



Bellringer

January 2022

Instead of telling you what to believe, we thought you might have a few ideas of your own



JANUARY'S THEME: LIVING BY INTENTION

January 2: TED Talk - Life on Purpose: How Living for What Matters Changes Everything. Victor Strecher, an award-winning pioneer in the field of behavioral science, lost his nineteen-year-old daughter to a rare heart disease. This life event challenged every aspect of Strecher's experience and drove him to an exhaustive search to pinpoint the potential and impact of purpose in our lives. The results of this groundbreaking investigation are revelatory and the crux of this TED Talk. Strecher's smart, personal, and highly practical talk will fundamentally change the way we understand what it means to lead a good life.

January 9: Living by Intention- In this new year, we listen for the heart's intentions; we hear from *Let's Get Real*, January's Cause of the Month, supporting

recovery from opioid addiction. The service will be led by Rev. Mary.

January 16: Compassionate Communication asks us to be aware of our own feelings and needs; opening to one another, becoming capable of creating an evolving spiritual community, together. Service led by Zellda Zelle and Rev. Mary.

January 23: Called to Love. We honor bell hooks, social critic & visionary, professor & poet, "Like all great mysteries, we are all mysteriously called to love, no matter the conditions of our lives. The persistence of this call gives us reason to hope." Service led by Rev. Mary.

January 30: The Power and the Story. When Joseph Campbell was an undergraduate at Columbia in the 1920s, he was certain that organized religion would not survive the twentieth century. A decade later he admitted he was wrong and devoted his life to finding out the why of this failed prediction. Join with Bob and Fran Mulkins this Sunday for *The Power and the Story* and find out more about this iconic professor of comparative mythology.

Zoomers, join our weekly Chalice lighting at home. Place a candle in a "Chalice" of your choice near your Zoom screen and light it as we light our main Chalice.

DUE TO THE OMICRON COVID VARIANT, OLMSTED UU SERVICES WILL TEMPORARILY BE OFFERED ONLY ON ZOOM. See page 2 for more information.



MARY'S MUSINGS: LIVING WITH INTENTION



The Soul Matters theme for January is *Living with Intention* - a shift from New Year's Resolutions - which focus on the future - to the daily practice of setting and living from intention. Resolutions may come from wishful thinking, self-criticism or cultural convention. Intentions arise from the heart and are

held in the mind, to keep us focused, in tune with our deepest values.

How do we do this? Each of us creates our own way. For me, I notice the breath; becoming still, breathing into the area of the heart, I ask, "What would bring me fully present right here, right now? What would be of benefit today, this week, this month?" Allowing myself to listen.

What happens when we ask? Sometimes I don't hear anything. Sometimes I notice for the first time how tired I am or irritated or sad or ready to take action. Sometimes the answer comes as a feeling or a picture or a memory. This past year, I felt, "Gentleness." I heard, "Be gentle with yourself." "Slow down." I felt my eyes lifting, "Look up." I heard, "Enjoy what you're doing."

Intentions start in us individually. But they don't stay there. When I'm gentle with myself, I'm gentle with others. When I slow down and look up, I see you and my heart opens. To be of benefit, we have to be fully present, not trapped in habits, opinions, assumptions. To help heal the world, we have to be in our hearts, grounded in our love for life. We 'get there' with intention, moment by moment, breath by breath, together.

Rev. Mary

OUUC RETURNING TO ZOOM-ONLY SUNDAY SERVICES

As you know, the omicron variant is spreading across the country and is much more contagious than earlier COVID variants. Given the rapidly deteriorating situation, the Olmsted UU Board has decided to temporarily return to Zoom-only services on Sundays. This also means that we will not offer Religious Exploration for children on Sundays. Small groups may continue to meet in person, if they are vaccinated and all agree.

We will continue to monitor developments, hoping that this wave will pass quickly and that we can return to dual-platform services before too long.





Church News

SUNDAY SERVICES / WORSHIP RETREAT

Help envision transformative, interactive services for this Winter/Spring

Come to our
WINTER WORSHIP RETREAT
Saturday, January 8, 2-4 at Olmsted UU

Our purpose is to explore emerging needs for us as individuals, families, small groups, communities; and respond with uplifting services.

This retreat is for anyone who'd like to help shape our UU worship. It doesn't mean you have to lead a service or join the committee/team. (Though we're open to that, too.)

In preparation, reflect on these **QUESTIONS**:

Ask Yourself:

Why do you come to church?
What do you get by participating?

What do you need from church?

What has helped you feel free to express your thoughts and feelings in your congregation?

What is missing in your life that you hope church will provide for you?

What are you trying to fulfill in your own personal spiritual journey?

What values are important to you to emphasize in these next 6 months?

How is your spiritual journey changing?

At the retreat, we'll listen for:

What are people longing for?

What do people need?

What spiritual needs do we hear?

What values do we hear emphasized?

What do we need from church now?

Hope to see you at the Winter Worship Retreat!

