

---

---

## WORSHIP SERVICES

---

---

**March Theme: COMMITMENT**

**Sun., March 21, 10:30 a.m.**

*Holy Redirect*

On this special Sunday, we will have a “Building the Future Together Fellowship Gathering” at 10:30 a.m. This will be an interactive, fun event led by our **Board of Trustees** where we will share what we love about UUCR and what comes NEXT!

At 11:30 a.m. immediately following our time of fellowship, UUCR has partnered with our kin congregation in Ann Arbor, MI, for what we're calling a “Holy Redirect.” This music-centric service will provide us a moment to remember how powerful a force it can be when voices work together. This is a moment to affirm our own voices with joy, to invest them with love and acceptance, and breathe beauty into the world we've been given. Learn more about their Senior Minister, **Rev. Manish Mishra-Marzetti**, and Director of Worship Arts, **Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout**, as well as their congregation's other fabulous ministers and staff, and about the congregation itself on their website: [www.uuaa.org](http://www.uuaa.org). We in turn will welcome UUAA to worship with us on April 25!

**Virtual Gatherings**—Please visit [www.uucr.org/zoom](http://www.uucr.org/zoom) for details on how to participate in our online worship services, and for the schedule of our Faith Formation classes for children and youth.

*(continued on page 2)*

March 17, 2021

# Quest

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

---

---

*Lifelong Spiritual Discovery Beloved Community A Just World*

---

---

Volume LXIV, Number 2  
March 17, 2021

Editor & Publisher:  
Adrian L. H. Graham

## PROJECT PANDEMIC CONTINUES

*by the Rev. Dr. Rebekah A. Savage*

Dear Beloved UUCR Family,

We are so delighted to share with you this very special issue of *Quest*, devoted to sharing some of our stories of this unprecedented time. We wanted to capture the hardships, grief, and even the unexpected and welcomed surprises that our UUCR family is experiencing while we are still physically distanced but spiritually close. One of the most welcomed and unexpected surprises of this time for me was the Holiday Cookie delivery project for our cherished elders and others, inspired and led by Emily Untermeyer. From the many bakers of the treats to our special delivery angels to the beloved recipients of the holiday cookies, so much joy and love went into and was felt through this special outreach. UUCR continues to be a special place, as we are living into our call to make our spiritual community not about a place or building, but about who we are as a people and how we live out our values in the world. Even during a pandemic and as we are in mourning for so many people and our previous assumptions about life and what is important. If you have a pandemic story to share with us for the next issue of *Quest*, please email [quest@uucr.org](mailto:quest@uucr.org).

So, beloved UUCR kin, stay in touch with us, stay in touch with each other, and if you're struggling, please let us know (call or email me, or email [pastoralcare@uucr.org](mailto:pastoralcare@uucr.org)). We're here to hold and support you. And if you're taking a pause, we'll leave the light on and welcome you back with open arms and an open heart when it's time.



The *Quest* publication schedule is TBD due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One additional issue is planned this church year for publication in early summer.

Email queries and possible submissions to [quest@uucr.org](mailto:quest@uucr.org).

Ongoing UUCR updates available at [uucr.org/covid-19](http://uucr.org/covid-19).

# Quest

**Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of Rockville**  
100 Welsh Park Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850  
301-762-7666  
UUCR@UUCR.ORG  
WWW.UUCR.ORG

## Staff

Senior Minister:

Rev. Dr. Rebekah A. Savage

Ministerial Intern: Kirk Freeman

Ministerial Intern: Mathew P. Taylor

Director of Religious Education: Carla Miller

Director of Music: Sarah Jebian

Director of Communications & Membership:

Adrian L. H. Graham

Congregation Administrator:

JeKaren Olaoya

RE & Youth Assistant: Aiden Chernikoff

Technology & Communications Assistant:

Erin Dowridge-Rodney

Pianist: Justin Furnia

## Board of Trustees

Elsa Powel Strong, President

Elizabeth "Betsy" Wilder, Vice President

Brian Haugen, Secretary

Don Helton, Treasurer

Glenn Griffin

Larissa Johnson

Kendall Watson

Mary Carvajal, Immediate Past President

## Officers

Secretary: Brian Haugen

Treasurer: Don Helton

Assistant Treasurers: Eric Burch

Barbara Harrison

## Quest Staff

Editor-in-Chief/Coordinator: Adrian Graham

Desktop Publisher: Adrian Graham

*Quest*, the regular newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville, is published monthly at the UUCR office at 100 Welsh Park Drive, Rockville, MD 20850, and distributed without charge to members, guests, and friends.

