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## WORSHIP SERVICES

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**November Theme: ATTENTION**

**Sun., Nov 10, 9 & 11:15 a.m.**  
*Ambushed into Attention*

French poet and mystic Simone Weil wrote, "Attention is the only faculty of the soul which gives us access to God." Weil considered paying attention as prayer. With Veterans Day, thinking of the service members and veterans in our community and our lives, we turn our thoughts to wonder how service and sacrifice connect to attention: what is gained, what is lost. Veteran **Rev. Rebekah Savage** welcomes other veterans and/or their families to wear or bring something connected to their service.

Special music by **Justin Fumia**, piano.

**First Fifteen**—Three to four Sundays a month, all ages\* join in worship in the Sanctuary for the "First Fifteen" minutes, after which those in K through 5th grade follow their teachers to their classrooms. Parents of K through 3rd grade are asked to sign their children out from classes ten minutes after the end of worship; children in 4th grade and up will be dismissed to find their parents at the end of class. \*Nursery care for infants—4-year-olds is available during the entire service in Building 3, Room 33.

*(continued on page 2)*

# Quest

*The Newsletter of the  
Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of Rockville:  
A Welcoming Congregation*

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***Lifelong Spiritual Discovery Beloved Community A Just World***

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Volume LXIII, Number 3  
November 6, 2019

Editor & Publisher:  
Adrian L. H. Graham

### *In the Interim...*

*by the Rev. Dr. Linda Olson Peebles*



The theme of the month of November is "Attention"—and I have been asked to bring to the congregation's attention some of the work which is being undertaken as part of the interim time between the departure of Rev. Strauss and the calling of your next settled minister.

Key tasks of the interim time are for you, the congregation, to have conversations to learn or be reminded of:

- your UUCR history
- your unique identity and values
- the ways you can connect with each other and with partners in the wider world.

To help you in this process, a small group of dedicated members has agreed to serve as an "Interim Task Team". They will be facilitating "conversation circles" with committees and small groups in the church. Look for an opportunity to share in one of the 30-minute conversation circles, if you haven't had a chance already. A session are scheduled for November 10 after both services, and we even plan some Zoom video chat conversation circles\*!

The **Interim Task Team** members are Dana Alzouma, Jill Asman, Jon Facemire, Michael Mignano, Jen Pong, and Ellen Rohan.

*(continued on page 5)*

*Quest* deadline: Thursday, **November 21, 2019** at 8:00 p.m.,  
for mailing on **December 4, 2019.**  
Email to [quest@uucr.org](mailto:quest@uucr.org)

# Quest

Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of Rockville  
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## Staff

Interim Senior Minister:

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Associate Minister: Rev. Rebekah A. Savage

Director of Religious Education: Carla Miller

Director of Music: Sarah Jebian

Director of Communications & Membership:

Adrian L. H. Graham

Church Administrator: Donna Taylor

RE & Youth Assistant: Aiden Chernikoff

Pianist: Justin Furnia

Building Sexton: Justin Onyeador

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*(Worship Services continued from page 1)*

**Sunday, November 17, 9:00 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.**

*Paying Attention to Each Other*

We welcome new members into the congregation, and **Rev. Dr. Linda Olson Peebles** reflects on the meaning of joining in community and finding ways to be in relationship. Our special musical guests are **Laura Weiss**, music director from the UU Congregation of Fairfax, VA, and **Catalyst**, a vocal group she conducts.

**First Fifteen**—see above.

**Sunday, November 24, 9:00 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.**

*Paying Attention to What Is Being Created*

This multigenerational service of Thanksgiving will use bread-making as a metaphor for the importance of all of us to pay attention to the seeds we plant, the grains we grind, the dough we mix and let rise to shape and bake. When creation happens in community, we give thanks and share the bread we bake (which we will do!). The choir is singing two beautiful anthems, and **Revs. Rebekah and Linda and DRE Carla Miller** offer their thoughts and prayers.

The **UUCR Choir** will sing; **Justin Furnia**, piano.

**Multigenerational Service**—All\* gather together in the Sanctuary for this service. \*Nursery care for infants—4-year-olds is available during the entire service in Building 3, Room 33.

**December Theme: AWE**

**Sunday, December 1, 9:00 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.**

*A Season of Awe*

This first Sunday of our “Awe” monthly theme, our services will be led by Worship Associates **Cynthia Shires-Thurston, Ginny Folsom, and Marie Reed**.

We are thrilled to have very special music offered by **HALO**, Barbershop’s first International African American Quartet Competitor’s, which includes UUCR member **Niambi Powell. Justin Furnia**, piano.

**Chalice Chapel**—On the first Sunday of each month, children in K through 5th grade gather in Founders Hall for worship where they will sing, share, and create together. Nursery care for infants—4-year-olds is available during the entire service in Building 3, Room 33.

