

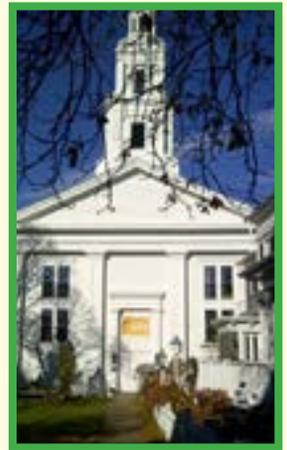
# UUMH Newsletter

236 Commercial Street • Provincetown • Massachusetts

April 2019

“The members of the UU Meeting House hold sacred each individual’s spiritual and ethical development. We welcome all and seek unity in diversity. We commit ourselves in service to the wellbeing of the congregation and to all of life.” ~Mission Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House of Provincetown

Photo: Robin Jones



*April come she will  
When streams are ripe and swelled  
with rain*

~ Simon and Garfunkel

# April is National Poetry Month



## The Importance of Poetry in Our Spiritual Growth (Catbird)

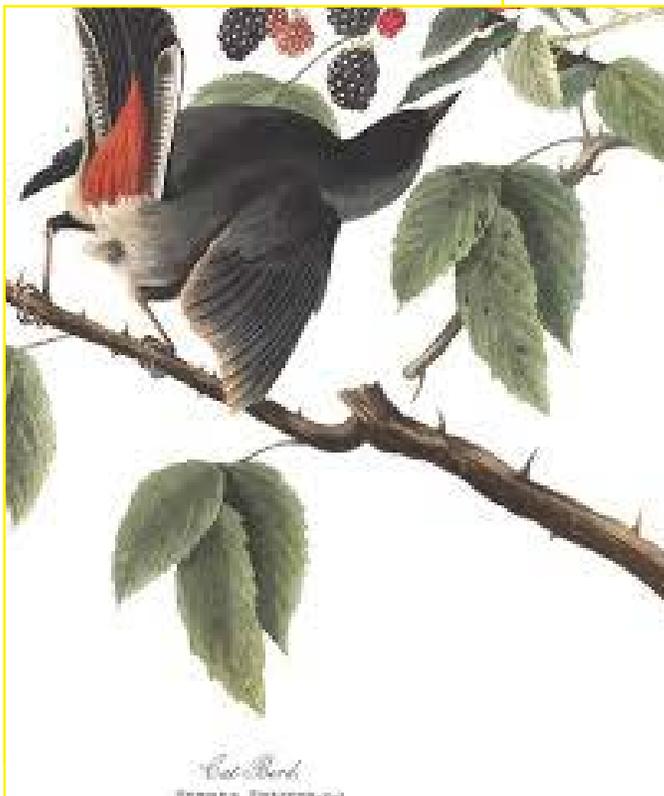
By Lorraine Kujawa

When I was ten  
Living in Brooklyn,  
Third floor brownstone  
On Hawthorn St.  
Much of my time  
Was spent reading  
In a brown velvet chair,  
Like cuddling in the folds of a great bear.  
My back against one large arm,  
Knees braced against the other arm.

There I read poetry.  
Understanding less  
Of the four syllable words  
Than the feeling of the rhythm,  
Matching the dancing of sound  
With pictures played in my head.  
A small dance for a small person.

Now when I allow myself  
The pleasure of writing a line or two,  
I hunch over my books and papers  
Looking out my window,  
Listening to the call of the catbird  
Announcing the arriving  
Of bright purple berries  
Bourne on what I now consider  
My trees.

The poets before me have whispered  
The music of moments  
That touched their souls  
One note at a time,  
Given, to make rich  
The lives we will never fully know  
But catch  
Like berries on a tree  
To nourish,  
As we all our song into the world.



Worship Worship Worship  
Worship Worship Worship  
Worship Worship Worship  
Worship Worship Worship

April



April 7

Rev. Bill Clark ~ "Optimism & Pessimism"



April 14

Rev. Paul Langston-Daley ~  
"Restoring Faith, Restoring Justice"



*Easter*

*The air is like a butterfly  
With frail blue wings.  
The happy earth looks at  
the sky  
And sings.*

*~Joyce Kilmer*



April 21

Easter Sunday!  
Rev. Chris Holton-Jablonski



April 28

Rev. Bill Clark ~ "Coincidence, Synchronicity, Fate or Miracle"

