



the UNIGRAM

Greetings from Rev. Barbara

Rev. Barbara Coeyman, Interim Minister

Hello to members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie! I am so pleased to be here among you, getting to know you online and, for some, in person. I have already been part of several conversations with the dedicated staff of this congregation and attended various congregant meetings. Even as we are meeting in new and different ways during pandemic, clearly I have entered into a congregation of loving and dedicated people.

I am here to serve transitioning ministry: specifically as the interim minister (in recent years the Unitarian Universalist Association has created several types of transitioning ministries for UU congregations). In the words of the UUA, “The interim period following the end of one relationship and preceding the beginning of another provides the breathing space during which a congregation can review its goals, assess its programs, consider the quality of its life in common, and “tune up” for a new era. This transitioning period can be exciting, even transformative, when devoted to self-examination and institutional renewal.” I look forward to walking with you in this time of discovery and renewal. I want to get to know you more fully and deeply: you as

(continued on page 5)



In This Issue

Sunday Mornings 2

Religious Education News 3

Splinters from the Board 4

Calendar 7

The Ways of Renewal

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

I’ve heard it and I’ve felt it myself. It isn’t always identified in the same way. Sometimes it’s a very general “I’m just tired.” It might be more specific: the tiredness might be physical (though not often), mental, emotional or some combination. But just as often as not, it’s just “tired.” It may also be sadness, anxiety, tears, boredom, grief, anger (increasingly), or a vague “heaviness” that defies more specific description. Some people can pinpoint low-grade (or more) depression. I’ve been in groups recently in which one person identified one or more of these feelings and everyone else responded with an immediate “me too.” The recognition is instantaneous and unanimous.

For me, it’s often that wonderfully descriptive word we’ve borrowed from the French, *ennui*. It’s a feeling of overall listlessness, lack of motivation for doing anything at all, the blahs, the doldrums, weariness, and discontent. Restlessness. Funk. Lack of focus. “Meh,” which I’ve seen described as the verbal equivalent of a shrug of the shoulders. It’s spiritual as much as psychological, and more existential than pathological in the context of our current circumstances.

All of this points to our need for on-going renewal in these strange days (and nights). To complicate matters, many of the things that we turn to for renewal are either just not possible right now, not

(continued on page 6)

Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

Service at 10:45 am September :: Renewal

This month we return to our monthly themes with the very timely theme of Renewal. Our Interim Minister, Rev. Barbara Coeyman, will be leading all the Sunday services during September. Rev. Barbara will discuss upcoming service topics at the end of each service when we come together after the post-service breakout discussions. Join us via Zoom at 10:45 am, every Sunday! Links for Zoom and the Order of Service will be in the eBlast each Friday, and posted on Facebook early Sunday mornings.

September 6 – “Renewal on Labor Day Weekend”

Jewish High Holy Days

September 13 – “Coming Back, Going Forward”

Rosh Hashanah – September 18-19

September 20 – “Renewing our Commitment to Shared Ministry”

Yom Kippur – September 30

September 27 – “In Praise of Walking”

Religious Education for Children & Youth

10:00 am & 12:30 pm

Please join us as we continue our religious exploration online via Zoom each Sunday morning! The RE Zoom links will be posted each week in the UUCM Friday eBlast.

September 6 – Story Time with Nadine at 10:00 am

September 13, 20, 27 – PreK-1 & 2-5 RE classes at 10:00 am / MSHS Class at 12:30 pm

Adult Religious Exploration

Adult Discussion Group
Every Sunday, 9:30 am
Via Zoom

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 and a Zoom link listed in the eBlast each Friday.

Renewal

Every person needs to take one day away. A day in which one consciously separates the past from the future. Jobs, family, employers, and friends can exist one day without any one of us, and if our egos permit us to confess, they could exist eternally in our absence. Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us. *Maya Angelou*

I all too often take for granted what I once deemed an unmerited gift. And it is often only in the face of a looming transition that I am inspired to remember—not only to bask in the memory, but to recall, remind myself of how I once received this gift with gratitude... Transitions; beginnings and endings; they provide a pathway into awakening and reawakening; into gratitude and a renewal of gratitude... Beginnings: “Today is the first day...” Endings: “What if this were your last day...” They cause us to reassess. They inspire us to consider what is most important. They remind us of the beauty that surrounds us... To paraphrase a popular song from decades ago, “You don’t know what you’ve got till it changes...” *Rev. Rod Richards*

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Sourced directly from our Soul Matters theme packets.

