



Unitarian Universalist Village Church

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Jerry Offerman

January 2021 Theme: *Letting Go*



Mark's Trail

Rev. Mark Walz

For some of us, this last year has been heaven. For others, this last year has been hell. For most of us, it's been a bit of both.

Most folks who believe in hell believe that it is a punishment prepared for someone else, not themselves. And those who believe in heaven are confident that it will be what they want it to be.

No one likes to be completely cut off from what gives them comfort, joy, and peace of mind. But the introverts among us appreciated not having most every conversation dominated by extroverts. They found time to for their favored pursuits, or projects they had set aside for a more convenient time. This year provided them a little bit of heaven. A pause.

For the extroverts among us, it was a time to redirect their energies, to find new avenues of obsession or expression. it felt like an unrequested time out. An unfamiliar blip in time.

Some of us played more golf and pickle ball, others read more, tried new recipes, or walked our village trails.

There was a 2020 BC (before Covid), And it's nice to speculate what our world will be like when the vaccines have been distributed, and we find a new normal together.

Hindsight will truly be 20-20. We can decide what was heaven and what was hell. What we need to keep that was good and what to dispense with that was just awful. The future is ours to create, and our church is ready for a new beginning, built on your acquired wisdom. Happy new year!



From the President

Warren Searls

The New Year

In this past year we have been confronted with something many of us have not experienced for a long time – separation. Perhaps many have never experienced it at least not to this extent. Even in times of war we've had shoulders to cry on or a shoulder to offer. I hope we have all learned to appreciate the hugs and handshakes of our relatives, friends, neighbors and acquaintances. It is important to keep a good countenance. Find things to smile about. Giving and getting smiles is good for you.

On Christmas Eve many of us met at UUVC for hot chocolate, cookies and even a dash of peppermint schnapps. It was good to see so many turn out. There was however, something missing – the warmth of a smile from a friendly face on a cold winter night. Everyone was doing their part to stop the spread of Covid-19 by wearing masks, avoiding physical contact and freezing outside in the 34 degree temperature.

I have a piece of advice for you should you ever have the opportunity for hot chocolate, and cookies outdoors in freezing weather. Do not take off your gloves. While one hand is warm holding the hot chocolate the other hand is getting close to suffering from frost bite. When I was growing up in Northern Illinois I knew how to put a glove on with one hand and my teeth while ice skating. I have lost two of those skills along the way, but I still have most of my teeth.

If you will attend a UUVC gathering on Zoom, I promise you big smiles from your UUVC friends.

"From the President" continued on Page 2



Events

Dee Offerman &
Stephanie Hubbard

Happy New Year! 2020 has been a year of challenges. In the past, the members and friends of our church have enjoyed our traditional Soup Supper following the Christmas Eve service. It has always been a time to celebrate the Christmas season, enjoy visiting with family and friends, and of course taste the many delicious soups and the special desserts all lovingly made.

This year has been different in many ways. The Events Committee planned a Christmas Eve event outside. We gathered to enjoy Christmas music, hot chocolate, and cookies. We also enjoyed each other's company and laughed at the ugly Christmas Sweaters and costumes.

We are not planning an event in January because of the winter weather and the fact that we want to keep everyone healthy and safe. This winter, while we are patiently awaiting our vaccinations think of Frederick from the children's book by Leo Lionni. While the other mice were gathering food for the winter, Frederick was gathering sun rays, colors, and words. Think back during this winter of the colors and warmth of spring, summer, and fall. Think back about all of the fun events that we have shared and think ahead of everything that is to come.

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021!!!



Adult Education

Salli Forbes

In January, there will be several education offerings—the first classes of two new courses, a book sharing session, and the first session in a series of discussions about humanism. Debbie Bostick and Patty Dacus will lead the Spiritual Practice course. Patty Dacus will teach the Articulating Your Faith course. Rev. Walz will lead a session for sharing books we have read. Warren Searls and Meg Koziar will lead a series of discussions about humanism, titled Good Without God. Check the UUVC Office emails for details on these offerings.

~From the President , Continued from p 1

Stay safe, be well, keep a social distance and occasionally look up on a clear winter night to appreciate this small blue dot on which we live and the greatness of vastness.

The New Year will be what you make of it! It's yours to do with it what you will.

Thinking will not overcome fear but action will.

W. Clement Stone



Green Team

Janet Holt

2021 is here at last and like many of you, I'm more than happy to see 2020 in my rear-view mirror. What a stressful year it was! But as we turn (or click) a fresh calendar page into view, it's time for us to look forward and renew our resolve to live more sustainable lives. The most important resolution we can make is to stop thinking *recycling* and start thinking *precycling*.

Here are **5 suggestions to prime the pump of your creativity**:

1. Challenge yourself to see how long you can go without buying anything new.
2. Before buying anything, ask yourself these questions: Do I need this? Or just want this? How will this purchase be disposed of when it has reached the end of its use? Is this something I can make from what I already have?
3. Find substitutes for meat and dairy. Animal agriculture accounts for at least half of greenhouse gasses.
4. Avoid single use plastic like it's toxic—because it is.
5. Can't find what you want in sustainable packaging? Learn to make it. (Yes, you can.)

Here's to a happier, healthier, greener, new year!

A setback is a setup for a comeback.

T.D. Jakes



Music Notes

John Leisenring

Another MUSIC ON BARCELONA concert is planned for later in the month of January, and this one will be a reprise of the wonderful performance we heard some two plus years ago – Ricko Donovan with his electric and acoustic guitars plus his hammer dulcimer. It will, of course, be a virtual concert, and you’ll see and hear on the last Sunday in January. Worship services will once again be virtual, and members of the choir will sing various hymns in hopes that you’ll join in. You’ll be at home – what could possibly go wrong?

