



# the UNIGRAM

## Splinters from the Board

*Caroline Sullivan, President*

We were at the end of an enjoyable June afternoon creating poetry with Rev. Julia and as tends to happen, the talk turned to church and the problems we were facing. Out of the blue, **Jan Moore** said PLAY MORE.

Absolutely brilliant. Google the importance of adult play and you will read things like ‘play can heal resentments, disagreements and hurts,’ and ‘through play, we learn to trust one another and trust enables us to work together.’ When we play, we laugh and we listen to those around us who are having fun. We look at folks in a new light and think why haven’t I gotten to know this person before now? We hear laughter in a community that hasn’t had much laughter lately.

We have been through a troubling few months with accusations, anger, and misunderstandings. The congregational decision has been made. Now we all have to get busy, set aside grievances, and stop thinking of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Do you have the courage to say I’m sorry to someone to whom you were unkind in the heat of the moment? They are hurting as are you. And if someone says I’m sorry to you, can you smile and say let’s talk about it? Do you have the courage to talk with Reverend Seth about anything—your grievances, future of the church—anything? Take a friend

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## Picking Up the Pieces

*Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister*

Our church held a special congregational meeting yesterday, Sunday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, to vote on a motion to remove the minister, and the proposed motion did not pass. The hard thing in situations like this, which would be true regardless of the outcome of yesterday’s meeting, is that no one really wins. While opinions were expressed and a decision was made, the underlying feelings of hurt, pain and sadness that brought us to this point and that were generated in the process of having this conversation – those underlying feelings are almost certainly not just going to melt away. So how do we move forward?

If you haven’t already read our Board President Caroline Sullivan’s article in this issue that addresses that question, I encourage you to do so. Caroline writes eloquently and with much wisdom about several strategies we might employ as we begin the challenging process in front of us. One thoughtful suggestion she made lifts up that your wisdom, the congregation’s wisdom, is needed for our healing process, and I couldn’t agree more. So instead of offering my own thoughts as I most often do in this space, I’m simply going to echo Caroline in asking for your help. I remain committed to doing whatever I can to help you all in the ways that you need in the next twelve months before my

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## Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

**Service at 10:45 am**

August marks the last month of our “summer holiday” from themes, so the services this month will feature a variety of topics. Please check the eBlast on the Friday before if you’d like to know the topic of that Sunday’s service.

August 4 – Rev. Scott McNeill

August 11, 18, 25 – Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd

## Religious Education for Children & Youth

**Classes at 10:45 am**

Our RE Summer Program, written by **Nicole Kaplan**, concludes August 18. Come join in the fun!

August 4 – Around the World and our 7 UU Principles

August 11 – Around the World and our 7 UU Principles

August 18 – Around the World and our 7 UU Principles

August 25 – Social Action Sunday, Heifer International

This morning our children and youth will be decorating animal shaped cookies to sell after the service for our annual Heifer International fundraiser.

## Adult Religious Exploration Offerings

Our mission statement begins by calling us to a continuing exploration of our faith. In pursuit and support of that goal, we offer our Adult RE on Sunday mornings.

Every Sunday, 9:30 am  
Red Room  
**Adult Discussion Group**

This group is a chance for people with various personal beliefs to get together and openly discuss a variety of topics. You’ll find weekly topics listed in the eBlast each Friday.

## Other Monthly Events

There are a variety of regular events on Sunday mornings at UUCM. Be sure to check the calendar for Youth Group meetings, Sack Lunches for the Soup Kitchen of Muncie, and much, much more... so many opportunities to connect with each other in our beautiful church in the woods!

### 2019-20 Themes

September – Expectation

October – Belonging

November – Attention

December – Awe

January – Integrity

February – Resilience

March – Wisdom

April – Liberation

May – Thresholds

June – Play

# Our Fifth Principle and the Intention of Our Hearts

*Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister*

“We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations.” - Unitarian Universalist Fifth Principle. Stated more simply, “we believe that all persons should have a vote about the things that concern them.” I came across an interesting take on this recently and want to share it.