Postage is paid at Rockville, MD.

All rights reserved.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Circulation Manager, *Quest*, 100 Welsh Park Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

(Worship Services continued from page 1)



## COMMITMENT

Our Spiritual Theme for the month of March

**Sunday, March 28, 10:30 a.m.**

*Say Yes*

Guess what? It's Membership Sunday and yes, we actually have Beloveds who have chosen to make UUCR their spiritual home—in the middle of a pandemic. Wow! They are saying YES to us. As author Brian Andreas reminds us, "Say Yes. Whatever it is, say yes with your whole heart, and simple as it sounds - that's all the excuse life needs to grab you by the hands and start to dance." In following our theme of "Commitment," how does saying YES give space for us to dance? Led by **Rev. Dr. Rebekah A. Savage** and **Adrian Graham**, Director of Communications & Membership.

**Virtual Gatherings**—Please visit [www.uucr.org/zoom](http://www.uucr.org/zoom) for details on how to participate in our online worship services, and for the schedule of our Faith Formation classes for children and youth.



**April Theme: BECOMING**

---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### Our Pandemic Experience

by Silvia Bolland

During this COVID year, my daughter Maria and I have been working and studying from home. We have seen a lot of each other! We grieve deeply the loss of our annual summer visit to Spain to see our relatives. Maria is sad that she has missed stage crew and her newly renovated school. On the good side, we have discovered the joy of hiking (even in winter!), board games, and tennis. Connecting to UUCR has been so very special this year. With the magic of video, I've been attending Sunday services, Vespers, Emerson's, Coming to the Table, and Dinners for 8. Maria keeps in contact with UUCR Middle Schoolers, sometimes with a book club or even playing games. I help out with the 4th/5th grade RE and that always puts a smile on my face. Some kids have a hard time connecting by video, but we still get to see everyone's personalities in their show-and-tells or when they choose Zoom backgrounds with family pictures or their dragon paintings (my favorite). One positive side of video connection is that we can keep in touch with families who have moved out of state. I loved making Halloween treats and then joining the video party with both kids and adults showing off their costumes. We also provided technical help for the virtual Pageant, which Barbara got out of her hat in amazing fashion. Kids can adapt to anything as long as we show them the way! One final word to thank Carla and Aiden because the little gift bags they sometimes leave at people's doors are truly a



### Pandemic Reflection

by Larissa Johnson

Luckily for Evan (my partner) and I - we bought a house in January 2020 - it was not something we had really planned for but came at the exact right time because it gave us the space we didn't know we were going to need for the Quarantine. Since both of us were now working from home, we needed our own spaces, and thanks to the new house we got it! And although we have a new home - NO ONE has seen it (other than like 5 friends) - no housewarming party, no backyard barbecues, nothing! That would be the hardest part, for a momma's girl like me, I am used to spending all holidays with family (or at least friends) and this year - that didn't happen at all and it was beyond tough. I miss hugs and I am not even a hugger!!!

I would have to say having control over my time [has been a gift] - granted I am usually in back to back to back meetings all day - but because I no longer have a commute...I have more time to do other things. I no longer wake up and go straight to work - I work out first, I meditate (I meditate - that's huge!!!), and I also write in my journal almost every day - these are all things I didn't have time to do before so I am grateful for the gift of time and reflection.

I am grieving the time lost with people - my grandmother is 85 years old and not being able to spend a holiday with her is beyond sad because who knows how many we have left so I have been missing the family times tremendously.

I love that I have been able to go to so many more services - no need to get dressed, heck even get out of bed!!! It has been amazing and I have learned so much and been able to experience more than any other year. And I love the First Fridays - what a blessing!!!