A Note from the Sabbatical Committee  
A Note from the Sabbatical Committee  
A Note from the Sabbatical Committee



*Mission Statement*

*The Ad Hoc Sabbatical Committee serves the Meeting House congregation, staff and committee chairs by providing oversight, direction, advice and support during the three months of the 2019 Sabbatical period. During the Sabbatical period the Ad Hoc Committee will work to ensure continuity of the mission and work of the Meeting House in lieu of the minister, ever mindful of protecting Reverend Kate's sabbatical.*

*Sabbatical Committee members: Bruce de Ste. Croix, Jane Lea, Lorraine Kujawa, Ellen Anthony.*

*“Just as ripples spread out when a single pebble is dropped in the water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching effects.”*

*Dalai Lama*

Spring is on its way. I have always felt a promise in spring. Everyone takes for granted at New Years that they will make and break promises. But spring itself is the promise come true. The buds are saying “yes” and poking their heads out in readiness, sometimes told to hush and wait a bit longer, the birds are flitting and flirting with plans for relining old nest and even the dogs are shedding their lovingly knitted sweaters with dreams of a romp on the beach.

I always remember spring as a time to take a deep breath, look around and notice the beauty unfolding before me. We've broken loose from our homes and lost some of the heavy jackets and scarfs and now walk with a sense of freedom and purpose.

The question that Mary Oliver asked: “ Tell me what it is you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” begs to be answered and only you have that answer. As you greet each day and look for sunshine this month, consider what you are as the sunshine for all who cross your path.

Saying that we can make a difference may seem daunting when we consider the world, our country or even this small town. But as each one touch becomes the conduit of all we are, these touches hold our message and willingly or unknowingly pass it on to those they encounter.

When I was teaching I was profoundly struck with the knowledge that whatever I said, whether wise or really dumb, was passed on to the parents and the other students and eventually back to me.

In the days when looking under the hood of a car was a useful endeavor, one of my students asked me how a car used the gasoline we put into it. During lunch break we went to the parking lot where I unlatched the hood of my car and gave a basic tour of its inner workings.



A year later I received a letter from the family, who had moved to another state, thanking me for their son's experience, having been given a lecture of how to change spark plugs by their eleven year old.

Life is full of sunshine that has found its way to our lives because of someone else's conscious effort.

In doing so it has made our lives more joyful. And isn't that what we want from life?

Here at the Meeting House, sharing joy has been what most of us have found important to us, whether in making a cake for a member's 90th birthday or speaking to a stranger during coffee hour or gathering round the bed of a ill friend.

Take a walk in the April sunshine today, look at the sky, watch the seagulls dive for clams. Gather all the beauty that is at your fingertips here and store it in your heart. It is the full heart that can be the most generous. And this generosity can more easily be shared when the opportunity presents itself.

Here at the Meeting House in the spring we hope to claim a little sunshine for ourselves, nurture it and gift it away.

“ Tell me what it is you plan to do with your one wild and precious life”. I hope you know.

Lorraine Kujawa  
Sabbatical Committee

Check out the UUMH website for a  
WEEKLY  
announcement of events!  
[www.uumh.org](http://www.uumh.org)  
click on  
THIS WEEK at the MEETING HOUSE

# Announcements Announcements Announcements



## Helping Hands. . .

Another UUMH great idea! Do you need a ride? have a pet who needs a walk? need some medication picked up? Helping Hands has been at work since 2016 assisting the UUMH community. Every month a different volunteer is in charge of matching your need up with someone who has volunteered to help. These volunteers are creative and resourceful people---don't hesitate! Dianne Kopser is the facilitator: 508-237-1321

SAVE THE DATE !!!

May 12, the Friday of Mother's Day weeknd, is this year's

**TALENT / NO TALENT SHOW!!**

You have the whole month of April (plus a few days of May) to rehearse a song alone, or with friends; write a poem or prose; gather with friends to create a skit. Then let char know to save a spot on the roster of performers.

(chartone1@aol.com or P.O.Box 1692, Provincetown or 508.487.4193).

Based on the sharing of Rev.Terry Sweetser, "The word freedom comes from an ancient Norse root verb that means to become loving".

