Faith"

5-6 --Tapestry of Faith: "Riddle and Mystery"

7-8--Tapestry of Faith: "Qualities of a Justice-Maker"

9--Coming of Age

10-12--YRUU

Third Sunday: In Person

PreK - 8--Art Assembly

9--Coming of Age

10-12--YRUU

Fourth Sunday: Virtual RE programming

Pre-K-1--Tapestry of Faith: "Wonderful Welcome"

2-4--Tapestry of Faith: "Signs of Our Faith"

5-6-- Tapestry of Faith: "Riddle and Mystery"

7-8--Tapestry of Faith: "Qualities of a Justice-Maker"

9--Coming of Age

10-12-- YRUU

Adult RE

Explore Your Leadership Style

Four-Session Course on Leadership in a Faith Context

As we begin a new church year, are you ready to make new friends and get to know folks anew at UUCSS? Are you available to deepen your connection to our beloved congregation and explore how you can contribute more to our community? Do you want to grow or deepen your leadership skills? If so, we want to give members and friends an opportunity to explore their approach to leadership closer to home and are bringing leadership development programming to UUCSS.

For many years, we have asked members to step into volunteer roles without a lot of preparation. Some members have had the opportunity to attend leadership development training offered by the UUA through regional workshops, conferences, and General Assembly. As a first step towards

intensifying the congregation's commitment to leadership development, the board reconstituted the nominating committee to be the leadership development committee to be able to consider volunteer and leadership development more broadly with the congregation. With this in mind, Jean Snell and Carol Hamilton will be offering a four-session workshop on leadership. Using an abbreviated form of the UUA curriculum, *Harvesting the Power*, through this class congregants will:

- Explore your leadership and faith journey
- Consider how to shift from an individualistic to a collective mindset
- Differentiate between leadership and management and why it matters
- Examine how to maintain your personal boundaries to avoid burnout
- Investigate what constructive conflict looks like

Who should attend: All members and friends are welcome! Whether you are considering a volunteer role within the church, elsewhere in the community, or in your profession, or whether you are already involved in some aspect of church leadership--we would love to have you!

When: Participants should commit to attending all four sessions scheduled for:

- **Sunday, Oct. 3** Noon-2:30 pm, in person if possible - details TBD w/potluck lunch if possible, or via Zoom
- **Thursday, Oct. 21** 7-9 pm via Zoom
- **Thursday, Nov. 4** 7-9 pm via Zoom
- **Sunday, Nov. 21** Noon-2:30pm, in the Sanctuary if possible w/potluck lunch, or via Zoom

How: Go to: <https://forms.gle/UcZ6zhf2fnX4fA3UA>.

Questions: Email ldc@uucss.org



CONNECT



EVENTS

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

October 1 7:30 pm. RE Feedback session I. *Zoom*.

October 4 7:30 - 10:00 pm. Online Men's Group.

October 8 8 pm. Ladies Night Out. Currently, a Zoom chat for UUCSS women interested in connecting with other UUCSS women. To join the group and receive announcements, subscribe to the the church's UUCSS | Ladies-Night-Out listserv, which is a subgroup of the main UUCSS groups.io listserv.

October 11 7:30 - 10:00 pm. Online Men's Group.

October 16 9 am - 1 pm. Church Grounds Volunteer Clean Up.

October 17 7 pm. Men's Book Group. We are reading *The Martian Chronicles*, a sci-fi novel published in 1950 by **Ray Bradbury** that details the exploration and settlement of Mars, the home of indigenous Martians, by Americans leaving a troubled Earth that is eventually devastated by nuclear war. (Did Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk read this as young men?) If you are interested in joining the discussion, contact Richard Lorr (rlorr4@gmail.com) to get the Zoom link.

October 18 7:30 - 10:00 pm. Online Men's Group.

October 25 7:30 - 10:00 pm. Online Men's Group.

October 25 7:30 - 9 pm. Women's Book Group. We are reading *The Tenth Muse* by **Catherine Chung**. We follow COVID-19 guidelines and will meet either in person or on Zoom. Interested readers are encouraged to come without a long-term obligation, although the core group has been meeting for over 20 years! For further information, please contact Deborah Weiner, dweiner04@gmail.com.