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## FAITH FORMATION

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### *Reflections . . . Family Faith Formation*

by Carla Miller, Director of Religious Education



#### **Paying Attention to Mealtime Gratitude**

That to which we give our attention will grow. Thanksgiving clearly offers an opportunity to pause and pay attention to our gratitude. And every day offers us this—three times a day! Meals are a natural time to pause for a moment of gratitude, even one mindful moment, one deep breath, and a silent “thank you,” nourishes a grateful, more generous spirit.

For families with children, shared mealtimes bring the added gift of connecting us to one another. Yet in a culture that often pushes us forward rather than encouraging us to pause, developing such a practice requires intention and a little effort. Simply getting the meal on the table with young children may seem like challenge enough. Perhaps a table grace can encourage us to center ourselves and be more present to one another, feeding ourselves and our children in both body and spirit. Some UU parents may be uncomfortable with the language of graces they learned growing up or from not having this practice at all. These hesitations fade when we find a language and practice we can embrace and enjoy as a family.

Here is one resource for **Table Graces** (<https://tinyurl.com/uucr-table-graces>) that are family-friendly and easy to recite by heart, though you may develop your own which come more authentically and grow organically within your family. That to which we pay attention, grows—including our grateful connection to the earth and to one another.

Another practice to nourish the spirits of our children and of our family this month is “Candletime,” which Joan Keith shares in the reflection below.

#### **One Small Candle Casts a Little Light**

by Joan Keith

Candletime is a secular celebration held between November 1 (the day after Halloween) and the day before American Thanksgiving. It was created by Magda Pecsénye in the late 2000s as a reaction to the encroachment of the Winter Holiday season on Thanksgiving and Halloween. Designed to be flexible and to fit into as many traditions as possible, Candletime is a way of holding space in the time between the chaos of Halloween and intensity of Thanksgiving.

There are no fixed rules for celebrating Candletime, beyond the wish to take a moment to breathe. Most people who honor Candletime take a few minutes to light a candle (real or electric) at the end of each day. How long the candle stays lit and what other traditions, religious or secular, that may be added are entirely up to the participant. That flexibility allows for inventiveness and a chance to create tradition in a whole new way.

Below are observations on my family’s celebrations of Candletime. I cannot speak to how others keep the festival, but here are some of the ideas that we have used over the last several years:

As a Modern Pagan, Candletime is a perfect addition to the standard 8 festivals of the Wheel of the Year. For my family, Halloween (or Samhain in the Old Tradition) is a festival about family and the ancestors. It is also the end of our religious year and the start of our winter’s practice of looking inward as individuals and as a family. We walk the labyrinth at Samhain has a symbol of our commitment to inward spiritual growth through the winter months and Candletime is an excellent follow up to reinforce that practice.

*(continued on page 7)*

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## HARVEST BAZAAR

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# HARVEST BAZAAR

FLEA MARKET, QUILT RAFFLE, FOOD, & FUN!

ENJOY GREAT MUSIC, FOOD,  
HOLIDAY SHOPPING,  
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**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville**

For more info & photos →



*We will continue to accept donations November 6-8!*

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## SHARING THE MINISTRY

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*(In the Interim continued from page 1)*

Throughout November, the Board of Trustees will be learning about what we hear from everyone about what you love at UUCR, what your thoughts are about the Sunday morning schedule, and what kind of ministry you value. In December and January, we'll be having conversations with leaders about what the conversations and a survey tell us, and will be offering some recommendations for going forward. By late winter, we will also have a clearer picture of the congregation's vision for ministry, and will create the pathway for that journey.

During this interim time, some of us may feel anxiety, since the community's work is in process and answers may take some time to become clear. Breathe deep, as we live through this time together, and rest assured that all will be well. Pay attention, deep attention, to one another. Listen to your heart and the hearts of those with whom you are in covenant. See the love, the hopes, the compassion; and honor the concerns, the disappointments, and the sorrows. Paying attention is the sincerest form of respect. May that be a gift we give to one another this year as we practice courageous love together.

*Rev. Dr. Linda Olson Peebles*

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### **\*Don't Miss an "Interim Conversation Circle"**

November 10 - You are invited to join in a Sunday morning conversation circle with one of the members of the Interim Task Team. Choose Middle Hour or following second service. They have three questions which we are asking all UUCR congregants as part of taking a "snapshot" of people's thoughts about the church and ministry. The session should take only about 30 minutes.

If you will be unable to attend either of the Sunday morning in-person sessions, you are invited to a scheduled Zoom meeting on November 6 at 7:30 p.m. Visit [tinyurl.com/UUCR-interimchat-1](https://tinyurl.com/UUCR-interimchat-1) at the scheduled meeting time.

