



Bellringer

August 2023

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



August 6: "Re-Storying Hope". The stories we tell matter. They have the power to shape who we are and who we are becoming. We Unitarian Universalists (UU's) are blessed to draw from many sources. How do we choose stories that inspire us to live into the promise of our faith and up to the challenges of our time? Join Rev. Alison Miller (Morristown Unitarian Fellowship, NJ) and Music

Director, Bertram Gulhaugen (West Side UU Congregation, Seattle) along with thousands as we view the General Assembly worship service of 2015.

August 13: "In All Thy Getting, Get Understanding". What do we enter into congregational life hoping to get? So many things, perhaps—but underneath the consumer's idea of acquisition is the pull to a deeper encounter with the experience, hope, heartbreak and yearning of others in community. Can we be a place of deep encounter where borders are crossed and faiths connect, where real stories and real struggle intersect and understanding arises anew? We'll explore the possibility as we watch the 2016 General Assembly worship service.

August 20: The Importance of Shangri-La. In 1937, American novelist, Thomas Wolfe wrote: "The essence of belief is doubt." At about the same time, British novelist, James Hilton had his High Lama of Shangri-La say: "I have found that doubt

is the basis of any profound and significant faith." To many this might sound like a contradiction. Join Bob Mulkins on August 20 to explore these and other ideas regarding faith and belief. Fran Mulkins will be our moderator.

August 27: "Re-imaging the Faith Community". The last few years have not been easy, including in our local congregations. Whole swaths of members have simply stopped coming; COVID is confusing, and polarizing; many ministers have joined the great resignation; and Pew studies and friends alike have pronounced the end of the local church.

In this moment, when so many of us might be wondering if we should just give up, and relent, **now's the time instead to double down on our commitment to the local church** - this unique community that saves us and also breaks our hearts - often much more of the latter than we'd like to admit. In the midst of our culture of death, the church is a place of life. Or it is, as long as we are willing to bring our own lives to it. Join us for a morning of celebration, witness, and future-visioning for the already and not yet power of the local Unitarian Universalist church. We'll watch the 2022 General Assembly worship service led by Rev. Gretchen Haley, Rev. Shari Halliday-Quan, Rev. Sean Neil-Barron, Lea Morris, Adam Podd, Joseph and Aimee Santos-Lyons, and Allison King with the GA Choir.



REV. MARY'S MUSINGS: Change Is Coming



A line from a song I heard at General Assembly asks:
"Change is coming. What do we need to imagine?" (by Molly Bajgot)

Pandemic disruptions thrust forward choices for change: Meeting in person or Zoom or both? Working from home or at the office? Americans balked at working 40+ hours per week and rejected productivity to measure self-worth.

We discovered our need for community, spontaneous acts of kindness, singing, holding hands.

We noticed unsafe driving.

We hear of more and more people who were and continue to be isolated.

What do we need to imagine?

As summer turns toward fall, we prepare for a new year of congregational life. What changes are calling to us? What does Life need us to imagine, so that we learn new skills to co-create forms, programs, services?

Change can be scary when we focus only on loss.

May we be present to one another, acknowledging loss, celebrating what we loved, what we learned, what we're releasing.

Change can be welcoming - exhilarating - when we accept that we and everyone are always in flux. How may we go with the flow, grow with the flow this month? What structures may we imagine and create in our congregation, to navigate waters of change and be of benefit to our community?

So grateful for spiritual community where we witness change and may imagine and create together what is needed.

A good August to all,

Rev. Mary

OXCART PANTRY IS COLLECTING PB&J IN AUGUST

What says "Back to School" better than PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY! That's what the Oxcart Food Pantry is requesting this month. The Pantry offers assistance to North Olmsted residents in need, and OUUC has been collecting items to help fill their

shelves for years. Please leave your donations in the marked box in Coe Hall and we will deliver them.



OUUC News

W.I.S.E. Women Is Celebrating Summer with a Picnic!



The next WISE Women meeting will be at 12:30 on Thursday August 17th on the patio of the church, weather permitting. This will be a social event (no Zoom session) with everyone

bringing their own lunch and perhaps something to share (dessert or fruit?). We can continue discussing how we experience "delight" and I plan to share some tidbits from "The Book of Delights." I look forward to a DELIGHTFUL time together. Cheers!