“Five Habits to Heal the Heart of Democracy” was written by Parker Palmer and posted by the Global Oneness Project. He begins with a quotation from Terry Tempest Williams which she notes that “the first home of democracy” is within the human heart. Democracy takes root in our hearts when we “resolve to act courageously, relentlessly, without giving up” as we craft a living democracy. Palmer’s essay is directed at our national democracy. It applies equally well to the life of our congregation. The foundation of democracy resides not in our bylaws, not in our Fifth Principle, nor even in the process we saw at work in the August 4<sup>th</sup> congregational meeting, but in our hearts.

He describes five enduring predispositions of the heart that he deems important for a democracy to flourish. First, we must realize that, despite our rampant individualism, we are profoundly connected to all that is. We are connected to other humans, of course—not just to those humans we *feel* connected to, but to all other humans. And not just to humans. Absolutely *everything* is connected in an endless and timeless web of being, which our seventh Principle affirms. We UUs do cherish our independence and individuality, and well we should. But we also cherish our membership is a community of things much larger than that, including our congregation.

As I listened to people’s comments during the August 4<sup>th</sup> congregational meeting, I heard this

principle being affirmed. “Just remember,” speaker after speaker said in one way or another, “we’re in this together. We *are* the church.

Second, while we value our interconnectedness, we must embrace the values contained within “otherness.” Us and them does not have to be us *against* them. It can be us *together*, it can be us and others expanding each other’s experience and opening up new and intriguing horizons for our exploration. It can be us coming together to create something far larger than the sum of each of us. To value the otherness of the other is to respect the inherent worth and dignity of each of us, affirmed in our first principle. We have given ourselves the opportunity to create something new out of the tensions that have been simmering over the last few years, something different and perhaps larger than any of us can yet envision.

Third, the juxtaposition of otherness with connection inevitably breeds tension. Being committed to both is something of a paradox. We can, however, use this tension to grow rather than to lash out or to shut down. “The genius of the human heart,” Palmer writes, “lies in its capacity to use these tensions to generate insight, energy, and new life.” Without the interplay of otherness in connection, we stagnate. With that interplay, we can change and grow, and discover new ways of being and doing church here at UUCM. Out of our differing viewpoints there can arise something new.

Fourth, every person should have a vote about the things that concern them. We all need as Palmer says, a “sense of personal voice and agency.” Part of what has happened in our congregation, it seems to me, is that some individuals and groups feel “disempowered by a complex and domineering system in which I have no voice.” That’s not a direct quote, but I’ve heard people voice variations of this

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## Religious Education Corner

*Nadine Tringali*  
*Director of Religious Education*

Our **RE Summer program**, Around the World in UU Principles, ends on August 18. Many thanks to **Nicole Kaplan** and **Maggie Bartlett** for creating and facilitating wonderful summer experiences for our children!

On August 25, we will be holding our annual **Social Action fundraiser** for **Heifer International**. Our children and youth will decorate animal shaped cookies in class, and following the service, they will be selling the cookies in the foyer. Heifer International is celebrating 75 years of working with communities to end world hunger and poverty and care for the Earth. I hope you will be able to support our fundraiser. For more information on what you can do, go to their website [heifer.org](http://heifer.org).

**The Religious Education Program Needs You!** We have a variety of positions to fill and room for everyone! August has arrived and once again it is time to complete our teaching teams for our new curriculum year in Religious Education for Children & Youth. Time spent with our children & youth is so valuable and rewarding for us. Please consider offering the gift of your time and volunteer one Sunday a month to teach in one of our RE classrooms. Other levels of support include volunteering as a classroom assistant, as a special presenter in a classroom, or helping with special events. Please contact me if you are interested. I would be very happy to answer any questions you may have!

**Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education (OWL)** - We are so pleased to be able to offer the **4-6 grade** program and the **7-9 grade** program this coming year! If you are interested in having your child or youth participate in OWL, please let me know. For more information on OWL, please go to our website and click on Religious Education/Sexuality Education.

*Nadine*

## Youth Programs

*Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd*  
*Coordinator of Youth Programming*

### **Ice Cream Gathering**

Sunday, August 11, 6 - 8 pm

Join us for make your own sundaes at the church as we kick off this exciting year of youth programming! Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

### **Youth Room Work Time**

Sunday, August 18, 12:30 - 2 pm

Join us to continue our project of making our High School youth room a truly special space for our gatherings. We have beautiful group photos to hang in the room! Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

### **Youth Sunday Planning Lock-In**

Saturday, Aug 24, 12 noon - Sunday, Aug 25, 9 am

Join us as we begin planning our Youth Sunday, which will be October 13 this year. Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

### **Youth Sunday Planning**

Sunday, September 8, 12:30 - 2 pm

Be a part of this important process! Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

### **Youth Sunday Planning**

Sunday, September 15, 12:30 - 2 pm

Be a part of this important process! Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

### **Youth Sunday Planning**

Sunday, September 22, 12:30 - 2 pm

Be a part of this important process! Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

### **Youth Sunday Planning**

Sunday, September 29, 12:30 - 2 pm

Be a part of this important process! Middle School and High School aged youth invited!

*Elizabeth*

## Splinters from the Board

**Caroline Sullivan** (continued from page 1)

or two with you if that is best. Do you have the courage to come back to the church you haven't been attending lately? We want to see you, say hello, tell you how important you are at UUCM and that you have been missed. We are not ugly people, but unfortunately ugliness emerged through action, writing, and secrets... oh, so many huddled whispered secrets.

In our recent communications with each other, we all have said that UUCM is a great and loving community. When 137 members attend such an important meeting, it is evident we all want what is best for the church! Your board is currently brainstorming ideas for activities to bring us together to rebuild that grand community but you know what? The best ideas will come from you, the

congregation. We are not ready for a Healing 101 workshop; we are not ready to make lists on sheets of papers to put on the windows—that will more than likely come later but not yet!

Let's mend some fences before we build the bridges. Building bridges into the future is going to be difficult work and it will take time but we can begin mending fences immediately through play. Is this too simplistic? I am in no way making light of our serious situation, but we have to be able to talk to and listen to each other as the first step. We need to begin and we must begin immediately. So, give your ideas to any board member or even better, help lead an activity; you will have lots of help. Get ready to PLAY MORE at our beloved UUCM.

Yours in leadership and love,

**Caroline Sullivan**

## Our Fifth Principle

**Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer** (continued from page 3)

feeling both about our own congregation and about the UUA as a national body. Being heard and having a sense of personal agency does not mean that we will always get our own way. It does mean that we can feel we are an important part of decisions that are made and actions that are taken. It means that we can be confident we will be respected even when we differ. It means we can all move forward, together.

I saw and heard this in our congregational meeting as well. Clearly, 41 of those present didn't "get their way." But the process allowed their voices to be heard. This lays the groundwork for moving forward. I truly hope that some those who spoke so poignantly about feeling disempowered and not heard felt some sense of having been heard.

Finally, Palmer writes, we must find ways to create community among us. Community doesn't just happen; it is intentional. We need the "steady companionship of kindred spirits" who both support us and challenge us to speak and act, and who can

help us keep going when we are depleted and discouraged. We can take our distinctive and partial truths, our varied perspectives and experiences, and weave them all into something more. We've not always been good at doing this. Our individual free and responsible searches for our own truth and meaning can become something much larger as we seek ever greater meaning and truth *together*.

The process and the discussion that began with the presentation of the petition to our Board has challenged us, to be sure. I hope that all of us found those who could "help us keep going when we are depleted and discouraged." I know I did.