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### **Attending to Community**

*by Adrian Graham, Director of Communications & Membership*

*"If you build it, [they] will come."*

Many people report that what brings them to Unitarian Universalist congregations is the search for community—for a place of belonging, as we explored with last month's spiritual theme. But what is community? It doesn't just happen all by itself; we have to work at it, and build it, and sustain it. We give to our communities as we are able, and in return we are nurtured by them. We pay attention, and we give attention, to those things we find meaningful and important. We are mutually supportive.

How can *you* attend to the building of the community that is UUCR? One way that you can co-create community is to join us on **New Member Sunday—November 17**—as we celebrate our newest members! We will welcome them in worship services that morning, and have a chance to get to know them during the reception during Middle Hour in Founders Hall. You are all invited.

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## SHARING THE MINISTRY

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### Queer Poetry Slam

by Rev. Rebekah Savage

In honor of National Coming Out Day, Cynthia Shires-Thurston and I hosted as an Action Auction event a “Queer Poetry Slam”. It was a smashing success, with a night of reading poetry, good food, and even better company! Dominic Russoli took our breath away with his original poem that we’d like to share with you here:

*Young LGBT people, be thankful you live now.  
You may not have it great but you got it good.  
When I was seven I knew I was gay but there was no gay where I lived.  
I had no TV role models, no gay friends, no gay support from anyone.  
When I was 10 I was beaten up for being queer and no one cared. Not the school,  
Not the police, not my family, no one.  
When I was 15 I had sex for the first time and the boy threatened to kill me if I told anyone.  
The next day He ignored me and called me fag in front of his friends.  
When I was 19 I joined the military and for the next 22 years I could never say to anyone I worked with  
“I’m gay”  
When I was 23 I had friends who stated to get sick. Really sick. Then my lovers and friends started  
dying. I worried I would too.  
When I was 25 I fell in love with a man and tried to start a life together but, the laws in My state said two  
men couldn’t rent a one bedroom apartment.  
When I was 30 my friends were still dying. My 70 year old mother cried to me on the phone that she had  
lost four great friends that year. I had lost 14.  
When I was 39, 22 years after I joined the military, I retired still never having said “I’m gay” to anyone I  
worked with.  
When I was 40 my partner and I (he wasn’t allowed to be my husband) adopted a child but I couldn’t be a  
part of it. The laws wouldn’t allow two men to adopt.  
When I was 43 we had to move out of my state and the home I loved so we could both be legal  
parents. The state we lived in wouldn’t allow two men to adopt the same child.  
When I was 47 I had to explain to my grade school son what being gay was as his school mates were  
teasing him for having two dads.  
When I was 51 I was finally allowed to marry the man I loved. We had already been together 25 years.  
We had spent thousands of dollars in Legal fees trying to replicate what we got with a \$20 marriage  
license.  
When I was 52 my husband finally got a military dependent ID. Over the years he missed out on getting  
military medical care, life insurance and travel privileges.  
Next month I turn 60.  
I say again.  
Young LGBTQ people, be thankful you live now.  
You may not have it great but you got it good.  
Oh, and one more thing you have that I didn’t. You have people like me who’ve been around a long time  
to support you.*



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## SHARING THE MINISTRY

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### Thinking of You

*compiled by Judy Eisenhauer and Staff on behalf of the Pastoral Care Team*

**Gaynelle Campbell** is mourning the death of her father, Don Snipes, who died on September 24 at age 96.

**Polly Campbell** congratulates her daughter, Ellen Campbell, on her successful completion of the 40-mile hike from the Maryland/Pennsylvania border to Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. The yearly hike is sponsored by the Mountain Club of Maryland. Polly celebrates her 100th birthday in the coming weeks! Please wish her a happy birthday and many more.



We congratulate newcomers **Dennis Jackson** and **Jennifer O'Boyle** on their November 1 wedding, officiated by Rev. Rebekah Savage.

Please contact **Judy Eisenhauer** with any joys, concerns, or accomplishments you would like to share in this column.

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*(Candletime continued from page 3)*

We use our Candletime celebration to help mark the shortening of the days and the encroaching darkness leading up to the Winter Solstice. Because Candletime has the same kind of progressive feeling of Christian Advent, we tend to extend our candlelit time each day as the nights lengthen. We eat by candlelit on nights when we have family meals and often do family activities by candle light on weekend evenings. We read seasonal stories and myths about the Hero/ine's journey, especially those that involve journeys through the underworld. We also discuss the new and wonderful things that we want to welcome into our lives at Winter Solstice, helping to set that intention in our minds moving forward. The Winter Holiday season still creeps into our Candletime, but we do our best to leaven the preparation with some reality. As a knitter who makes many holiday gifts, I often use our candlelit time to work on projects I'm gifting, passing the quiet, peaceful energy into the project and hopefully to the recipient.