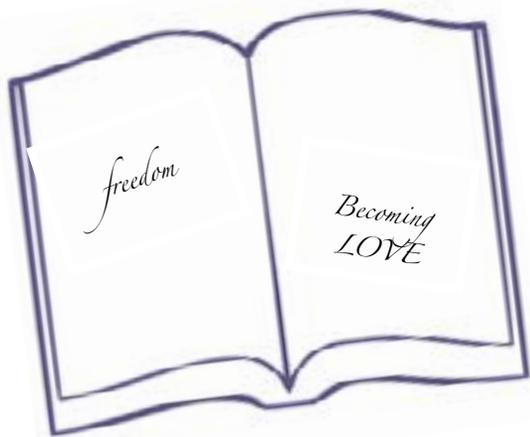
Have you been thinking of what particular joy/s (a song, a poem, a book, a road-trip) in your lifetime turned your heart loose, gave you moments of FREEDOM, helped you become loving?

Your sharing could be 4 lines (or 4 pages) long.

AND: if you are so inclined, you may read your reflection at our TALENT / NO TALENT SHOW, on May 12 (see above notice)

Whether or not part of the T/NT Show, all entries will become part of the BECOMING LOVE BOOK that we will create together.

Becoming Love



“When we open to love  
we become love.”

-- Tara Brach

**May 11th**

# **UNITING~4~CLIMATE**

## **An Outer~Cape Forum**

*...to Tackle **OUR CLIMATE CRISIS** & Inspire **ACTION***

*~~~ here & beyond ~~~*

**Saturday from 2:00-4:30 PM**

**246 Commercial Street @ Provincetown's Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse**

### **Keynote Speakers**

**2:00~3:00**

**Richard Delaney\_Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies**

**Hartman Deetz\_Wampanoag Tribal Representative**

**Nauset Regional High School**

**Charlotte Launoy\_Human Rights Academy**

**Montana Bailey\_Green Club**

**Rev. Fred Small\_Religious Witness for the Earth**

### **Inspiring Personal & Collective ACTIONS**

**3:00~4:00**

### **CLOSING RITUAL**

**4:00~4:30**

**Sponsored by the Faith Community Environmental Network**

**...of the Cape Cod Climate Change Collaborative\_FREE & Open to the PUBLIC**

Racial Justice Provincetown

Racial Justice Provincetown

Racial Justice Provincetown

Dismantling Systems of Oppression

By ~WAVE aka Rik Kapler

Humanity's survival depends on a paradigm shift. When it comes to Global Warming, we know that dirty fossil fuels need to be replaced by clean, regenerative power sources. So what do we humans need to change to survive? How do we make our paradigm shift? Are there social constructs that are blocking and slowing down the process? Who holds the power and decision-making process in our country?

In 2016, I spent eight weeks at Standing Rock, in North Dakota. I learned a lot by living, listening, sharing, and working with indigenous peoples; Expanding my perspective on so many issues.

When it comes to resisting, overhauling or dismantling Dominating Power Systems, it's both personal and political. What can I personally and collectively do to create social constructs that value sharing power equally?

Please join us at the UU Meetinghouse  
Racial Justice Provincetown (RJP)  
on Wednesday, April 17th, from 5-7:30 pm

Let's explore ways to **step away** from systems of oppression and **step into** a new paradigm of power sharing in Community and in our Country. Let's dream, think, move, act, and grow together!

For more information, contact: Rik at [ugowave@gmail.com](mailto:ugowave@gmail.com)

The ultimate tragedy is not the  
oppression and cruelty  
by the bad people  
but the silence over that  
by the good people.  
Martin Luther King, Jr.

# Racial Justice Provincetown

HOSTS

**Monthly Pot~Luck**

&

**“Dismantling Systems  
of Oppression”**

This month, we will explore our ancestral roots & challenge colonial constructs deemed inherent and unquestioned. US institutions are grounded in superiority, purity, competition, individualism, binaries & suppressing of emotions. Humanity is dependent upon our ability to decolonize and reclaim the teachings of our ancestors and their indigenous understandings of the natural world.

*This innovational, invocational Workshop & Heart Circle is ...  
~Rooting-in~Restorative~Decolonizing~  
~~moments/movements/sharing & improvisations~~  
presented by ~WAVE aka Rik Kapler*

**Wednesday, April 17 th  
...5:00-7:30 PM**

free

All are Welcomed

Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse\_236 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA.

Isaac Lopez (aka Jaguar) and ~Wave met at Standing Rock in 2016. Since that time, he began exploring the Two-Spirit aspect of himself. He is fourth generation Mexican-American; Born and raised in San Jose, California. Isaac is an artist, activist and bar tender who has relocated here, in Provincetown. The injustice at our Southwestern border can seem so far away to us, here on the tip of the Cape Cod. This essay by Isaac brings it home in a powerful way. RJP offers this essay on decolonization this month.