As someone who is highly allergic to cats, I have been told I can't/ shouldn't get them but alas I ignored everyone and am happy to welcome Josephine Robinett Biden Jr and Kamala Devy Harris into our home - these two sister kittens have warmed my heart and my life in a way I never expected and I am so grateful for them (and for naps).



---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### **Pandemic Poem**

*by John Mornini*

We should have done better. We could have excelled.  
That's the hardest part. Knowing we failed. From the start.  
That's the source of my "divine rage." That's why I agree with Valerie Kaur.  
Agree that we must declare what is obsolete. Determine what can be reformed.  
Reimagine what's incomplete.

Everyone has been warmed by fires we did not build.  
Everyone has drunk from wells we did not drill.  
We should do no less, says Mark Shields, for those we stand before.  
And together we can do so much more.  
And Amanda Gorman tells us to, "end this uncivil war."

And she proclaims, "...if nothing else, say this is true:  
That even as we grieved, we grew,  
That even as we hurt, we hoped.  
That even as we tired, we tried. . .(and) put our differences aside."

Divine rage and divine language stand side by side.  
The guard rails are holding, in spite of the friction.  
Spoken word and song keep me alive.  
I will continue to trust science, not fiction.



---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

### Pandemic Woes

by Viki Betancourt

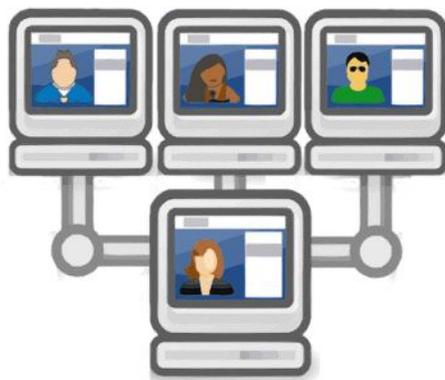
The most difficult aspect of living through this pandemic has been learning how to navigate our family relationships when we are all home and all grappling with different stressors. I live with my daughter and pre-teen granddaughter and though we love each other dearly, we are three fiercely independent females. It has been a challenge to constantly be conscious of each other and how we interact in these unusual times. In the beginning we were fine - the first four months had hiccups, but overall, we managed well. We learned how to let off steam without burning each other. We cooked new dishes, we cleaned out closets, we took advantage of the newly found commodity of time. My 92 year old mom was safely ensconced at my brother's home in Reston and safe from COVID.



The next four months got a bit tougher as we realized COVID had come to stay for a bit longer than expected. Again, we adapted. Through it all, though, we found joy in the outdoors - walking, biking, swimming - we could revel in the beauty of nature. That gift of rediscovering nature and the great outdoors has been magnificent! We decided to move my mom to assisted living and that was probably the hardest decision of my life. I know it was the correct decision, but she was very sad and confused. Her first quarantine really threw me for a loop - I could do nothing to help her.

The last four months have been really difficult. We all have felt trapped by different tensions/emotions. I moved out of our house and have been housesitting for a friend these last two months and it has been a welcome respite, albeit sad and a bit lonely. My mom has lost most of her memory and it is hard to visit her while not being able to comfort her physically. I am not sure how we will work together when I go home at the end of this month - another challenge.

However, UUCR virtual worship has been an anchor this whole year. I look forward to services every Sunday, have enjoyed some of the newer offerings (Friday music) and have marveled at the sheer talent in our congregation. The music makes me happy and the sermons have provided so much room for emotional exploration. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a member of Kirk's internship committee - what a joy to see his strength and humility as he navigates this new side of his world. UUCR has been a rock.



---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### Reflection

*by Tom & Stephanie Bozzo*

Like many others, our family has faced challenges and joys during the COVID-19 pandemic. We've tried to put a positive spin on it for our family by embracing the extra time together and the slowing down of our busy lives.

Unexpected gifts emerged from our time at home: connecting with our neighborhood community in a deeper way; exploring the nearby woods on daily walks; our kids independently forming a biking club complete with race maps, schedules, practices, and timed trials to occupy long summer days; not getting into the car for weeks at a time (!); not rushing anywhere or being late to anything; and observing our four children follow their hearts and develop new interests and hobbies. We've greatly appreciated staying connected with our UUCR community virtually. Attending service with young kids has never been easier!

