

April 2023

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



All Sunday services are offered in-person in our Sanctuary and broadcast live on Zoom. Please see the all-church email for the Zoom link. Masks are still required inside all buildings at UUCSS except for specific events as determined by the event organizers.

April 2: Mud, Miracles, and Resistance: A Passover Service, Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg

Passover is a celebration and a recommitment to our work resisting oppression and working for collective liberation. It's also a time for singing and telling ancient stories in new ways. Join us for this special Passover service of story, song, and metaphorical mud.

April 9: Tables Not Crosses: An Easter Service, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

This week we celebrate Easter in story, song, and sermon. There is no Religious Education today, the all ages service will be shorter, and afterward all kids are invited to take part in the Egg Hunt. Alleluia!

April 16: How Can We Serve? Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

We continue our mission and vision work this month with a service exploring who UUCSS is now, the unique gifts we have to offer, and the opportunities in our wider community to serve our values. Whether you've been part of UUCSS for many years or have just begun attending and getting connected, you are invited to participate in the workshop after today's service! A light lunch for all ages will be served and childcare provided.

After the Service: Second Mission and Vision Workshop—Who Is UUCSS Today?

Last month we considered who UUCSS has been when at our best, and this time we focus on who we are today, what gifts and strengths we bring to bear, and the opportunities in our wider community to serve our values. Whether you've been part of UUCSS for many years or have just begun attending and getting connected, you are invited to participate in the workshop after today's service! A light lunch for all ages will be served and childcare provided. If you will need ASL interpretation please email vision@uucss.org by April 2.

April 23: Active Hope: An Earth Day Service, Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt

Coping with anxiety about the sustainability of our planet can be tough. Join us for this Earth Day service where we honor those feelings and tap into joy as a form of resistance to despair. After the service there will be activities for people of all ages to learn about the Chesapeake Bay Trust grant our congregation received, and the role we can all play in healing our corner of the Earth.

April 30: Coming of Age Sunday, Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg and the Coming of Age Class

Several teenagers in our congregation have spent the last many months delving deep into our free faith, theologies, and their own beliefs. This Sunday we have the privilege of learning what wisdom they have to share. You won't want to miss this beloved service and opportunity to support our amazing youth.

INSPIRE

Minister's Column by Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt



Rabbi David Wolf tells a story of a boy and his father. They were walking along a road when they came across a large stone. "Do you think if I use all of my strength, I can move this rock?" the child asked. His father answered, "If you use all of your strength, I am sure you can do it." The boy began to push the rock. Exerting himself as much as he could, he pushed and pushed. The rock did not move. Discouraged, he said to his father, "You were wrong. I can't do it." His father put his arm around the boy's shoulder and said, "No son. You didn't use all your strength—you didn't ask me to help."

Dominant culture centers the power of the individual, so I love the way this story reminds us of our power together. I wonder if the thing we must resist most in our world today is the sense that we can only depend on ourselves, answer only to ourselves—that our primary way of being in the world is as an individual. What if we understood ourselves first and foremost to be part of community, felt accountable to that community, and knew we were able to rely on that community in times of need? What if our resistance was rooted not just in making things better beyond us but within us, too?

Our theme for the month of April here at UUCSS is "resistance" and we have some truly excellent services lined up to help us explore these and so many other questions. I hope you'll join us as we celebrate the springtime holidays and continue digging into our shared mission and vision. This month brings Passover, Easter, another Mission and Vision workshop, Earth Day, and at the very end of the month the beloved Coming of Age Sunday.

Wishing you and yours all good things in this season of fragrance, beauty, and longer days.

Message From Doneby Smith, Board President



What if *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once* is not just the name of a movie, but a description of how we are living? With the 24-hour news cycle, information (mostly about negative events!) comes to us in live action and full color daily or even hourly from every corner of the globe. Sometimes it seems like everything, everywhere, all at once is also how we do church.

A couple of Sundays ago after the service, we had a pizza party, a movie, name tag-making, letter-writing, and an archive display all at once in the sanctuary foyer. We are a very active bunch with big plans and high ambitions! This year, 77 members are serving on at least one committee, with 21 of those serving on multiple committees. Yet, the constant refrain is that there are not enough volunteers, and there is ongoing concern that our volunteers are burning out. (It's worth noting that this phenomenon is not happening at our church alone.)

We have started a process of discernment through the mission and vision all-church workshops. Maybe with a clear and tighter focus, we can ground ourselves, so we can accomplish some things at a sustainable pace in our church and locally--something, somewhere, step by step.