## Decolonize Me ~~ By Isaac Lopez

I was never fully carefree the way that a child is supposed to be. There was always a part of me that understood I was a colonized being. I may not have had the pedagogy to understand how or why this was so, and I may not have had the vocabulary to explicate on it, but I had an awareness that something wasn't right about the world that I was born and bred into.

I was always in turmoil and hyper-aware in regard to specifics about myself that did not make sense. As young people, it's an injustice having to settle for a reality with that magnitude of invalidation, thinking that that's all there is to life. It becomes easier to accept from this point to not question the numerous manners in which life is indeed unfair.

Even though I was raised to be intelligent and hard-working, to read and write English with great proficiency and to do good in school, I was also raised for an uphill battle. I remember my mom saying that she wanted us to learn English instead of Spanish, recalling that when she was a child that her teachers would reprimand her if she dared speak Spanish and even if she tried to speak English and did so improperly they would still punish her by putting her in time-out and sometimes they even hit her on the hand with a ruler! I remember my father telling me what his father told him when he was a child: that people like "us" (brown people) have to make sure we work at least twice as hard as white people if we want to be taken seriously. I was always aware that there were stereotypes that preceded me; that there were people who would think I was beneath them, that I was incompetent, dumb or lazy simply because of the complexion of my skin, or the fact that I had a Spanish surname.

As an impressionable youth I did what served me well at the time by idealizing my parents, honoring their words, putting faith in their beliefs and making sure to excel at my studies. I was particularly drawn to the arts, reading, writing and drawing. I was one of those nerdy kids that read lots of books in order to escape. I almost always raised my hand in class whenever the teacher asked a question. I made sure to participate, thinking that I was doing the right thing, which of course put me at odds with the majority of my peers who were of similar demographics as myself: working class Latinos and Chicanos who struggled to learn proper English, people of color trying to get off of welfare, "minorities" striving to work hard and not fall through the cracks of a system that seemed set up for us to fail.

At the time I didn't want to believe that we were that different,

I had a keen awareness that these factors were a part of our reality, but I did not want to accept it as my truth. I knew I was better than that. It was not that I was better than anyone else (the way that my classmates mistook my intentions) but I knew that we were all worth more than falling into the fate of having to join a gang or becoming a drug user in order to get by in life. I knew that we all deserved better than to have our classrooms broken in to and have our supplies stolen from us, and that we were better than to have to accept a leaky classroom in the middle of the rainy winter months. But I was also a lone wallflower and a survivor unto myself because I was considered "pocho," as the other kids would call me. The term is used by Spanish-speaking communities to describe a person of Mexican descent who has given up their culture in order to assimilate into the white man's world. I was beginning to learn from my classmates that I was not one of them simply because of my place of birth as well as our language barrier. The irony of my parents' intentions for me to do well set me up for a pitfall that was unwittingly against me in that I was never able to fully relate or have a sense of affinity with other Latinos. I remember one day in class arguing with a few students because they were pressing into me how I was not Mexican like they were, but that I was in fact Mexican American—and that that difference offered me in many ways, both privilege as well as stigma. At the time I didn't want to believe that we were that different, or that I possessed certain advantages simply because of my citizenship.

On top of race and class divides I was also a young queer boy in the closet, and I was often bullied and ostracized for being effeminate, both at home and at school. I felt like no matter where I went I was never safe and that I could never fully be myself. In fact, I had no idea what that concept even meant at the time. It was merely about survival to get to the next stage. I kept my sexuality as much of a secret as possible by sticking to my studies. Eventually, my grades gave me an opportunity to go to a magnet program school where I gained opportunities to be surrounded by ambitious students who wanted to learn and get good grades (which was kind of hard to believe at first), and that was the kind of motivation I needed to finish my home run stretch through early academia.

College presented itself as the opportunity to “freedom” that I was always seeking although ironically, I came to learn in many respects that the University system was just another set of hoops to jump through in the game of life. My parents weren’t able to afford to send me to college, so I had to take out loans that I have to this day never been able to repay. On the flip-side of that coin, what I did get out of my higher education was the pedagogy and the framework in order to understand the reasons for my angst in a world of systematic oppression. I came to know with all of the right words just how displaced and far removed I was from the freedom that I was seeking all along, and that my own true personal integral sense of freedom and identity could only come from deconstructing and decolonizing my identity.