## Religious Education Corner

*Nadine Tringali*

*Director of Religious Education*

Many thanks to **Nicole Kaplan** for leading our Summer RE program, ***Backyard Zoom Bonanza!*** Nicole led ten amazing activities that the children could do with their families. From creating nature constructs and fairy gardens, to creating obstacle courses and going on scavenger hunts. Thank you Nicole!

Our religious education classes will begin on Sunday, September 13. We will continue to meet on zoom, until such time as it is safe to meet together again at church. The curriculums we will be using this year are all designed to be online sessions.

- We will use the UUA theme-based curriculum, ***Soul Matters (SM)***, for Preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This year, SM has devoted one session each month to a different aspect of dismantling white supremacy as it relates to the theme. Please note that our Preschool-1<sup>st</sup> grade online grouping is geared toward children 4 years and older.
- For our combined MS and HS class, we will begin the year with ***Be the Change!*** - a UUA Tapestry of Faith program which offers youth a starting place for discussions about the role of race, identity and justice in living out their faith. Beginning in December, we will move to ***On the Road Together***, a Soul Matters theme-based youth resource. We look forward to an exciting year full of lively discussions!

We have purchased a year-long ***Soul Matters Soulful Home*** subscription for our families to enjoy! **The theme for September is Renewal.** Families will receive a packet at the beginning of each month that is organized around eight distinct family “spaces” with ideas and resources to fill those spaces with UU-theme based exploration. It is about creating memorable and amazing moments!

It is with great joy, that we welcome **Nicole Kaplan** as our Coordinator of Youth Programming! She will be an excellent guide for our youth, with her compassion, warmth, energy, and enthusiasm. Welcome Nicole, we all look forward to working with you!

**Nadine**

## Youth Programs

*Nicole Kaplan*

*Coordinator of Youth Programming*

### Youth Group Online!

New Youth Group Time! 1:30 - 3 pm on Sundays in Zoom Room #2

<https://zoom.us/j/5150188364>

As we adjust to our new normal with some of us at home and some attending school in person, we are changing the time of the youth group back to Sundays for the foreseeable future. We hope to see many of our Middle and High School Youth as we all settle into our own personal school year routines, whatever those are for us.

We have been enjoying a variety of virtual activities and look forward to continuing to do art together, play games like Sushi Go, and, as always, share our ups and downs during our ritual Check-ins.

I couldn't be more excited to have been welcomed as UUCM's new Coordinator of Youth Programming. While many of you know me already, I have been encouraged to introduce myself.

While my name is Nicole, some of those closest to me call me 'Nic' and I am happy to respond to either. I have a deep passion for languages that likely emerged from having a parent who was a first generation American of Italian immigrant parents, and being blessed with the opportunity to live overseas during kindergarten and again in 8th grade. My other passions include my menagerie of animals (about a dozen of them), cooking and creating in the kitchen, musical theatre, and gardening. I have been involved in education and worked with youth for over 15 years and I look forward to continuing to build the wonderful youth programming here at UUCM.

Thank you all for your kind welcome.

**Nicole**

## Splinters from the Board

*Emily Wornell, President*

*Exploring faith. Practicing Inclusivity. Living Justice.*

This has been a busy behind-the-scenes month for the church! We have some exciting changes and important words of gratitude to share with you all.

First, we can finally extend a long-awaited *welcome* to Rev. Barbara Coeyman! Rev. Barbara's official first day was Monday, August 16, although she has generously offered her time to many of us prior to that day. I believe I speak for all of us who have had the chance to engage with Rev. Barbara when I say that we're excited about what the future holds for our congregation under Rev. Barbara's leadership.

While many, if not most, of you knew of Rev. Barbara's start date, you may *not* have known that we also welcomed a new staff member on August 16. Nicole Kaplan accepted the position of Youth Coordinator in early August. Although starting a new position in the middle of a pandemic *and* leadership changes is less than ideal for anyone, Nicole has hit the ground running and has great ideas for our youth programming. She has been actively involved with the youth program as a volunteer for the past year, and I consider our church blessed to have such a dedicated, enthusiastic leader to build and encourage our youth. Thank you, and welcome, Nicole!