LEARN

Contemplations from Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg, Assistant Minister of Spiritual Growth



This Month in Religious Education at UUCSS

We'll be starting off Religious Education in April on April 1st with a congregational field trip to see the Afrofuturism Exhibit at the National Museum of African American Culture and History (that's the big Smithsonian one on the Mall in DC). We have 42 tickets for 10:45 am, meeting outside the front doors of the museum at that time. Please let Rev. Caitlin know if you plan to attend! For more information on the exhibit that opens March 24 (or to book your own tickets if you can't make it that day), visit <https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/afrofuturism>

Then on April 2, we'll finally be opening our **Centered On Love Art Gallery** featuring art made by YOU about our new proposed language for the covenant of the Unitarian Universalist Association, centered on love, with the values of Equity, Generosity, Interdependence, Justice, Transformation, and Pluralism. We're asking you to bring your art in advance so we can get it hung, and for you to include a note that has your name, the name of your artwork, and a blurb (just a couple sentences) about your artwork. It can be anything that is appropriate and won't decompose.

This month we hope to have the nursery open starting at 9:15 every week!

Note that we are still looking for one more childcare professional and for backup volunteers. If you have someone to recommend for the job or are willing to spend a few hours once a month or so with our youngest UUs, please email Rev. Caitlin or Sara.



April 2—before the service will be Multigenerational Art and Archive Explorers, and after the service, our Coming of Age kids will be gathering in Fellowship Hall while the rest of us gather for the Centered on Art Gallery Opening downstairs in the Sanctuary building

April 9—our Easter Celebration, with no Religious Education before the service. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt after, though, so please put on your finery and bring your baskets. Teens will be hiding the eggs during the service

April 10—in the evening, will be our Passover Seder

April 16—Children's Arts and the Gifts and Challenges of Aging before the service, with Coming of Age afterwards. Youth (YRUU) are meeting for games before the service

April 23— Earth Day Celebration and before the service will be Superhero Academy (Elementary), Building Bridges (Middle School), Connecting Through Games (High School), and Lectio Divina (Adults)

April 30—Coming of Age Service (you won't want to miss it), with an All Ages May Day/Beltane gathering outside beforehand

Coming Up in Religious Education

We are starting to get organized for OWL (Our Whole Lives) for next fall! Are you already trained to teach OWL, or interested in becoming trained in OWL for children, youth, or adults? Please reach out to Rev. Caitlin or Sara!

Remember, ALL PARENTS of kids and youth in our program need to sign up to help out with Children's Community Time during services! Here's the link to that sign up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E4AACA72DABF5C07-supervision>

Is your kid actually registered for Religious Education? If not, we've created a new form:

<https://forms.gle/8yKEHgh8YU4qjSV98>

And here's our RE Wish List, if you would like to contribute to the RE program by contributing materials:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YhImlv8lyrP5WYIR1reFSJp_SjQWNldhnLL4lCh9LIU/edit

Questions, comments, want to get involved? Email Rev. Caitlin at amsg@uucss.org or our RE Coordinator Sara at recoordinator@uucss.org. You can also text Rev. Caitlin at 301-679-5832, or schedule zoom meetings with her at www.calendly.com/revcaitlin (or meet her for coffee or whatever!).

Remember that Rev. Caitlin is typically most available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and usually takes Friday and Saturday as her days off.



CONNECT



Events

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

Pathways to Membership class: Saturday, April 1

Are you interested in becoming a member of UUCSS? Our next Pathways to Membership class will be from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm on April 1 in the Dolan Lounge in the Admin Building. Rev. Kristin will be joining a couple of us from the Membership Committee to provide you with the opportunity to learn more about the history and principles of the UU faith, about UUCSS in particular, and about the privileges and responsibilities of becoming a member. We will host a light brunch as well. For more information and to RSVP, please email membership@uucss.org.

Food Bank Donations: Sunday, April 2

UUCSS will collect food donations on the first Sunday of every month for the food bank at Silver Spring Christian Reformed Church (1501 Arcola Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20902). Please bring canned fruit in its own juice or water, canned vegetables with no added sodium, canned meats (chicken, salmon, tuna), low-sodium soups, meals in a can (such as chili, beef stew, spaghetti), whole wheat pasta and pasta sauce, low-sugar cereal and oatmeal, dried beans or rice, nuts, oils and vinegars to church on the first Sunday of the month. If you will not be at church on the first Sunday of the month, you can leave your donation in the kitchen, labeled "food bank donation." Thanks!