Through courses that focused on the deconstruction of race, class, sexuality and gender studies, and how these categories create intersectionalities of power and privilege—which divide us as individuals, as groups and as nations—I was finally able to achieve that validation that I never had access to as a child. It was suddenly clear as daylight to me what was missing and I no longer felt crazy or stupid because I was finally being recognized by my teachers and my peers who were also lucky enough to make it to this level of understanding. I was beginning to see who I really was, and I was also being seen!

When I am reminded of my childhood it’s still difficult to face. In many ways it was an unbelievable nightmare. It’s hard to believe it was real. There was also a lot of beauty that came of it though, knowing that my parents did the best that they could—that they wanted only for me to be strong, to succeed and to be happy. I can easily see how the community and the people I come from are a beautiful people, even though in many respects I still feel separate from them, even though they still carry on with their struggles. I advocate for them with the use of my privilege by educating anyone who thinks of them as unworthy of love, respect and prosperity. For example, I know that we have indigenous ties to this landmass, and so we have as much right to be in the United States as anyone else. The Mexican Cession of 1848 doesn’t diminish the fact that we are indigenous, just like the modern day border with Mexico and the proposed plans to build a wall still do not diminish the fact that we are indigenous. The very idea that we are foreigners in our own land is a construct of the same colonization that tricks us into believing that Mexicans are here to steal American jobs just to put fear into the minds of white working class folks. It’s the same stigma that makes me feel stratified and estranged from my own people who are beguiled into fearfully questioning whether me speaking English instead of Spanish puts me on some kind of hierarchical pedestal that they should aspire to, when in reality we know that both English and Spanish are the languages of our colonizers, and not part of the rich indigenous heritage that has the potential to unite us in Renaissance with our land.

I know that we have indigenous ties to this landmass, and so we have as much right to be in the United States as anyone else.

It’s important for me to remember from here on out that decolonization is always a work in progress. If we are being colonized on a daily basis, then we have to decolonize on a daily basis. This framework should always be in our perspective lens, whether it’s the main course of our expressions or if it’s on the back burner. We have to learn from and transcend the intergenerational trauma that we inherited from our ancestors’ struggles so that it’s not passed on to the youth the way it was passed to us, and we need to work actively with the youth, the future generations on changing the human relationship with the planet, so that all children are born and raised in a world that they feel they are a part of, where they can fully embody that freedom without restraint or hesitancy.

# Following up



This essay helps us understand covenant through the eyes of a grade schooler.

As a follow up to Kathleen Henry's sermon in early March, these words, simply put, say it all.

## MAKING PROMISES, MAKING COVENANTS

By Janeen K.Grohsmeier

Do you remember your first day of school? I remember mine. Your parents and grandparents probably remember theirs, too. Probably everyone remembers, no matter how long ago it was. Going to a new place and starting something new can be exciting... and sometimes a little scary. We have a lot of questions: "Where do I sit?" "What time do we eat?" "Where is the bathroom?" "Am I allowed to climb the trees?" "Does the teacher expect me to do homework?" And, of course, "When can we go outside to play? At school, the teacher shows us where things are and explains how things work. She tells us the rules.

Once we know what we are expected to do and what we are allowed to do, it's not so scary anymore. Sometimes, though, there is no teacher. On the playground, it's just kids. Sometimes we make up our own game, and we decide how it ought to be played. Sometimes we make the rules.

On the jungle gym, we can decide that the red bars are fire and you can't touch them when you climb. When we play tag, we can decide that the person who is It has to count to ten before they start chasing everybody else. It can be a lot of fun to make up the rules to your very own game. You get to make it just the way you like it.

That is, if the other kids agree. But, what if you think the red bars on the jungle gym are fire and can't be touched, but another kid says that the red bars are fine and you can touch them however you want?

There are a lot of different ways to play a game. And if you don't want to play all by yourself (and you can't play tag by yourself), then everybody has to agree on what the rules are while you are playing. Maybe you can keep all the rules. Or maybe you can change some. Some how, some way, after discussing and changing and arguing and compromising, everybody agrees on what the rules should be. Maybe you don't like one of the other kids' rules all that much, and maybe someone else doesn't like your rules all that much, but you both agree to them anyway because you got some rules you liked and so did the other person. Then, finally, everyone promises to each other to follow the rules, with no cheating, and we can play the game. When we agree to follow the rules we make together, we are covenanting with each other. A covenant is a promise to each other about what we are going to do, and how we are going to behave. We need a covenant to have fun playing a game.