Love is Friendship set to music

Jackson Pollock



Pastoral Care Ministry

Court Mathey

We are deeply saddened by the death of UUVK Member, Janine Betscheider. Others have been ill lately but there is no one whom we know in a serious health situation now.

The Holiday Gift Group organized by Duckie Berkley, Becky Hamilton and Kim Townsan have been bringing light and spirit to us. The delivery (by Elves) of soup-making kits is deeply appreciated. There have been, and will continue to be, other niceties by the Events group and many others from our church family. We continue our efforts to defeat the possible loneliness of being apart for now.

Best wishes for the New Year, stay safe and healthy.



Janine Betscheider

June 28, 1946

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December 19, 2020



Membership Snippets

Veronica Zuege

Congratulations to Steve and MaryAnn Rittenmeyer for 15 years of membership. We are so grateful for their presence!

You don’t need me to reiterate that this year has been a tough one. I feel like I have been in hibernation! As you do, I miss seeing our UUVK family in person on Barcelona. We have lost some members this year and will miss them forever. And now, with the arrival of the vaccine, 2021 looks promising for us to gather again and resume all the celebrations together. We have some wonderful new members and friends, some who have “jumped right in” to make our connections stronger, our community better.

For the most part, the Membership Team has been rather dormant. Brenda Tirrell has made sure that everyone is secure in a neighborhood network and Pam Harrison always keeps our UUVK Member/Friend file up to date. Be assured that the rest of us are still here and ready for action when it is safe to do so.

Please do stay safe, be well and look for joy.

Christmas Soup Elves



Photo: Kim Townsan

First there were turkeys, now elves and reindeer! December's “stay in touch” project was soup in jar. Two of our elves, Pam Harrison and Jean Campbell at the elf workshop, and three delivery elves — Michelle Mendez and Stephanie Hubbard with help from our littlest elf, Kennedy. Thanks to our wonderful volunteers who assembled and delivered — Dee Offerman, Alana Clegg, Sam Stout, Nancy Baumgartner. A special shout out to our lead elves, Ducky Berkley and Becky Hamilton...who found a vegan recipe and all the ingredients!

Many thanks to all.



Social Justice

Sue Loberg

Our congregation is just simply the best! We raised \$4,100 in our November Share collection enabling us to provide a wonderful Christmas for 6 local families. The UUVc elves were busy putting together the Christmas Baskets which they delivered on December 18th. Families received all the items for a Christmas meal, and a \$200 gift card. We also helped Santa with a bag of gifts for each child. We received a thank you Christmas card from one of the families. It's as follows: "This special time of year, there's LOVE in the air, JOY in every heart, and MAGIC in all we share. Christmas fills my spirit with gratitude for the people in my life- especially AMAZING people like you.....Thank you all for a wonderful Christmas."

Let's keep the joy and love in our hearts as we tackle 2021.



Can you name these UUVc masked Christmas elves???



Photo: Kim Townsan



Dispute Mediation

Cloe Bayer

The Dispute Mediation Committee stands ready to assist members and friends in resolving conflicts which affect their life in the church. For more information click [HERE](#).

Contact Cloe Bayer: 922-3810

cloebayer29@sbcglobal.net

or

Steve Rittenmeyer:915-0575

sd-rittenmeyer@wiu.edu



Treasurer's Report

Kim Townsan

Thank you ... although we have been unable to meet in person for the first 6 months of our fiscal year, the commitment to UUVc's financial well being continues by our members and friends. While pledge income is running \$5,000 under budget, our lower operating expenses have enabled us to still show net income of \$15,504. Thank you for your contributions!

I have had several folks ask "if my check got there". We are only doing deposits twice a month. So if you have sent in a check in the first half of the month, look for it to clear by around the 20th. If it was sent in the latter part of the month, it should clear by the 7th of the following month.

Reports for your contributions to UUVc's operating, building and Share will be sent out via email by January 15. Later in the month, I will provide pledge status updates to anyone who had made a pledge to the Operating or Building Fund pledge drives.

While We've Been Away...



Photo: Kim Townsan

Our new ramp and railing has been completed! Many thanks to Tom Tirrell for all his leadership and efforts in getting this project in place. Need for accessibility from our back parking lot was one of the items resulting from our 2018 Security and Safety Recommendation Report. Tom took the lead in the implementation of the recommendations which included a ramp out of the back of the Sanctuary, and additions to lighting and fire alarms.

Forget what hurt you, but never forget what it taught you.

Shannon L. Alder

About UUVC

UUVC Website: <http://www.uuvc.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/>

Sermons: www.uuvc.org/messages-and-sermons.html

UUVC Principles

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Birthdays

1/1 Loren Loberg
1/1 Rhiannon Zerbe
1/4 Marie Welch
1/7 Alex Perez
1/10 Patrick Ransom
1/16 Pam Harrison
1/23 Susan Johannsson
1/27 Ann Haase
1/27 Gerald Wheeler
1/28 Carl Ford
1/29 Merrill Clark
1/29 Thomas Lovely
1/30 Nancy Unowsky
1/31 Lee Duckfield

Anniversaries

1/8 Toby & Mark Hamilton
1/18 Sam & Joe Stout
1/19 Lorraine Ridley & Glenn Calloway
1/21 Nola & Dennis Abraham
1/22 Kandy & Ken Shelton

Some of us think holding on makes us strong, but sometimes it is letting go.

Herman Hesse

If you want to move forward, you need to let go of the past that drags you down.

Amit Ray

Christmas Gathering

UUVC lights up in the midst of Covid-19 darkness



Photo: Kim Townsan