Of course, the pandemic hasn't been without challenges as we ride the emotional rollercoaster of fear, uncertainty, loss, isolation, and anxiety not just from the pandemic, but all of the political and social justice issues of the last year. Despite the challenges, we remain hopeful that the future will bring about positive change... and a date night or some travel in the not-too-distant future.

### Physically Distanced, Yet Spiritually Close: Life in the Pandemic

*by Betsy Wilder*

Beyond our household, I see people through a computer screen or behind a mask. For basic communications purposes, it works. But I feel the loss. I miss the physical presence of people and their faces. And although I've always disliked big crowds, I miss little crowds – the people in a restaurant, or a movie theater, at a friend's house, or at UUCR. We're a gregarious species. There's just something about being around other people.

On the other hand, the gift of the pandemic has been time at home and fresh air for the planet. The lack of a commute has given me time for consistent exercise, and my carbon emissions have plummeted. I miss traveling, but the Earth is happy we're staying home. My daughter and I have afternoon tea together, do crosswords, binge watch TV.

Through the tumult of the pandemic, UUCR has been a constant. Our UU the Vote letter and card writing campaign gave me a way to practice our principles AND hang out via Zoom with amazing people. Being part of the Board and the Lay Ministry Council has introduced me to other wonderful, passionate people. Sunday mornings provide a time to be grounded in community, to be reminded of our 8 principles, and to be inspired.

As the pandemic subsides, we'll adjust to a new normal. We'll see each other in person again and we'll travel again. But we'll be more thoughtful about it. We'll reduce our emissions. We'll be more mindful of the value of being together. That's truly a gift.

### Reflections on 2020

*by Bre Hoff Rosenfeld*

2020 was filled with many challenges, but also many blessings. I am forever thankful that I have a job and that my family is well. I am an "essential worker", which secured my son a spot in the emergency day care. This gave him a comforting routine, continued education, and social interaction. We would set out every morning on completely empty roads, in what felt like the apocalypse, and arrived at a little pre-school sanctuary. We were able to have Ethan's 4th birthday party at school, and his family party on Zoom, providing him with some sense of normalcy.

I am a nurse practitioner and as I watched my fellow providers fall in NY and Chicago, I knew that it was my duty to go to work, but that I also might die in the process, so I made my will, discussed my end of life wishes, picked out a headstone and made peace with the world. I am so grateful that I am still here. We were able to slow down and evaluate our lives and made the decision to move back to our hometown, so Ethan can spend more time with his grandparents. Both parties are thrilled with this development.

I will miss this UUCR community so much, and I hope that our new UU community will be a welcoming place to raise our son. I will never forget the values and lessons that I learned here, and the kindness and love that I was shown in this congregation. Thank you all, bless you and be well.

---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### Reflections from UUCR Musicians

During the pandemic, UUCR's volunteer musicians have provided music for virtual services each Sunday. This has involved a learning curve for most; musicians cannot rehearse together in the traditional sense and have experienced the trials and errors of home recording. We asked some musicians to reflect on their experiences participating in virtual worship and living through these strange times.

#### **Julie Graf - WildBerry Jam, Sonaria**

WildBerry Jam has continued to create music during the pandemic, albeit through different means. As we could not rehearse together, we limited our pandemic repertoire to pieces we had performed in the past. Richard Gilbert would record the piano accompaniment and send it to me. I would record a backing track (piano and vocal), which I would send to the singers. From there, each singer recorded their vocal part while listening to the backing track on headphones. I then sent the piano and vocal recordings to my brother, who compiled the tracks into a single recording. After we settled on a mix, we recorded video of ourselves lip synching to the master mix. Finally, we sent the audio and video recordings to Sarah Jebian, UUCR's Director of Music, for use in virtual services. Each piece required planning, coordination, and the frustrating work of recording take after take, alone in a room with a smartphone or other recording device.

While it's been nice having projects to work on during the pandemic, I can't help but feel a sense of loss. I miss singing with my fellow Jammers together in the same room. I miss our check-ins at rehearsals and giggling through our mistakes. Now, we giggle (or curse) through recording mishaps – like the background sounds of a cricket chirping or the muted yowl of a cat. And of course, I miss seeing the faces of UUCR members as we sing, knowing that we're connecting with each other through music. I look forward to rehearsing – new music! – with my fellow Jammers and performing in person for all of you again sometime soon.