Speaking of thank yous ... it's never too late to extend thanks, and we all owe a huge THANK YOU to Mary Johnson Robey and Jennifer Parks-Strack for their really amazing work with the virtual service auction in July! It was a big shift, moving everything online, but it was a seamless transition under their leadership, and we beat our goal of \$5,000 (by \$72). They have now set their sights on the bazaar. While absolutely nothing is certain in the time of COVID, both Mary and Jenn are working with the COVID-19 taskforce (Bruce Craig, Susan Taylor, Christie Williams, Jeff Turner, Lisa Cox, and Susan Bossung) to determine if, when, and how we can virtually host the bazaar. Stay tuned!

Finally, if you see Ben Strack out and about – or interact with him virtually in some capacity – please remember to say “thank you” to him as well. At the board meeting last March, we decided to close the church building, effective almost immediately. As is typical, that meeting was on a Wednesday, and by the following Sunday our services were virtual. I'm proud of us for making that difficult decision as quickly as we did, but it also meant that we didn't have much time to prepare for virtual services. Ben graciously stepped in to lead that transition and went above and beyond what we would normally expect from a volunteer in our congregation. Ben has spent literally hundreds of hours producing our virtual services over the last 5 months, and I strongly believe our continued connection with each other during this difficult time is due in no small part to Ben's work. Because of the sheer magnitude of the work he has committed to our congregation since March, and in line with what other UU congregations around the country are doing, the board voted at our August meeting to provide Ben with an honorarium for services rendered through July. Moving forward, Ben has agreed to coordinate the new technology team (consisting of himself, Joe Kaplan, Ben Ewing, Matt Cechini, Ric Dwenger, and Jay Moorman) as part of his president-elect responsibilities. The formation of this new team will also allow Ben to move back to typical volunteer hours and actually have a Sunday off now and again.

The work that each of you do for our congregation is essential, whether it's volunteering your time and talents, gifting your monetary resources, or supporting one another emotionally and spiritually. We are a congregation because we share similarities in beliefs, but we're a family because of the love and commitment of each of you. Thank you for all that you do and everything you bring to our family.

In loving service,

*Emily*

## Greetings from Rev. Barbara

**Rev. Barbara Coeyman** ([continued from page 1](#))

individuals and you as a congregation. I want to listen to who you are, what you value about this congregation and liberal faith, how you see the work of religious community and social justice in the world.

This is my eighth transitioning ministry to UU congregations. I have just completed a ministry in Lancaster, PA, and previously served in Reston, Virginia; Littleton, Colorado; Salt Lake City, Utah; and several locations in New England. I am one of the UU Accredited Interim Ministers (AIM) committed to intentional transitioning work. I want to bring you learning and experiences from previous congregations and from colleagues and professional trainings, and I also want to hear and learn from you. I want to discern how my mentoring here can be most useful. I will ask lots of questions and invite you to do the same. If I bring a new concept or a different way of being together which you are unclear about, I invite your curiosity to learn more.

While I have served in a wide variety of congregational settings and geographic location, I admit that this is new for me, to begin a new ministry in pandemic conditions, largely online and distanced. We will walk together in this current mode of congregational life, which we know will come to an end at some point: I have faith that we will get past covid-19. So I ask your patience of me, as I will of you, as we figure out pandemic-style shared ministry together,

At this point, ten days into this ministry, I can offer some general information about transitioning projects and upcoming worship services:

**Meet and Greet:** Clearly we cannot come together in the traditional gathering of in-person meeting at an opening potluck, or after a worship service. Instead, supported by UUCM Transition Team, we will work out a program for you, the congregation, and I to get acquainted virtually in a series of 20-minute Zoom calls, with 5 or 6 of you on each call. I want to learn who you are and give you a chance

to learn more about me. For any congregants without computer access to Zoom, I am happy to meet by phone. Watch up-coming eBlasts for more information as we work out details of this program.

**Worship Services:** Just a few words about upcoming worship services. To the extent possible I will continue to coordinate worship with the monthly themes of the Soul Matters program. I love working together with Worship Associates and church staff in a collaborative approach to planning and presenting worship.