Men's Book Group: Sunday, April 16 at 7pm

The Men's Book Group is considering opening membership in the group to all Church members and friends who enjoy reading. At our next meeting, we will discuss this issue and our next book, ***The Magician*, by Colm Toibin**, an intimate, astonishingly complex portrait of Thomas Mann, his magnificent and complex wife Katia, and the times in which they lived—World War I, rise of Hitler, World War II, Cold War, and exile. If you are interested in joining the discussion, let Richard Lorr know (rlorr4@gmail.com), get the book, and join us.

Women's Book Group: Thursday, April 24 at 7:30

We meet on the fourth Monday of each month in the UUCSS sanctuary foyer. 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm. All interested readers are welcome without a long-term obligation. A title for April has not yet been selected. It will be announced in the all-church email when decided. Questions and suggestions are welcomed at dweiner04@gmail.com.

Join Us for Monthly Church Workdays

It's time to beautify our church building and grounds. We need your help with:

- Clearing vines & weeds
- Pruning bushes
- Digging out plants
- Dusting & tidying
- Boxing stuff in Community Bldg

Mark Your Calendar and Join Us on Saturdays...

- April 29 10 am – 12 pm
- May 27 10 am – 12 pm
- June 24 9 – 11 am
- July 22 9 – 11 am
- August 26 9 – 11 am
- September 23 9 – 11 am
- October 28 10 am – 12 pm
- November 18 10 am – 12 pm

An outside lunch will be served after. Please bring a side dish to share!



Hope to see you there!!!

Brian Beard and Linda Barrett (UUCSS Garden Group)

Questions? Please email brianbeard@hotmail.com and limabean290@gmail.com.

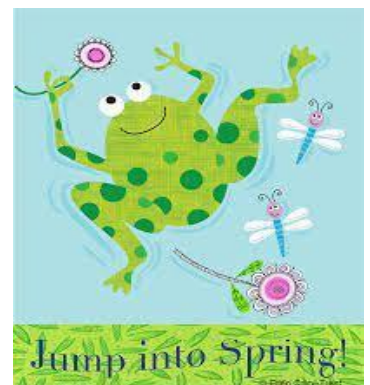
Committee Updates

Auction Grand Finale!

What an amazing and fun auction! We raised about \$29,000. It was so nice to have a live auction again.

Many thanks to all who donated items and events, to those who bid generously or donated money, and to those who helped with the logistics to make the auction a success.

If you are interested in joining the auction team for next year, Linda Barrett, Emily Harris, and Emily Tien are happy to talk with you, or send an email to auction@uucss.org or board@uucss.org.



Update from the Finance Chair

By Tamara Bowman

Here's the updated information on UUCSS finances. The amounts for ABD Pledges and Capital Campaign are the monies received this fiscal year, not the amounts pledged.

Budget period from July 1, 2022, through March 15, 2023.

Capital Campaign		\$217,953.20
Income		
	ABD Pledges	\$309,027.03
	Rental Income	\$28,205.00
Expenses		\$449,083.21
Endowment		\$84,462.93

If you have other finance related questions please direct them to finance@uucss.org.

Green Sanctuary Committee: Celebrate Earth Day at UUCSS



"Once a photograph of the Earth, taken from the outside, is available...a new idea as powerful as any in history will be let loose."

Physicist Fred Hoyle wrote those words in 1948. It would be twenty years before an astronaut in the Apollo 8 lunar mission captured the image above, known as *Earthrise*, on December 24, 1968. Earthrise is considered the most influential environmental photograph ever taken. Capturing the beauty and fragility of Earth, the image did indeed help inspire a powerful movement—the first Earth Day was celebrated two years later, in 1970.

This year, UUCSS will celebrate Earth Day with a worship service on April 23, followed by fun and educational activities after the service.

Kids can make a fairy house, play nature games, or get acquainted with our new UUCSS shade trees by participating in a tree scavenger hunt. There will be treats! Green Sanctuary will also highlight some earth friendly products and share information about how to make your yard more friendly to pollinators and other wildlife.

Green Sanctuary Committee: Styrofoam Collection and Other Off-Campus Earth-Day Friendly Collections

Before the Earth Day Service on April 23, we will be collecting styrofoam in the parking lot.

Please follow the guidelines below.