Bev Schmittgen

UU IN-PERSON LEADERSHIP DAY - AUGUST 12

Looking to build your leadership skills and/or help OUUC grow? This workshop is for you!

Learn how to communicate more effectively and implement ways to create life-affirming community ... at work, at home and at church!

Topics will include thinking in systems, effective communication, collaborative project planning, and inclusive decision-making.

Saturday, August 12, 2023, 9 am - 3:30 pm at the UU Church of Kent.

Cost is sliding scale - \$20-30-40

Watch a 3-1/2 minute video to help explain what this training is, who it is for, and how it will help your congregation and you:
<https://youtu.be/P2IdSjkpaUM>

Here is the link for more information and registration:
<https://www.uua.org/central-east/events/congregation-events/leadership-essentials-inclusive-communities>

TOO GOOD TO MISS!

Check out the exciting Service Auction Items that are still available:

- A commissioned oil painting by local professional artist Eric Jawarowski
- Lovely Ladies' Afternoon Tea
- Drumming Explorations: Learning Basic Rhythms
- Unique Greeting Cards created by you!

- Forest Walking & Sketching in the Rocky River Reservation
- Saturday Morning with Tai Chi

Sign-up sheets and directions on how to pay are in a manilla folder on the table to the left as you enter Coe Hall. Take a look next time you are at church. Or call the church at 440-777-6622 .



UUA News

WELCOME PRESIDENT SOFIA BETANCOURT



It is with great enthusiasm that the UUA welcomes the Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt as the tenth UUA President! Her presidency comes with a number of historic firsts – she is the first openly queer person and first woman of color to be elected UUA president. She has served Unitarian Universalism for more than twenty years as a religious educator, minister, scholar, and member of the UUA national staff and many volunteer committees at

the regional and denominational levels. She most recently served as Resident Scholar and Special Advisor on Justice and Equity at the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

Rev. Dr. Betancourt holds a Ph.D. in Religious Ethics and African American Studies from Yale University as well as an M.Div. from Starr King School for the Ministry, where she also served on the faculty. She is the author of *Ecowomanism at the Panamá Canal: Black Women, Labor, and Environmental Ethics* (2022). You can learn more about her in a new Q&A with *UU World magazine*, including how early life experiences shaped her path to ministry.

As significantly, she also brings to the role theological depth, a commitment to communal care, and a pledge to continue to organize for justice. She has also expressed an appreciation for the diverse voices and leaders in our community as well as for the hard work that UUA staff does every day. We know that Unitarian Universalists (UU's) across the country and UUA staff will all benefit from her experience, wisdom, and sense of care.

Carey McDonald, our Executive Vice President, expressed his keen anticipation in this way, "we are excited to have the Rev. Dr. Sofía Betancourt at the helm as UUA President to lead us in the next chapter of our faith's journey. We are already inspired by her deep theology and commitments to community care and imagining the way forward together."

We are entering an exciting time for both the UUA and Unitarian Universalism. Rev. Dr. Betancourt's presidency and the General Assembly vote by delegates to continue consideration of changes to the Article II bylaws mark a key moment in our faith tradition. With her leadership, we are positioned to move forward in faithful community, in recognition of our shared values and the important work ahead.

Please make OUUC checks payable to "First Universalist Church of Olmsted"

The legal name for our Olmsted Unitarian Universalist Congregation is "First Universalist Church of Olmsted". That is the name we used when we opened our current bank account with Chase Bank. The bank is now requiring that all checks made

out to the church be made payable to "First Universalist Church of Olmsted". They will not accept anything else. If you are sending a check to the church, please be sure to use the wording that Chase Bank is requiring.



Programs/Meetings

Adult Programs

Meeting type - whether in person, Zoom only, or both - is noted below. Links for Zoom meetings are published in the weekly e-Bellsound.

Sundays

Meditation with Mudras will not meet in August.

Tuesdays

Poems to Live By, Poems to Wake Us Up: August 8, 2-3 pm (Zoom). Bring a poem (or two or three) to share. Or just come to listen. All are welcome.