NEW AT OUUC! WORKSHOPS ON EFFECTIVE LISTENING

Have you ever left a meeting asking yourself, "What did we accomplish?" or saying, "What a waste of time!"? Have you ever left a conversation thinking that you knew what the other person needed and then found out that you were mistaken? Have you thought that you had a problem solved only to have it resurface?

Missed communication often happens when good listening skills are not used. It's important that we, as a community, pay attention to how we communicate with each other—one on one, in meetings, in problem-solving groups and in important conversations.

In February we will begin a series of workshops on effective listening. The first, ***Listening with Compassion*** will be held at Olmsted UU on **Saturday, February 26th, 2022 from 1:00 to 5:00 pm**. It will be led by Zellda Zelley who has facilitated workshops for managers and executives in Fortune 500 companies in the U.S., Canada, South America, Asia the UK and Europe. If you want to improve your listening skills this workshop is for you.

Follow-up workshops will include *Making Agreements*, *Following up on Broken Agreements* and *Giving Feedback*.

More information about registering for the workshop will be announced soon.



Church News

LISTENING TO MARGINALIZED WRITERS - JANUARY

***Love Lives Here: A Story of Thriving in a Transgender Family* by Amanda Jetté Knox**
Tuesday, January 25, 1-2:30 pm on Zoom

Here's the Amazon description:

An inspirational story of accepting and embracing two trans people in a family - a family who shows what's possible when you "lead with love".

All Amanda Jetté Knox ever wanted was to enjoy a stable life. She never knew her biological father, and while her mother and stepfather were loving parents, the situation was sometimes chaotic. At school, she was bullied mercilessly, and at the age of 14, she entered a counselling program for alcohol addiction and was successful.

While still a teenager, she met the love of her life. They were wed at 20, and the first of three children followed shortly. Jetté Knox finally had the stability she craved - or so it seemed. Their middle child struggled with depression and avoided school. The author was unprepared when the child she knew as her son came out as transgender at the age of 11.

Shocked, but knowing how important it was to support her daughter, Jetté Knox became an ardent advocate for trans rights.

But the story wasn't over. For many years, the author had coped with her spouse's moodiness, but that chronic unhappiness was taking a toll on their marriage. A little over a year after their child came out, her partner also came out as transgender. Knowing better than most what would lie ahead, Jetté Knox searched for positive examples of marriages surviving transition. When she found no role models, she determined that her family would become one.

The shift was challenging, but slowly the family members noticed that they were becoming happier and more united. Told with remarkable candour and humour, and full of insight into the challenges faced by trans people, *Love Lives Here* is a beautiful story of transition, frustration, support, acceptance, and, of course, love.

Amanda Jetté Knox will be joining us from Ottawa, Canada to discuss her memoir

JOIN OBERLIN UU TO DISCUSS THE 8TH PRINCIPLE

Oberlin will have two more exploratory sessions on the 8th UU Principle and vote on January 30th. And members and friends of Olmsted UU are warmly welcomed to join the discussion.

Sessions will be facilitated by Rev. Mary and Stephanie Gibson.

Prepare yourself for these sessions by reading:
WIDENING THE CIRCLE:

"Hospitality and Inclusion" for sessions on:

- January 9th, 12-1, in person

- January 13th, 6:30-7:30, on Zoom. (Please note that this is Thursday.)

"Living Our Values in the World" for sessions on:

- January 23rd, 12-1, in person
- January 25th, 6:30-7:30, on Zoom

The book, *Widening the Circle*, by the Commission on Institutional Change is available for no charge online, as a pdf:

<https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committee>



What's Happening

Adult Programs

Sunday Services are Zoom only. Small groups may continue to meet in person if everyone is vaccinated and all agree. Meeting type - whether in person or Zoom only - is noted below. Links for Zoom meetings are included in the weekly e-Bellsound.

Sundays

Meditation with Mudras: January 23, 12:15-12:45 pm (Zoom). Hand positions to welcome intention and affirm harmony of body, mind and spirit. Facilitated by Emily W. All are welcome.

Tuesdays

Poetry Group: January 4, 7-8 pm (Zoom). Bring a poem (or two or three) to share. Or come to listen. All are welcome. Facilitated by Rev. Mary.

Listening to Marginalized Writers Book Group: January 25, 1-2:30 pm (Zoom). See page ??? for information.

Care-Givers Support Group: January 25, 4-5 pm (Zoom). A drop-in support/conversation for all who are caring for a family member or friend. Facilitated by Rev. Mary.

Wednesdays

UU Gathering at Kendal (Zoom); Meeting date/time to be announced. "Joy doesn't simply arise, it flies, it flings." "Joy is hard; it requires vulnerability. It's worth the work and so are you." Joy is in all -- in you; in us, together; blessing the world, sharing the joy. "

How do we open to and cultivate joy? We'll invite you to recall and share moments of joy, and to explore the fun and powerful practice of "joy-spotting."