ACCEPTED POLYSTYRENE—Only Items with the #6 symbol

All foam with **only the #6 symbol** including:

Foam cups and "to-go" containers, egg cartons, ice chests, rinsed meat trays, protective packaging foam (frequently used to protect electronics during shipping), and other foam with the #6 inside the chasing arrows triangle.

PREPARATION

- Place foam in clear, sealed bags
- Place packaging foam and food service containers in SEPARATE bags
- Food service containers MUST be clean and rinsed

NOT ACCEPTED

- Polystyrene without the #6 symbol
- Packing peanuts (see below—they may be saved for UPS re-use)
- Straws
- Lids
- Plastic wrap
- Trash

ACCEPTED PACKING MATERIALS that Will be Brought to Local UPS Stores for Reuse

- Loose packing peanuts—please bag separately
- Bubble wrap
- Air Packs

A paper-shredding and electronics recycling event, sponsored by One Montgomery Green, is being held on April 15. For details see the Events page on the One Montgomery Green web page, <https://onemontgomerygreen.org/index.php/calendarevents/list/>

A complete list of county-sponsored events for Earth Month can be found here <https://mygreenmontgomery.org/earth-month/>

*Coming on **June 11** along with the church picnic—A UUCSS Pollinator Event!*

Maureen Malloy

Communications Team: Changes Coming for Church Email Lists

The Church Office and the Communications Team are working together to shift our small group email listservs, from the logical email system the church has been using for decades to groups.io, where our congregational listserv has been for a few years.

Shifting to the groups.io platform will make it easier for our volunteers to train in and to share the tech support duties, and for our members to find different groups that they might want to join, and to create new groups when they want to.

The move will happen slowly, and this phase will only affect logical emails that go to groups of people. The all-church email and staff email addresses will not be affected.

If you haven't yet joined the congregational groups.io listserv and would like to, just send an email to main+subscribe@UUCSS.groups.io (no subject or text required).

If you have any questions not handled below, you can send them to CommTeam@uucss.groups.io.

FAQ on the Transition

Why are we doing this? What's wrong with using the logical emails?

The groups.io platform is more robust than the logical email system, and has more support available. It has many features that groups can use if they choose to, such as file sharing, chats, calendars, and wikis. We can provide training on these features for those that are interested and there is good online documentation.

Is there anything users need the moderators to know about their groups as we make this transition?

As we move email lists from logical emails to groups.io, we ask the head of each group to provide us with a description of the subgroup, and we ask if the group is currently accepting new members.

If there are email addresses on the logical email list that are not in our directory, nor in the church database, we will ask the group leader to help us determine who is attached to those addresses.

Are the logical emails going to completely go away?

The logical emails are going to go away eventually, but we will warn you before they do.

- Logical emails that are in use and point to lists of people will become groups.io subgroups
- Logical emails that are in use and point to an individual person will remain for now, but eventually a new solution will be found for them
- Logical emails that have not been used in a long time (according to the recipients of those logical emails) will be deleted

The main thing that will change in how your group communicates is the email address that you use. Instead of using the uucss.org address, you will use the uucss.groups.io address. Just like with the uucss.org address, your messages will go to the entire group when you use the uucss.groups.io address.

For example, the "membership@uucss.org" was a logical email and now with the group.io system the new address "membership@uucss.groups.io."

When are they going away? Will there be overlap time?

The new groups.io groups will be set up as soon as volunteers can get to them. (This is expected to take several months—there are over 100 logical emails.) When each new group is set up, the logical email is changed to forward to the new group. Once all the groups have transitioned, we will announce all of the new email addresses. We will keep the old logical email addresses forwarding to the new lists for several months after all groups have transitioned.

How will our group communicate with each other?

The main thing that will change in how your group communicates is the email address that you use. Instead of using the uucss.org address, you will use the uucss.groups.io address. Just like with the uucss.org address, your messages will go to the entire group when you use the uucss.groups.io address.

What changes will I see in my email?

For most users, there should be little difference, except that groups.io gives you some built-in options. At the bottom of each email there are links that you can click, including:

- Reply to group—same as clicking 'reply' in your email window

- Reply to sender—if you want to send a private response
- Unsubscribe—if you want to drop out of the group.
- Mute this Topic—if you want to stay in the group but drop out of this one thread.

For group owners, and moderators (these are usually the committee chairs or group leaders) you will get a few more emails.