Covenants are not only for the playground. They can be made by people in families and by students and teachers in schools. They can be made in religions too. Our Unitarian Universalist religion has a covenant. Our UU Covenant was made about 50 years ago, when your parents and grandparents were young. Back then, there weren't any Unitarian Universalists. There were Unitarians and there were Universalists. Two different religions, with different names, different buildings, different songs... different rules. The Unitarians and the Universalists had been talking to each other for a very long time. Even though they had different rules for how they did things, they realized they agreed on many important ideas, many principles of life. Just like the kids on the playground, they had different rules, but they wanted to play the same game. In 1960, they decided to play together. They knew they had to figure out new rules that all the Unitarians and all the Universalists would agree to follow. It took them almost a year. After discussing and changing and arguing and compromising for months and months, the Unitarians and the Universalists from hundreds of different congregations agreed on six Principles — six rules — that they all could agree to follow. It's true that one person might not have liked another person's ideas for rules all that much and maybe that person didn't like the first person's rules all that much. But they agreed to follow them anyway, because they knew they both got a lot of the rules they wanted. And they got to play together.

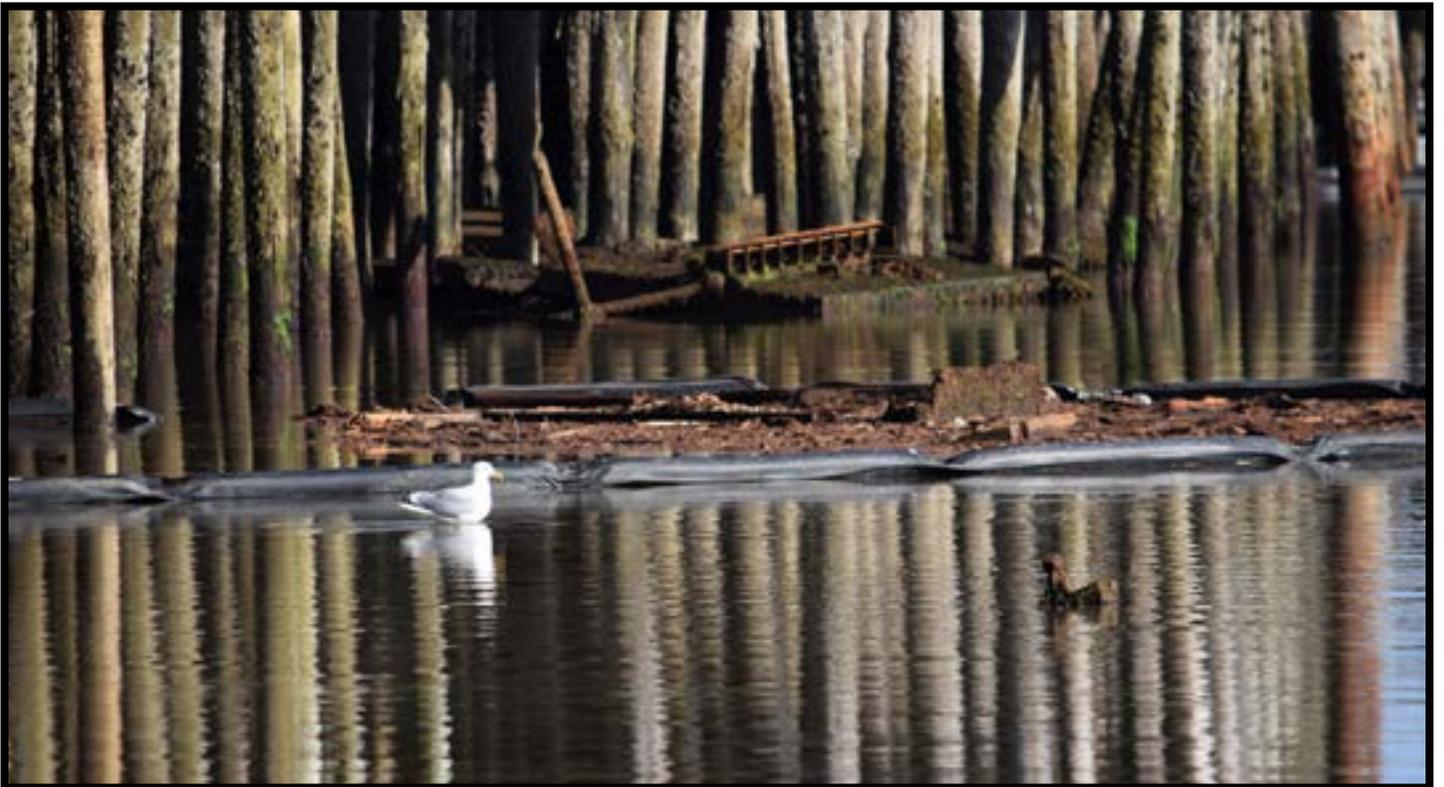
They compromised. And then they covenanted. They decided to "play the same game." Twenty-five years later, in 1985, they added one more Principle, to make it seven. You may already have heard of the seven Principles.