This is the challenge and the promise of the Fifth Principle (and all the principles) for our congregation: to view them and use them not just as principles in the front of the hymnal, occasionally affirmed in a service, but as the promise of what human community at its best can be. What we can be.

We have begun.

**Rev. Julia**

## Picking Up the Pieces

**Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd** (continued from page 1)

resignation takes effect, and I'm also well aware that I can't figure out what that looks all by myself. So while I will certainly be working closely with and taking direction from the Board of Trustees, I also ask if you feel up to it, that you share with me – gently and respectfully – any thoughts or ideas you have about how I might best serve our congregation in the next twelve months.

The one thing I will add to Caroline's suggestions is a reminder about the pastoral care resources we have available. While I remain everyone's minister, and remain available for pastoral care for everyone in the congregation, including folks on both sides of yesterday's concerns, I recognize that not everyone may feel comfortable coming to talk with me. Fortunately our Community Minister, Rev. Julia, is available, as well as our talented Pastoral Associates. And of course, one of the strengths of this congregation is the kindness, compassion and generosity of its members and friends, so you all have each other as resources as well. I encourage you to use any or all of the above resources in your healing process, as is helpful for you.

While I don't envision that the next twelve months will be easy, I also have faith that we have the strength and the courage to navigate it successfully, together. It will take hard work and commitment though. There are many hard things happening in the world, in our country, and in Muncie, in addition to in our congregation. Our mission statement, "Exploring faith. Practicing inclusivity. Living justice." still rings powerfully true and important to me, now more than ever. In premarital counseling, many ministers share the reminder that one the honeymoon phase is over, marriages require a lot of work to sustain. Our church community is a family, and family relationships aren't much different. The work ahead will be hard and challenging, and, if we stay committed, living as our values call us to from a place of kindness, compassion, and love – we will get there. 🎵 Heaven knows how we will get there, but we know we will. 🎵

See you in church!

peace, love, and blessings,

**Rev. Seth**

## Sharing Gratitude



I was honored to be invited by Coly Tabberson to attend his Eagle Scout Honor Ceremony, and on behalf of the UUCM congregation, I thanked **Coly Tabberson** and the **Boy Scouts** for the construction and establishment of our **Sensory Garden**. It is the first thing that draws your eye as families come to church through the east door and the last thing they see as they leave. Today the planters are filled with plants of various textures and scents enjoyed by all. The latest addition to our garden is what is called a Popcorn Plant, which when the leaves are gently stroked, leave your hands smelling like buttered popcorn. The UU Church and I thank the Scout Council and Coly Tabberson for this wonderful addition to our church grounds, which children and parents will appreciate for years to come!

Many thanks to **Nicole Kaplan** and **Maggie Bartlett** for creating and facilitating nine **RE Summer Sundays** of exploration for our children!

I am so grateful that **Ben & Denise Ewing** volunteered several years ago to become certified **Our Whole Lives** facilitators for our children and youth. They have facilitated 7-9 grade, K-2 grade, 10-12 grade, and will lead 7-9 grade OWL this coming year. Thank you Ben and Denise for guiding our youth!

Many thanks also to **Nicole Kaplan** for volunteering to become a certified **OWL** facilitator for the K-1/4-6 grade programs. Nicole attended a facilitator training workshop in April and will be an awesome facilitator on our OWL team! We are pleased to be able to offer OWL 4-6 grade this coming Fall.