Committee Updates

UUCSS and the Silver Spring Justice Coalition

The Racial Justice Task Force (RJTF) is excited to work with members of our congregation in our work on implementing the 8th Principle. More will be forthcoming about our plans. In the meantime, the External Engagements sub-committee of RJTF continues to lend its support to the Silver Spring Justice Coalition (SSJC) by sending reps to its general monthly meetings as well volunteering on the Mental Health Committee and responding to calls for assistance from other committees.

SSJC is a coalition of more than 15 local and regional organizations that began in the summer 2018 as a community response to the shooting of Robert White, who was shot unarmed in his own neighborhood by the police. SSJC is focused on changing policing in Montgomery County, working in alliance with other groups to reform county, state, and national laws and policies affecting local policing. You can read more about SSJC at: <https://silverspringjustice.wordpress.com>.

We are currently working on a video project for SSJC to help spread the word about the number of persons unjustly killed by the police in Montgomery County, and what community members can do to help change the system. Watch the UUCSS.io group and Facebook page for the release of the video in the next weeks and help by sharing it via social media!

The SSJC Mental Health Committee advocates on the mental health crisis response in Montgomery County with the goal to provide the best standard of care to everyone experiencing a mental health crisis. Informing this is the urgent need to prevent harm by police to mentally ill residents. Towards this end, the committee has lobbied for full funding of mental health crisis teams. It has been a vocal advocate with the County Executive and County Council for an end to the use of force by MCPD officers in their encounters with individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis. It also lobbies for the County's adoption of the Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets (CAHOOTS) program, so that mental health professionals respond to emergency calls for people experiencing mental health problems, instead of police officers.

The good news is two new crisis and outreach response teams launched in MoCo this month. A \$1.9 million Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant will fund six positions for

two years. However, there is much more work to be done to ensure that MoCo follows the CAHOOTS model, rather than continuing to use police as the first responders when residents are experiencing mental health

issues. If you're interested in learning more about how to support these efforts, please email RJTF@uucss.org or contact Mary Beth Lerner and Kathryn Leete.

UUA Initiative

The Unitarian Universalist Association has a new national initiative: the "Side With Love" Action Center. It will provide a home for four campaigns--Creating Climate Justice, UU the Vote, LGBTQ ministries, and Love Resists, which supports decriminalization. You can get alerts for letter-writing campaigns, attend on-line skill-building meetings, and access resources and tools for justice advocacy in one site. ([Side With Love Action Center](#))

"Side With Love" is also seeking volunteers for the Squads that support its work. The Squads bring the campaigns to life by providing bite-sized commitments for UU's and friends to take action for a just, equitable,

and multiracial democracy. Squad volunteers help folks learn to phone bank, manage data, run Zoom events and promote spiritual grounding and fun. No prior experience is necessary. Interested folks will get help finding the right squad and the right-size role for the time and energy you have available, as well as training and orientation. For more information contact Florence Fultz at vogelsang5@rcn.com.

Rainbow Alliance

National Coming Out Day – October 11th



On October 11, 1987, more than half-a-million people marched in Washington, D.C., for lesbian and gay rights. National Coming Out Day was created on the first anniversary of the march as a positive celebration of queerness, and to encourage people to share their truth and take a stand against homophobia. It is now celebrated annually, celebrating the spectrum of sexual orientation and gender identity in the queer community. While many in the queer community have coming-out stories to tell, coming out is a continual process as part of negotiating everyday life. Coming out may not be safe for everyone, especially for those who are part of marginalized communities, or in certain situations.

If you want to observe National Coming Out Day, attend a rally, support someone you know who is coming out to family or friends, or share your coming-out story. Ask questions or learn more by visiting hrc.org.

The Rainbow Alliance at UUCSS welcomes all members, friends, and visitors, whether a member of the queer community or an ally. If you are interested in joining, send an email to rainbowalliance@uucss.org.

Groups.io: More Than a UUCSS Listserv

When you volunteer to chair a committee or plan an event at UUCSS, you need an efficient way to communicate with your team. The church's Groups.io account helps you achieve that.

You may think of Groups.io as a listserv, much like the Yahoogroups listserv that we discontinued a year ago. Yes, Groups.io has a listserv-type function, but it is far more than a listserv. In fact, Groups.io can serve as the hub for the full life of the church.

One of Groups.io's best aspects is the subgroup feature. If you're chairing a committee or heading up the planning of an event like the annual auction or the Fellowship Dinner, you can set up a subgroup for your team. There, you can set up and share:

- Files
- Photos
- Calendars where you can schedule meetings and send out reminders
- Wikis
- Polls, so you can ask questions of the entire group
- Email communications

Each group can have multiple owners and moderators.