#### **Michael Holmes - Bonfire of the Mannakeys, UUCR Community Choir**

I have been serving as the coordinator for Bonfire, and we've been producing pieces for the service postludes, starting with our September postlude piece (I'm a Believer). We're doing distributed recording, where one of us produces a recording template for the other musicians to record to. The template gets replaced by the actual tracks that each of us submits separately. I've been collecting the individual tracks and creating the final mix, as well as setting schedules so that the tracks get done in a logical order. Our videos are then produced by either Sarah or Bronson Hoover. I'm impressed by what the other musicians are capable of, and I'm very grateful to have the chance to work with them!

Doing recordings has given each of us freedom to do multiple takes until we get it right, and as the audio engineer, I can correct little timing and other issues to arrive at a recording that may sound better than what we would be able to do in live performance. Still, I miss getting together with the others to rehearse and performing live at UUCR services. And of course, I miss choir rehearsals, in-person UUCR services, and all the UUCR events that have either gone away or gone virtual.

#### **Ginny Shires-Thurston - UUCR Community Choir, Sonaria**

I have enjoyed UUCR's virtual worship as the alternative to not seeing anyone in the congregation at all. Well, no, it's better than that: I am grateful to at least see other congregants and occasionally to converse with some. Thank you, Adrian, for greetings and announcements and you, Erin, for meeting rooms. I am grateful to experience the service - the music, the sermon, and the collection - albeit virtually. I am especially grateful for all the manipulations that allow me to sing with the choir - bless you, Sarah and electronic friends! - and I don't have to be at church by 8:15 a.m. to warm up! It is difficult not to be able to rehearse together or to be working on how well we blend, but most Sundays you can see how well (or not) this old dog has learned new tricks! And I am grateful.

*(continued on page 8)*

---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

*(Reflections from UUCR Musicians continued from page 7)*

### **Glenn Griffin - UUCR Community Choir**

I came to the UUCR choir in 2009 hoping for music and community. I was welcomed into a music community dedicated to fostering UU worship and values. At sublime moments, I felt music grow to become art, and community expand into love. Now, COVID-19 has caused many changes, some surprisingly positive. We used to rehearse as a group, seldom hearing individual voices, but sort of subconsciously adjusting under the guidance of our excellent directors. Now, we can't rely on the director or others in our section for direct feedback. We have heard our individual recorded voices – for better and for worse. Through lectures and demonstrations – including video of a singer's larynx - Sarah is teaching us how our voices work and how we can hear ourselves and improve. Each of us is learning to follow the director's guidance over a video link and to take more responsibility for our own singing. I'm not feeling much art in singing my own individual part, but I hear something amazing after Sarah has blended 50-some voices together. And we continue to build stronger beloved community - what UUCR is about. But, make no mistake, I look forward to returning to in-person conversations, rehearsals, meetings, and services with UUCR.

### **Reflections on Pandemic**

*by Lisa Reed*

It's been a strange, surreal eleven months.

From day to day, I feel I am almost unaware of the passing of time because each day is so much like the day before. I work and live entirely from home. It's like spending a year on hold waiting for someone to pick up the phone.

But this is an illusion. From week to week, month to month, dramatic events have occurred – out there, in that larger universe of public space, that I mostly read about and watch via on-line streaming ...there has been massive economic dislocation and economic loss as the country tries to stop the spread of the virus; there have been encouragingly diverse protests following one too many unjust deaths of people of color at the hands of police; there has been an attempted subversion of our elections and the possible implosion of a major political party; there has been a realization of (and then forgetting of) who we depend upon for basic needs in our lives; there has been the panorama of dysfunction in our government institutions: 500,000 deaths and counting – and yet I know none of them more than in passing. I live in this safe bubble of privilege. It has been surreal. From the safety of my home, I do what I can but I feel I'm ineffective when I want to “be the change I want to see”. When I need community most – to join in protest, to gather in solidarity, to congregate in remembrance, I must keep it all at arm's length, to zoom, to keep waiting...but there is no dial tone. There is no music playing on repeated loop to sooth my jangled soul into submission. I am awakened and screaming at the injustice and locked inside, all in the same moment.