I have several grounding worship themes I like to present at the start of any new interim ministry. This Sunday, **August 30**, let's consider the first of these: what we mean by "spiritual practice" and how "Everyday Spiritual Practice," the title of a popular book by UU Rev. Scott Alexander, is especially relevant during this time of pandemic. Sunday, **September 6**, is Labor Day Weekend: let's be "out-of-the-box" this Sunday, as we engage in the spiritual practice of taking a break from our usual ways of doing things. Often on Labor Day Sunday, congregations use the time for community clean up: to polish the silver and the woodwork, to clean out the refrigerator, to prepare the church grounds for autumn. This year we will give staff a break from usual worship preparation as the congregation comes together in a series of short break-outs as the core of the service. Sunday, **September 13**, will be In-Gathering Sunday. Often the day of the traditional UU Water Ceremony, instead this year food collection will represent our collective coming back together. Stay tuned to upcoming eBlasts and Sunday morning announcements for details about how the food collection will work.

And stay tuned to this Unigram in October, when I tell you more about the Five Focus Points of Interim Ministry, other transitioning projects we have in store, and adult education offerings I hope to bring to the congregation

See you in Virtual Church!

**Rev. Barbara**

## The Ways of Renewal

**Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer** (continued from page 1)

safe, or exceedingly difficult and anxiety-provoking. In-person gatherings, even if small and out of doors, are fraught with concern. Sitting across from a friend and sharing our concerns over coffee isn't a great idea right now. Hugs and handholding...will they ever again be possible? Visits with family and friends are iffy. Gym workouts, massages, maybe manicures or pedicures, concerts...the list goes on. And of course, in-person church!

There's been an uptick in do-it-yourself projects while people have been sheltering at home. Renewal, too, can and needs to become a DIY project. It is in that light that I offer these suggestions. What renews us is individual. Spirituality is a quite significant component of renewal, in that it can facilitate our tapping into something larger than ourselves, however we experience that, something that can help us transcend the trials and challenges of the present day. Something that can renew us.

Religious studies scholar Huston Smith writes: "All of us dwell on the brink of life's infinite ocean of life's creative power. We carry it within us: supreme strength, the fullness of wisdom, and unquenchable joy; but it is deeply hidden. What if we could bring it to light and draw from it unceasingly?" (*The World's Religions*). This is what our aching hearts and souls cry out for now.

According to Smith, there are four types of people, spiritually speaking, each calling for a specific method, or what Hinduism calls "yoga." These are not airtight compartments. We embody different types in differing proportions. Nonetheless, they provide me with one helpful scheme for organizing my understanding.

1) Some of us have a strongly reflective tendency, which is different than "book learning." It is wisdom rather than knowledge. It is wisdom that transforms. Hinduism calls this jnana yoga. Through it, we can begin to grasp the timeless that underlies the historical, the unconditioned that underlies the conditioned, the bedrock that underlies the shifting sands. We usually are avid readers, but read slowly, thoughtfully. What we read becomes part of who we are. We're rarely without a book or two. Long hours spent reading refresh us, and we come away with our minds steadier, our hearts and souls lighter.

2) Bhakti yoga centers itself in the transformative power of love. People inclined toward bhakti know deeply the truth that Love is at the heart of it all, even when it's hard

to see it. We choose "Love" as the most evocative way of naming the sacred. It's the impulse that animated our early Universalist predecessors to deny Calvinist Christianity's insistence that only a select few were destined for salvation. That Love holds us, sustains and supports us, and doesn't let go. Tapping into this Love places the vagaries of the day in a larger context.

3) Some of us find renewal in activity of various sorts. In traditional Hindu description, this is karma yoga, the path of action. Perhaps it's in the rough-and-tumble of the socio-political world, working to enlarge the scope of social justice, ease the disparities in health care, housing, or access to nutritious food. It may be volunteering at a food pantry or demonstrating for a cause we find compelling. We find renewal in doing the right thing because it's the right thing, or in serving others for the greater cause of Love. For others of us, this outward-directed activity may be more draining than renewing.