Check out all the features of the church GetSetUp.io pages and subgroups. If you need help setting up and running a subgroup, contact the Communications Committee at communications@uucss.org for help.

How to Subscribe to UUCSS.groups.io:

Send an email to main+subscribe@UUCSS.groups.io from the email address listed in the UUCSS directory, so we can make sure you are on our current list of members and friends. Only individuals who are current members or friends of UUCSS can join UUCSS@groups.io

Subscribers are encouraged to consult the [members manual](#) for detailed instructions on managing their email preferences and using the many features available.

Volunteer Spotlight

Kathryn Leete



Kathryn Leete loved her childhood Presbyterian church. It was folding-chair small, friendly, and welcoming with a young hip minister. There was less impetus to attend church in college. Living on her own after college and looking for a church she tried the local Presbyterians and found them unwelcoming. A friend suggested UUism, and it seemed right enough to put it on a dating-service profile when she moved to DC. This is in part how she matched with Steve Leete. On their second date, he took her to a summer service at UUCSS, and Kathryn felt such a sense of welcoming and belonging that she signed the book shortly thereafter.

That was in 1993. Since then, Kathryn has been very active in our church. Early on, she sang in the choir and joined the committee to evaluate our new building for handicapped access. She has worked in the nursery, taught elementary and middle school RE and OWL, stewarded for the Annual Budget Drive, and continues as a worship associate and tech director. Right now, her heart is in the Racial Justice Task Force and particularly in external engagement for the tangible work of changing law and public policy.

Kathryn's church touchpoints have included InReach groups, a decades-long marriage enrichment group, monthly "Ladies Night Out" gatherings, and adult RE classes. Particularly important were a parenting group (precursor to Families LUUV); Rob and Hank Dahlstrom's enneagram course, adult OWL, and former UUCSS minister Rev. Leon Dunkley's movie and discussion offerings. All have helped her to know herself, enrich her marriage, and know other members at a deeper level. Her hope for us is that we can keep that feeling of friendliness she first encountered. There are many ways to volunteer and, sometimes, the simplest is to reach out to someone undergoing a hard time. That's something Kathryn is good at.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

Contacting Rev. Kristin--*UPDATED*

My work schedule has changed! In general I check email in between meetings and appointments on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 10am to 4pm. Sundays I focus on worship, Mondays are my days for writing/study, and Fridays are my day off. If something urgent comes up outside my office hours or over the weekend please text or call me.

Worship: Sunday

Writing day: Monday

Office hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 10am-4pm. Emails are checked.

Day off: Friday

Contact number for phone, text, and emergency: 202-780-7164

Email: minister@uucss.org

If you'd like to chat or have a pastoral visit by phone, Zoom, or in-person at church (masks required), please go to www.calendly.com/rev-kristin-schmidt where you can schedule an appointment.

Membership News

UUCSS is a welcoming congregation. There can be no doubt about that. Those of us on the Membership Committee have heard time and again from people that one of the reasons they kept returning to UUCSS is because the people were so friendly and welcoming. But it's hard to work our warm magic when we can't be together in person. The chat during service is our best opportunity to do this and every week reading the chat reminds us just what a kind and big-hearted community UUCSS is. This is also when Membership's Visitor Captains reach out to visitors. Let's continue to keep our eyes open for visitors and friends who are adventurous enough, brave enough, curious enough to join us on Sundays and make that extra effort to reach out to them, both in the chat and Coffee Hour.

We are thrilled to be welcoming **Jake Ryder**, **Caroline Stauss**, and **Tallman Boyd** as new members of our congregation in a new members recognition ceremony within the next month or two. If you see Jake, Caroline, or Tallman in a Zoom room or chat, please congratulate them!

We also anticipate holding our next Pathways class sometime in early Fall.

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

Dr. Laura Solomon

Director of Spiritual Growth

DSG@uucss.org

Lindsay Cowett

Religious Education

REassistant@uucss.org

Philip Browne

Church Administrator

administrator@uucss.org

Maggie Hayes

Board President

president@uucss.org

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

Uniters are published monthly September-June by the Unitarian Universalist Church of Silver Spring.

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.

Co-editors are **Lynn Cave** and **Caroline Stauss**.

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**.