Thursdays

Thursday Morning Meditation, January 6, 13, 20, 27, 10:30-11:30 am (Zoom). Reflecting on Pema

Chodron's book, *Welcoming the Unwelcome*, Jan 6, chapter 8, "Beyond the Comfort Zone;" Jan 13 & 20, chapter 9, "Our Shared Humanity;" Jan 27, chapter 10, "How You Label It Is How It Appears." All are welcome. Led by Rev. Mary.

Dream Group: January 6, 2-3:30 pm (Zoom).

Explore lessons and meanings in dream metaphors, stories, wisdom, and humor. Bring a dream (or dream image) to share. All welcome. Facilitated by Rev. Mary.

WISE Women: January 20, 1-2:30 pm (Zoom and in person / wearing masks if unvaccinated). A monthly spiritual exploration group, to listen and support each other and celebrate what is emerging. This month's theme is Living with Intention. Facilitated by Lynda Garvin, Pat Krivonak, Zellda Zelley, and Rev. Mary.

Committees & Teams

Sunday Services / Worship Teams: January 5, 6:30-8 pm (Zoom) to reflect on past services and plan upcoming services. Facilitated by Rev. Mary. All are welcome!

Board of Trustees, Wednesday, January 12, 6:30 pm (Zoom). All are welcome.

OUUC & OUUF Adult Program Teams, Thursday, January 20, 4-5:15 pm (Zoom). To assess past programs and plan up-coming programs. Facilitated by Rev. Mary.

Oberlin Programs

Men's Group: Mondays, January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at 7 pm (Zoom & in person). Contact Don for information at donleake087@gmail.com.

What Would Jesus Do? Wednesday, January 26, 7 pm (Zoom). This covenant group focuses on returning to the heart of Jesus consciousness and Christian renewal within Unitarian Universalism.



January Calendar

Sunday Services and are offered on Zoom. Meeting type - whether in person or Zoom only - is noted below. Links for Zoom meetings are included in the weekly e-Bellsound.

Sunday, January 2

- 11:00 TED Talk: Life on Purpose (*Zoom*)
- 11:00 Religious Exploration (*In person*)

Monday, January 3

- 7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group (*In Person & Zoom*)

Tuesday, January 4

- 7:00 Poetry Group (*Zoom*)

Wednesday, January 5

- 6:30 OUUC & OUUF Worship Teams (*Zoom*)

Thursday, January 6

- 10:30 Thursday Meditation (*Zoom*)
- 2:00 Dream Group (*Zoom*)

Saturday, January 8

- 2:00 Workshop Retreat (*In person*)

Sunday, January 9

- 11:00 Sunday Service: Living by Intention (*Zoom*)
- 11:00 Religious Exploration (*In person*)
- 12:00 Oberlin UU 8th Principle Discussion (*In Person*)

Monday, January 10

- 7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group (*In person & Zoom*)

Wednesday, January 12

- 6:30 Board Meeting (*Zoom*)

Thursday, January 13

- 10:30 Thursday Meditation (*Zoom*)
- 6:30 Oberlin UU 8th Principle Discussion (*Zoom*)

Sunday, January 16

- 11:00 Sunday Service: Compassionate Communication (*Zoom*)
- 11:00 Religious Exploration (*In Person*)

Monday, January 17

- 7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group (*In person & Zoom*)

Thursday, January 20

- 10:30 Thursday Meditation (*Zoom*)
- 1:00 WISE Women (*In-person & Zoom*)
- 4:00 OUUC & OUUF Adult Program Teams (*Zoom*)

Sunday, January 23

- 11:00 Sunday Service: Called to Love (*Zoom*)
- 11:00 Religious Exploration (*In person*)
- 12:00 Oberlin UU 8th Principle Discussion (*In person*)
- 12:15 Meditation with Mudras (*Zoom*)

Monday, January 24

- 7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Group (*In person & Zoom*)

Tuesday, January 25

- 1:00 Listening to Marginalized Writers (*Zoom*)
- 4:00 Care-Givers Support Group (*Zoom*)
- 6:30 Oberlin UU 8th Principle Discussion (*Zoom*)

Wednesday, January 26

- 7:00 What Would Jesus Do? (*Zoom*)

Thursday, January 27

- 10:30 Thursday Meditation (*Zoom*)

Sunday, January 30

- 11:00 Sunday Service: The Power & the Story (*LIVE & Zoom*)
- 11:00 Religious Exploration (*In person*)
- 12:00 Oberlin UU 8th Principle Vote to accept

Monday, January 31

- 7:00 OUUC & OUUF Men's Covenant Group (*In person & Zoom*)

Deadline for the February issue of the Bellringer is Monday, January 24.

OLMSTED UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

5050 Porter Road, North Olmsted, Ohio 44070 / 440-777-6622 / office@olmsteduu.org / www.olmsteduu.org

Staff / Minister: Rev. Mary Grigolia - mary@marygrigolia.com

Director of Religious Exploration: Caitlin Chapman - caitlin.c.chapman@gmail.com

Office Manager: Cathy Ross - office@olmsteduu.org

Board / Brian Warren - Vice President Emily Williams - Past President Kay Potetz - Treasurer
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