Because we are a musical family and enjoy music as ritual, we sing as we light our candles. Two of our favorite candle lighting songs are "[Shadow](#)" by The October Project from their amazing album of secular chants and rounds call *The Book of Rounds* and "[One Small Candle](#)" by Jessica Radcliffe from *Beautiful Darkness: Celebrating the Winter Solstice*. Both songs are easy to learn for both kids and adults—and they're fun to sing!



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## SHARING THE MINISTRY

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### The Art On Our Walls

by Liliane Blom and Sharrill Dittmann, Aesthetics Committee

Let us celebrate the arrival of autumn with some beautiful landscapes by artists Leslie Kraff and Cecelia M. Laurendeau! While each artist paints in her own style, Leslie and Cecelia share “our universal connection and sense of belonging that is ever present in our earthly environment.”



[Leslie Kraff](#) has been painting for 20 years. She has studied locally at the Corcoran, the Yellow Barn, the Capital Arts Network, and with other teachers. Although she finds inspiration everywhere, she usually focuses on an aspect of the natural world. Her current work is centered on paintings featuring trees as a metaphor illustrating the interconnectedness of all life.

[Cecelia M. Laurendeau](#) is a lifelong painter and photographer. Her paintings are inspired by visions of her photographs. In nature, Cecelia sees the stillness of the landscape, the greatness of the oceans, and the journey of the seasons. She has studied under several painters and photographers.

Our artists will host a **reception and presentation** between services on November 10 in Founders Hall. Please join them to learn more about their work and their inspirations.

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## SOCIAL JUSTICE

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True attention  
always comes  
at a cost,  
because  
real looking  
always results  
in you not  
being able to  
look away.



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## SHARING THE MINISTRY

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### Spotlight on...the Attention Span of a Goldfish

by Sarah Jebian, Director of Music

I once heard that goldfish have an attention span of approximately 3 seconds. The man who told me this fun fact thought it would be nice to buy his goldfish a large tank and a lovely castle to go in it, so that as his fish swam around the tank, it'd constantly be amazed by seeing this wonderful castle. (Imagine the fish swimming) "Hey look! A castle!".... 1...2...3..."Hey look! A castle"....1...2...3...



I am a goldfish. I've been trying to write this article all day but my attention keeps getting pulled into different directions. First, I thought I'd write about one of the contemporary classical composers of color whose music will be featured in an upcoming service. My idea was that composers of color are not typically the first ones to jump to mind when you think of 'classical music' and that is, in part, because they had so much difficulty capturing the attention of the music publishers and recording studios. But then, as I was researching a particular composer—[Rosephanye Powell](#)—it triggered the thought that I still hadn't confirmed music for a different upcoming service and that task needed my attention more urgently.

So I completed that one task. And then I responded to several emails that caught my attention when I was confirming the aforementioned service. This led me down the rabbit hole of YouTube, where I spent some time listening to different versions of one of the pieces you'll be hearing in the next couple of weeks to see which arrangement felt 'the most right' to bring into our arrangement of the music so I could give guidance to a guest musician joining us on November 3. And then I remembered that I needed to finish the vocals on an arrangement for that same service. And that reminded me that I still had music to learn and chords to write for THIS Sunday.

So I got to work on all those things. Feeling good. Crossing things off the to-do list. Feeling super productive and then "ping". A new email. And again, my attention was pulled away on a completely different track. And oh yes, I meant to email this person, and those people have been waiting on a response and gosh, what time is it? Ack! I still need to complete the rehearsal plan for tonight's choir practice. Oh dear. Ugh! I haven't even begun to write this month's *Quest* article and it's due by 8:00 p.m. tonight. And so here I am, full-circle, right back where I was when I started my work day—staring at a blank sheet of paper with no capacity to give it my full attention.

The thing is, my brain is always set to rapid-fire like this and I struggle sometimes to keep my attention focused where it needs to be. Music helps. When I sing, the music doesn't allow me to be anywhere but right here, right now, in this song. If I allow my attention to wander, I'll forget my words or I'll miss the entrance on that one measure that I can never seem to hear correctly. Music slows my heartbeat and calms my breath...and my mind. Unless it's Rachmaninoff. Or Journey. Journey is my favorite band ever. I've seen them a bunch of times and they still rock as hard now as they did 20 years ago. I got to go backstage to meet the band once. It was AMAZING! Hey look! A castle!

Sigh.

*Sarah*

## *Quest*

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### **Unitarian Universalist Principles**

As a member congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Association, we covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- 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.

In addition to these Seven Principles, the members of UUCR voted to support the UUA in moving toward incorporating a proposed Eighth Principle that may be as stated below:

- Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

### **Our Mission and Vision**

The mission and vision of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville is to  
*Practice Courageous Love.*

### **Our Values**

Lifelong Spiritual Discovery ~ Beloved Community ~ A Just World