UU Kendal Monthly Gathering, is on summer siesta. See you in September! (**Sept 26, 2-3 pm - 4th Tuesdays**)

Wednesdays

Pastoral Counseling / Check-In, 2nd & 4th Wednesday's, August 9 & 23, 11-12 noon. Phone in: 216-402-3438. Or email Rev. Mary for an appointment at a different time (mary@marygrigolia.com). All are welcome.

Thursdays

Deepening Circles Meditation (DCM), Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 am (Zoom). Reading Pema Chodron's, *When Things Fall Apart* - August 3 (Introduction and chap 1, Intimacy with Fear); August 10 (chap 2, When Things Fall Apart); August 17 (chap 3, This Very Moment Is the Perfect Teacher); August 24 (chap 4, Relax As It Is); August 31 (chap 5, It's Never Too Late). All are welcome. Led by Rev. Mary.

Wisdom Dreams: August 3, 1:30-2:30 pm (Zoom).

Bring a dream (or dream image) to share. Explore together the messages, meanings and metaphors, wisdom and humor of dreams. All are welcome.

WISE Women: August 17, 12:30-2:30 pm. In person only at Olmsted UU for a BYO Lunch. Women-in-Spirit-Evolving is a monthly group to listen, support

and celebrate what is emerging in our lives. Summer sessions delve more deeply into Delight: How is delight bringing you fully into the moment? In person only for a BYO picnic at OUUC.

Committees & Teams

Sunday Services Committee: **Tuesday, August 1, 4-5 pm (Zoom)** to reflect on past services and plan upcoming services. All are welcome.

Board of Trustees: **Wednesday, August 9, 6:30 pm (Zoom).** All are welcome.

OUUC & OUUU Adult Program Teams: **Thursday, August 17, 4-5 pm (Zoom).** Evaluate current programs, plan new ones. All are welcome.

Oberlin Programs

Men's Covenant Group: **Mondays, August 7, 14, 21, 28 at 7 pm (In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom).** Contact donleake087@gmail.com for information.

What Would Jesus Do? Wednesday, August 23, 7 pm (In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom). This covenant group focuses on returning to the heart of Jesus consciousness and Christian renewal within Unitarian Universalism.



August Calendar

Meeting type - whether in person, Zoom only, or both - is noted below. Links for Zoom meetings are published in the weekly e-Bellsound.

Tuesday, August 1

4:00 Sunday Services Committee (Zoom)

Thursday, August 3

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation
1:30 The Wisdom of Dreams (Zoom)

Sunday, August 6

11:00 Sunday Service: Re-Storying Hope (In person)
12:00 Coffee Hour (In person)

Monday, August 7

7:00 OUUC & OUUU Men's Covenant Group
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

Tuesday, August 8

2:00 Poems to Live By (Zoom)

Wednesday, August 9

11:00 Pastoral Counseling/Check-In (Phone-In)
6:30 Board of Trustees (Zoom)

Thursday, August 10

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)

Saturday, August 12

10:45 Saturday Morning with Tai Chi - a Service Auction in-person event. Places still available.

Sunday, August 13

11:00 Sunday Service: In All Thy Getting, Get Understanding (In person)
12:00 Coffee Hour (In person)

Monday, August 14

7:00 OUUC & OUUU Men's Covenant Group
(In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

Thursday, August 17

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)
12:30 WISE Women Picnic (In person at OUUC)
4:00 Adult Programs Team

Sunday, August 20

11:00 Sunday Service: The Importance of Shangri La (In person)
12:00 Coffee Hour (In person)

Monday, August 21

7:00 OUUC & OUUU Men's Covenant Group (In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

Wednesday, August 23

11:00 Pastoral Counseling/Check-In (Phone-In)
7:00 What Would Jesus Do? (In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

Thursday, August 24

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)

Sunday, August 27

11:00 Sunday Service: Re-Imagining the Faith Community (In person)
12:00 Coffee Hour (In person)

Monday, August 28

7:00 OUUC & OUUU Men's Covenant Group (In person at Oberlin UU & Zoom)

Thursday, August 31

10:30 Deepening Circles Meditation (Zoom)

Deadline for the September issue of the Bellringer is Monday, August 28

OLMSTED UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

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