These are the rules that Unitarian Universalists agree to follow:

1. Each person is important.
2. Be kind in all you do.
3. We're free to learn together.
4. We search for what is true.
5. All people need a voice.
6. Build a fair and peaceful world.
7. We care for Earth's lifeboat.

When we promise to each other to follow the rules we make, we are covenanting with each other. Just like the kids on the playground playing tag.

Just like the Unitarians and Universalists did 50 years ago.





# Among Ourselves Among Ourselves Ourselves Among Ourselves

Technology (or poltergeists), got in the way of the **AMONG OURSELVES** column this month. Jane Lea, the person responsible for **AMONG OURSELVES**, submitted the April issue column before she left on vacation. But . . . it never arrived in the UUMH Newsletter's in-box, and since Jane and Jennifer are on a beach in Florida with UUMH South, Jane cannot re-submit it.

So let's take this moment as an opportunity to think about **AMONG OURSELVES** and what it means to us as a community.

The Pastoral Care Committee reflects and prays about all of us during their regular meetings, members who are sick, or members who are experiencing great joy. Great care is taken to maintain confidentiality of course, and after deciding what is appropriate to include, Jane writes up a warm and heartfelt letter to all of us sharing who **AMONG OURSELVES** needs our prayers, time, energy, attention.

It is a balancing act, knowing what and whom to include and, of course, the list serves to remind us that **AMONG OURSELVES** is a community for whom we all care. It reminds us to reach out to those on "the list" and to others, too, knowing we will be touched by the thoughtfulness of this community in our time of need or great joy, too.

We don't thank her very often--if at all--for this monthly work behind the scenes that involves keen observation, quiet devotion, diplomacy and understanding.

So...just **AMONG OURSELVES**, let's all say together (ready?)

[ready, set, go:]

**THANK YOU, JANE LEA, FOR ALL YOU DO!**

from the Board

from the Board



***Volunteer!***

***Start where you are.***

***Use what you have.***

***Do what you can.***

***~ Arthur Ashe***



As April winds bring us a new energy and the promise of spring, this has been a time of growth and looking toward the future for the Meeting House.

- In recent weeks members of the Meeting House Safety Committee and the Board have taken NARCAN Training. The Meeting House has also been equipped with NARCAN Kits to assist people in the event of an opiate overdose.

- The sound system that amplifies and mixes the audio from the Sunday Service, Music on Sundays, and other events in the sanctuary has been replaced with a new system that is more specifically tailored to the room as well as to our audio speakers. You may have noticed better audio quality since the system has been installed, both in person and in the video recordings posted to the web by our video team. This system should also provide better quality for the Assisted Listening System in the sanctuary. Watch for a fundraising event in June to help with the cost of this upgrade to our systems.

- In other news related to fundraising, the popular Talent / No Talent show returns on Saturday May 11th, so now is the time to brush up your act! Pencil it into your calendars! We are also planning to expand the Movies on the Lawn event to happen once a month on the first Mondays of

June, July August and September.

Happy spring everyone.