### **Monthly Manna Food Drive**

*by Dolores Barnes, Hunger Task Group*



UUCR, in coordination with our shared space congregation, Capital Rivers Church (MC Church of Christ) will be conducting a Food Drive for Manna Food Center, the second Saturday of every month, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Please be aware that this is a drive-by event. No need to even get out of your car! Staff from both congregations will be outside of UUCR to help unload your nonperishable food items and get them to Manna. Our next collection is scheduled for Saturday, March 13th. Can't make the second Saturday? Please remember that there is ALWAYS the Manna bucket located outside of Founder's Hall for ongoing donations.

Need ideas for your next shopping trip? Check here: [www.mannafood.org/give-food/most-needed-foods-list/](http://www.mannafood.org/give-food/most-needed-foods-list/)  
Contact me for more information. Thank you for your support of our neighbors in need during these unprecedented times.

---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### Remembrance—Bob & Betty Prestemon, Founding Members

*by Kent Hancock, Memorial Committee Co-chair*

In our Sanctuary Courtyard you will find our beautiful Memory Board that holds the nameplates of past members who loved our congregation. Listed are:

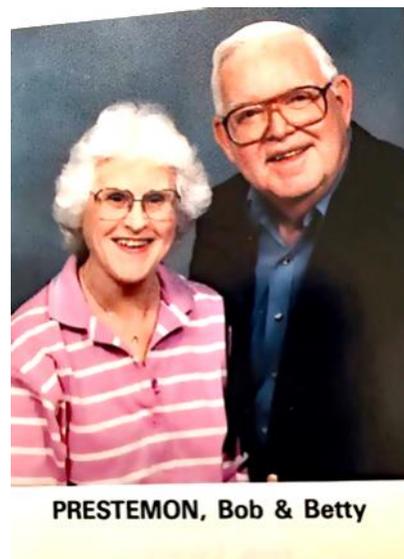
**Robert G. “Bob” Prestemon      1924 – 2005**

**Elizabeth F. “Betty” Prestemon   1923 – 2018**

Bob and Betty grew up as “natural UUs,” attending (and marrying in) the Universalist Church in Minneapolis, MN. Federal employment brought Bob and Betty to the Rockville area in 1950. After a stint at the Arlington Unitarian Church, they discovered the Unitarian Church of Montgomery County which met in the Women’s Club of Chevy Chase. This church later split into two groups, one that built a new church on Cedar Lane and the other organized a Unitarian Fellowship in the Rockville area. In 1957 Bob, Betty, and others moved to the West Rockville Elementary School for Sunday services, and finally to our present campus in 1964.

Bob was a member of UUCR’s original Memorial Committee that dedicated our Memorial Garden in May 1991. He carved the beautiful Memory Board we use today. Bob was “Mr. Finance” for many years at UUCR, chairing our Finance committee. He was active in promoting and raising funds for construction of our current sanctuary. At that time there were two factions at UUCR: “Pro-Growth” and “No-Growth”. Bob was a leader in the Pro-Growth movement, also supported by wife Betty.

Betty wore many hats at UUCR. She sang in the choir for over 50 years. As a distinguished first, in 1972, Betty became UUCR’s first woman Board President. She worked over a decade at UUCR as Church Secretary. She was active in all phases of church life. At the time of her passing, she had been an active member at UUCR for 61 years.



Are there any early members of UUCR on our Memory Board whose story you wish to hear? Please contact Bruce Baskett or Kent Hancock at [memorial@uucr.org](mailto:memorial@uucr.org).

---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### How the Pandemic Affects Us (excerpts)

by Kathleen Halverson

Our little family of 4 (two adults, one 11-year-old son, and one 10-year-old dog) has been navigating things surprisingly well. Overall. Probably because my husband and son are both extreme introverts and incredibly happy, cozy home-bodies.

This. Is. Their. DREAM.

I, however, am an incredibly social, energetic extrovert. As I like to say (not my words; saw this on a Facebook post), “Introverts, please check on your extroverts. WE ARE NOT OKAY.”