When you see **Coly, Nicole, Maggie, Ben and Denise** please thank them! ~**Nadine Tringali**

*If you have a gratitude you'd like to submit for the next Unigram, please send it to [uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org), subject line "Sharing Gratitude."*

## August 2019 UUCM Calendar

Online calendar: <http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/members/calendar/>

### Regular Weekly Events

Worship Service	Sundays	10:45 am
Religious Exploration for Children & Youth	Sundays	10:45 am
Adult Discussion Group	Sundays	9:30 am
Body Life Dinner (resumes August 20)	Tuesdays	6:00 pm
Revival Hour (see online calendar for location)	Wednesdays	5:30 pm



### August Events & Activities

Special Congregational Meeting	Sunday	Aug 4	12:30 pm
Stewardship Committee	Tuesday	Aug 6	1:00 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Aug 7	7:00 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	Aug 8	7:00 pm
Roots & Wings :: New Member Class	Sunday	Aug 11	12:15 pm
Youth Group Ice Cream Gathering	Sunday	Aug 11	6:00 pm
Social Justice Committee	Monday	Aug 12	7:30 pm
Pastoral Associates	Tuesday	Aug 13	5:15 pm
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	Aug 14	6:30 pm
Kitchen Cleaning	Saturday	Aug 17	10:30 am
New Member Signing Ceremony	Sunday	Aug 18	10:15 am
Adult Discussion Committee	Sunday	Aug 18	12:15 pm
Youth Group :: Youth Room Work Time	Sunday	Aug 18	12:30 pm
Unigram Submission Deadline	Monday	Aug 21	9:00 am
Program Council	Wednesday	Aug 21	7:00 pm
Youth Sunday Planning Lock-In	Saturday	Aug 24	Noon
Sack Lunches for Soup Kitchen of Muncie	Sunday	Aug 25	9:30 am
Choir Rehearsal	Tuesday	Aug 27	7:30 pm

#### Join the Choir!

The Choir will resume rehearsals on August 27! We rehearse on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 pm, then enjoy some light refreshments and fellowship. Childcare is available if you give us advanced notice. For more information, please contact our choir director,

**Marcel Ramalho**

[marcel@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:marcel@uuchurchmuncie.org)

[org.](http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org)

*If you enjoy singing please join us!*

#### Help Needed for Second Harvest Forward S.T.E.P.S. Dinner on August 22nd

The UUCM, under the auspices of the Feeding Our Hungry Neighbors (FOHN) Task Force, annually supplies, serves, and cleans up after the August dinner for participants in the Forward S.T.E.P.S. Program. This year and last we helped with the April dinners as well. Until recently, this was the anti-poverty Circles initiative through Teamwork for Quality Living, and then, after a merger, through Second Harvest. *Forward S.T.E.P.S.* is the new name.

For background: Once each month, participants in Forward S.T.E.P.S. – folks dealing with poverty, their volunteer allies, and staffers from Second Harvest – meet for a dinner and brief program to support the vital, difficult, and complex work of helping people increase their economic self-sufficiency.

It's time to get ready for this summer's S.T.E.P.S. dinner which will be on **Thursday evening, August 22**, at First Baptist Church in downtown Muncie. Check your email for a SignUp Genius invitation soliciting donations of food, specifically: lasagna, fruit crisps, garlic bread, and grapes.

If you'd like to help but prefer not to use Sign-Up Genius, you may also contact **Steve Chalk** directly (at [srchalk66@gmail.com](mailto:srchalk66@gmail.com)). All volunteers are welcome and encouraged to stay for the dinner as well!

## UUCM Staff & Leadership

**Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd, Minister**  
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**Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister**  
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**Rev. Elizabeth Carrier-Ladd, Coordinator of Youth Programs**  
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### Board of Trustees

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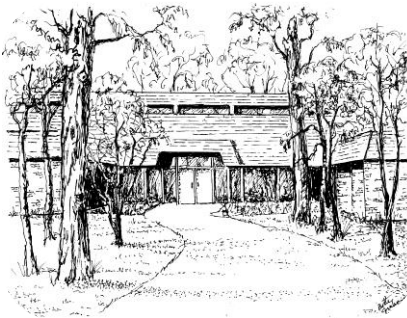
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Office Hours: Monday 1:00 – 4:00 pm | Tuesday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm | Wednesday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

## Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie

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