~Will Hildreth



*I was born in March. Growing up, it was a game to see whether March  
would come in like a lion or a lamb.*

*New England Marches underscore the wonderment behind that game.  
You never know if the blustery wind will bring more snow. Oh, is that a  
crocus I see?*

*April is the prize you win for playing the lion or lamb game.  
April means the brooks are bubbling, filled with the rush of melted  
snow.*

*The bulbs are beginning to peek through.  
The dirt smells rich. It is shedding its coat of winter and so are we.  
That first deep breath, chin raised, what gift are you giving me, April?  
What air! What joy!*

*Puddles, yes, there will always be rain. April cups its palms and fills  
them up and, whoosh, splashes you in the face with raindrops and mist.  
Time to jump and splash!*

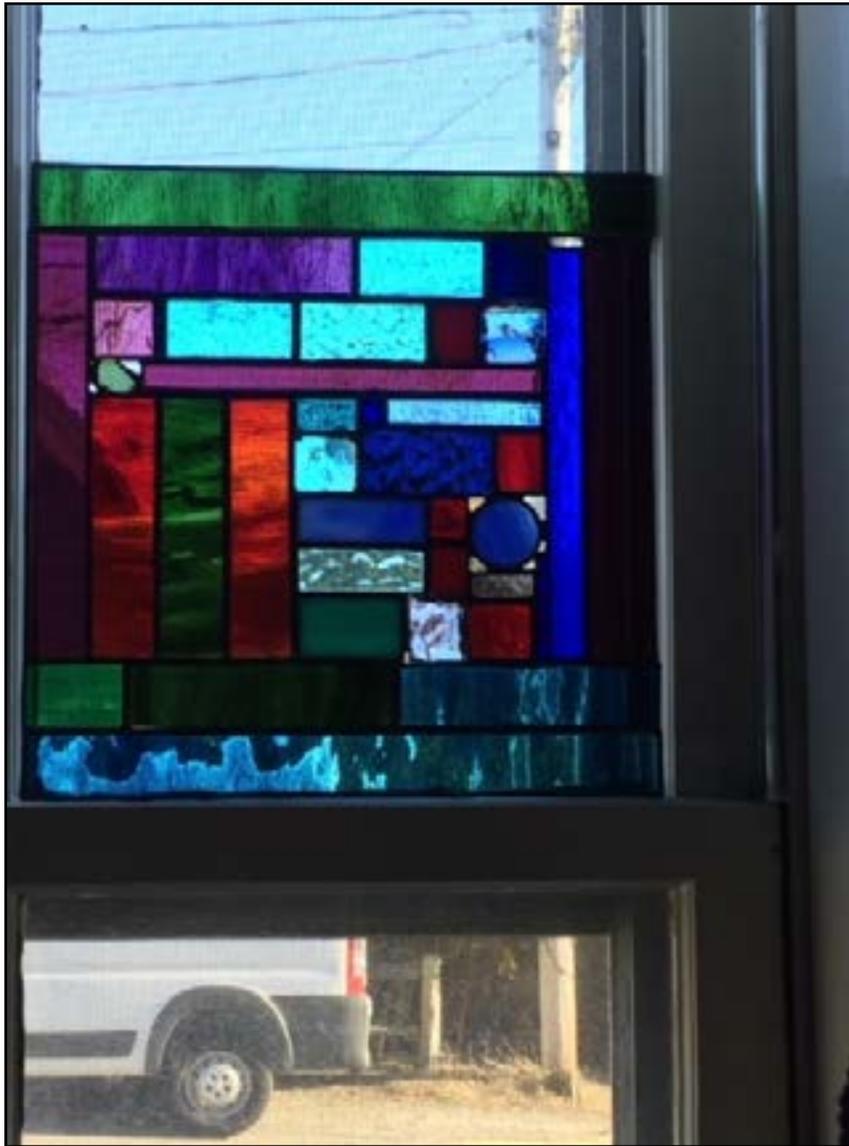
*And speaking of  
“splash”--*

*is there a better word in the whole English language?  
Splash says exactly what it is, with the sound and the rhythm perfectly  
fitting its action.*

*SPLASH!*

*Go do it!!*





Stained Glass and photo  
by April Baxter

“Glass, music, and France are a holy trinity for me... and when I am creating with glass, the three merge as one! It is transportive and illuminating!”

In the course of sending this in to the newsletter, and in this editor’s query as to whether she wanted me to crop out the truck and the sky from the photo, April realized: “Marty referred, in her photography workshop, to a synchronistic photo . . . the van outside the window is ‘transportive,’ and the glass is ‘illuminating.’ It hadn’t dawned on me until after I sent the photo to you.”



## Back Page The Meetinghouse News

Kathleen Henry, Editor

Submissions are welcomed  
and encouraged!  
Please submit written work,  
announcements,  
and artwork,  
by the 20th  
of the month  
to  
[meetinghousenews@gmail.com](mailto:meetinghousenews@gmail.com)