What’s been surprising is the amount of time we’ve been able to give our pets. Our 14-year-old dog just died in November (the day after Thanksgiving). He was very old and very sick, for a long time. It was such a gift to have been able to spend 24/7 with this furry family member of ours (he and my son “grew up” together) whom we ADORED.

Another surprising thing has been the fact that we aren’t driving each other nearly as crazy as we thought we would have done, by now. We’ve gotten into a “groove”; a routine; a “new normal” that, at times, feels oddly comforting if not incredibly different. But, not all bad.

We are grieving the loss of my husband’s friend, who died of COVID. He was not elderly but very much alone, single, and with myriad health problems pre-COVID. Also, a friend’s dad, who died about 2 weeks ago after not having seen his wife and family in person since November. He died alone, in a hospital bed in a nursing home, with no one but the paramedic who had been called to assist with yet another stroke.

I think, as the working parents we’ve always been (“working” by not just necessity but choice), Jeff and I miss having “our very own physical space” (i.e., the workplace environment) that was always so uniquely our own. We miss having “a work home that was 100% ours.” No one else’s in the family but ours. It was tough, losing that. I always said I was a better mom because I had my own sphere of being that was uniquely mine. Both of us love what we do for a living, and we both miss the social aspects of our jobs—physically being with the wonderful team of people each of us works with. And being a better parent because of that balance.

I haven’t attended [UUCR’s virtual worship services] much, to be honest. I have attended a few of the evening concerts and found them incredibly relaxing, very well-done (great job, musicians and performers!), and a strong source of fellowship and camaraderie during a very complicated, difficult time for us all. Music really is such a great way to bring people together. Especially during a time like this when all of us feel so incredibly



---

---

## SHARING THE MINISTRY

---

---

### **Pandemic Reflections from the Pastoral Care Team**

*by Sue Thomas*

The hardest part of living through the pandemic for our family has been the need for social distance. We see each other infrequently, always outdoors, 6 feet apart and masked. Visits are very short in winter. I miss most the hugs we shared and the easy interactions that come with familiarity. When we are together, our grandchildren have replaced their casual chat with careful courtesy. The students and teachers in our family are “zoomed out,” and miss the personal contact essential to effective learning environments.

My greatest source of grief is not specific to the pandemic, but may be a collateral result. I mourn the dissolution of our democracy and the stark awareness of how many in our country support greed, violence, and white supremacy. This realization requires me to reset my smug assumption of American exceptionalism. With new humility, I must acknowledge that I can no longer believe that we are models of enlightenment, but that we are as imperfect as any other government.

I admire the effort and creativity of the UUCR community during the pandemic. Staff and congregants have adapted worship and program formats which effectively provide inspiration and support.



### **My Pandemic Story**

*by Karla Timmons*

One of our biggest losses from this past year is not being able to take trips—international and domestic. We enjoy traveling, and we’ve missed that. While we “zoom travel,” it isn’t the same. Another in our “loss” category is time with family and friends. We are fortunate that we have our health (for the most part, although Burt is still struggling with his vision; he hasn’t been able to drive since March, which adds to the feeling of isolation), and we were able to continue with our deliveries for Meals on Wheels, and I even added shopping trips for friends and neighbors that were uncomfortable going to the grocery store. In Montgomery Village, I helped start a “Little Free Pantry” because there is just so much need right now. We’ve been able to restock it every day, and many times in the morning, it is nearly empty.

As I had to postpone my normal social/physical activities (swimming, running with friends, etc.), I found new ones. My new-found addiction to pickleball has filled many hours, and fortunately, our outdoor courts in Montgomery Village opened in October...where I’ve made new friends, as well as reconnected with people I hadn’t seen in years. Zoom has allowed us to stay connected with our UUCR friends, in letter/postcard “get out the vote” campaigns, as well as Dinners for 8, the Pastoral Care Committee, and the UUCR fiction book club. And the magic of Zoom is that we can stay connected, no matter where we may go in the future, when we’re able to start traveling again!

## Quest

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville  
100 Welsh Park Drive  
Rockville, MD 20850

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
ROCKVILLE, MD  
PERMIT NO. 121

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

March 17, 2021

DATED MATERIAL

---

---

### 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