- If you have an open group, you will be notified whenever someone joins. If you have a group with restricted membership, you will be notified whenever someone asks to join, and one owner or moderator in your group will have to approve or disapprove them
- If your group opts to allow in email from anyone, (not just UUCSS main group members) you will be notified of a pending message each time someone not in the main group sends your group an email. An owner or moderator must approve the pending message before it is sent to the whole group.

What if I don't have the technical skills to be a group Owner?

If you are made a group owner and don't have the technical skills, the communications team, and the groups.io administrators can help you, and training can be provided to people that are interested. Also, groups.io allows for co-owners and moderators, so you can recruit other folks within your group to help you if you need it.

There are many options that are available to group owners, but the only required actions are:

- Approving new members (only needed for closed or restricted groups)
- Approving occasional emails (only needed if your group chooses to allow emails from people that are not in our main UUCSS group)

To whom should people address questions/concerns if they have them?

CommTeam@UUCSS.groups.io

Member Spotlight: Corita Waters



Corita Waters grew up in Greenbelt, MD, on the same road that she, her wife Andrea, and children currently live on. Her parents were very active members of the Lutheran church on the University of Maryland campus, and Corita remembers going to church multiple times per week. She was an acolyte and sang in the choir and helped her mother decorate the church with lively banners and armloads full of wildflowers for Sunday services. She felt supported and loved. However, in the late 90s Lutheran churches began an internal struggle about LGBT members and clergy that would not resolve for some years. Upon coming out, Corita felt a disconnect between her identity and values and a

church struggling to define who could preach and lead.

Corita had been aware of Unitarian Universalism for much of her life, including an elementary school friend who was raised UU in an interfaith family. When Corita and Andrea were looking for a church community that shared their values there was a draw toward Unitarian Universalism and to a church that was proudly welcoming to queer people. They found it was a denomination that truly worked toward acknowledging the essential worth and dignity of every human being. Without a car in 2004, they took a bus from Silver Spring

and made their way to UUCSS. They enjoyed it, and afterward Esther and Mark McBride drove them home and then offered to pick them up and drive them home any time they wanted to go to church. Corita will always remember this act of hospitality and welcoming.

There have been a lot of things to like about UUCSS. She particularly liked the ecstatic, spiritual, lively music and the pagan rituals that were more common in the 2000s. She and Andrea also like camping and went on Family LUUV camping excursions even before they had their two children, Kai and Maeve. The natural world is a key component of Corita's life. She is a nationally recognized wild and scenic rivers manager for the National Park Service. Many of the things she likes best are outdoors—hiking, swimming, boating, camping, and Catoctin, where kids could wander freely in nature. But then there is also dance class, ASL, and raising two children that keeps her busy. At UUCSS, Corita has volunteered in the nursery, was on the Welcoming Committee and the Racial Justice Task Force, and she took particular delight in her InReach group. She also remembers fondly, after Kai was born, friendly visits from Joan Lorr to discuss life, and she looks upon the experience as a gift. For Corita, UUCSS is about joy—the ability to laugh, as much as to cry, or be silent, and encourages UUCSS to nurture the joyful part of our spirit.

Staff Hours and Contact Information

Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg, Assistant Minister of Spiritual Growth

Caitlin is most available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays—Mondays and Fridays are her flex days (either used for writing and planning or as days off, according to the needs of the church and her family). You can email her at ams@uucss.org, text her at her Google Voice number (301-679-5832), or schedule a meeting with her via calendly: www.calendly.com/revcaitlin.

Michael Holmes, Music Director

Michael works Thursday evenings, Sunday mornings, and is available at other times by appointment. Michael can be reached at musicdirector@uucss.org.

Jeannette Jackson, Administrator

administrator@uucss.org

Rev. Kristin Grassel Schmidt, Minister

Rev. Kristin works Tuesday through Thursday from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Mondays is her writing days and Friday is her day off. She is available at minister@uucss.org and 202-780-7164. If you experience a pastoral care emergency outside normal office hours or over the weekend please text or call her. You can schedule an appointment with Rev. Kristin at www.calendly.com/rev-kristin-schmidt

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

Rev. Caitlin Cotter Coillberg

Assistant Minister
of Spiritual Growth

AMSG@uucss.org

Michael Holmes

Music Director

musicdirector@uucss.org

Jeannette Jackson

Church Administrator

administrator@uucss.org

Sara Scott

Religious Education Coordinator

recoordinator@uucss.org

Doneby Smith

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**.