4) Hinduism traditionally cites raja ("royal") yoga, the way of physical and psychological experimentation on oneself, as the fourth path. I want to focus on the physical aspect, or hatha yoga. Incomplete without attention to some additional method according to the tradition, it's what many in the west think of first when they think of yoga. It's the postures, the poses. And it's become quite popular as a way of helping manage stress, anxiety, depression, and a host of other psycho-physical maladies. I'd include in this category too people who find renewal in swimming, biking, running or walking, playing music, or similar pursuits.

Not all our ways of finding renewal in a 21<sup>st</sup> century pandemic fit neatly into traditional Hinduism's categories. Nor do they need to. They do point to the importance of exploring alternatives. What one of us finds renewing, someone else finds enervating. What's crucial in this time is that we find ways to renew our souls or spirits, as well as our bodies, minds, and hearts. And we need to incorporate renewal into a variety of time frames. We need renewal on a daily basis. We can build in longer times for renewal every week, every month, and throughout the year. In the situation in which we find ourselves now and for the foreseeable future, we can't afford not to do so.

With blessings on this strange, shared journey,  
**Rev. Julia**

## September 2020 UUCM Calendar

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

### Regular Zoom Events

Check the eBlast for links to these Zoom meetings and more.

|                                                                            |                                            |          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------|
| Adult Discussion Group                                                     | Sundays                                    | 9:30 am  |
| RE Classes: PreK-1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> grades | Sundays                                    | 10:00 am |
| Worship Service                                                            | Sundays                                    | 10:45 am |
| RE Classes: Middle School/High School                                      | Sundays                                    | 12:30 pm |
| Youth Group                                                                | Sundays                                    | 1:30 pm  |
| Choir Gathering                                                            | 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays | 8:30 pm  |
| Board of Trustees                                                          | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday                  | 6:30 pm  |
| Trivia Night                                                               | 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fridays  | 8:00 pm  |

### September Meetings via Zoom

Check with committee chairs or church office for Zoom links

|                     |           |         |         |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Worship Associates  | Wednesday | Sept 2  | 7:30 pm |
| Pastoral Associates | Tuesday   | Sept 8  | 4:00 pm |
| Board of Trustees   | Wednesday | Sept 9  | 6:30 pm |
| RE Committee        | Sunday    | Sept 20 | 9:00 am |

#### Office Hours

I'm still here at our beautiful Church in the Woods during regular office hours. Even though our building is closed to in-person business, you can reach me by phone 765.288.9561 or email [uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org)

I miss everyone's presence here, but I'm grateful we are doing our part to stay safe and well!

~Christie

#### Office Hours

Monday

1:00-4:00 pm

Tuesday – Friday

9:00 am-4:00 pm

### VOTING in the General Election – Important Dates

**October 5** – Registration deadline

**October 22** – Deadline to request absentee ballot

**November 3** – Election

**November 3 noon** – Deadline to return absentee ballot--postmarks do not count!

**Oct 6 – Nov 2 (noon)** – In-Person Absentee (Early) Voting – NO ABSENTEE BALLOT

APPLICATION NECESSARY Voter Registration Office, 100 West Main Street, Room 104, Muncie, IN 47305.

#### Absentee Ballots

The Delaware County website claims that *Any resident* can vote with an absentee ballot prior to an election. (That is not quite true – voters must indicate an "excuse" on the form.) IF YOU ARE 65 OR OVER, PLEASE REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT AND STAY SAFE! REQUEST EARLY (NOW!) AND POST BY OCTOBER 22 TO BE SURE IT IS DELIVERED BY THE DEADLINE. To download an application use this link:

<https://bit.ly/3hAuDZB>

October 22 – Deadline to request

November 3 noon - Deadline to return (Must be received--Postmarks do not count)

Visit this State of Indiana website for registration and voter information:

<https://indianavoters.in.gov/>

# UUCM Staff & Leadership

## Staff

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

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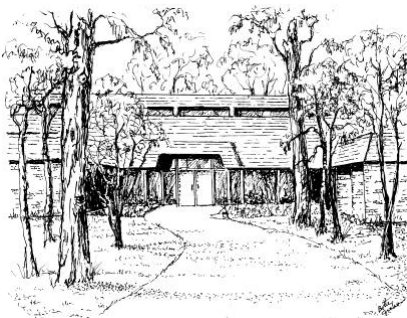
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## Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie

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