

Change

When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying that we are not yet ready. The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back. A week is more than enough time for us to decide whether or not to accept our destiny.

— Paulo Coelho, *The Devil and Miss Prym*

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On September 17, Rev. Jacqueline Hollingsworth of Christ Chapel AME and I led the Forum on Race, Safety and Relationships at the Christ Chapel AME congregation. The forum invited participants into a deep discussion of both our different experiences in our county and our desire to reach across diversity for the sake of our community and especially our children. UUs attended with faith leaders and members from all across Loudoun County.

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Spare Any Change?

Rev. Anya Sammler-Michael

The conviction that rose from our gathering was, "If you are not safe, I am not safe." Or said another way, "I am my brothers' and my sisters' keeper."

This sort of a dialogue spurs change for our community that will serve us all. It is a way for us to build

relationships around a common hope: safety for all. Join us this month as our worship services, spiritual practices, and covenant groups invite us into a deeper consideration of the sort of change we seek for ourselves and our world.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Self-Sustaining Congregation



*Paul Roche,
Board President*

What does it mean to be a 100% self-sustaining organization? What is our individual responsibility?

What does it mean to be a 100% self-sustaining organization? What is our individual responsibility?

All the funds it takes to operate the church (almost \$300,000/year) are raised solely by us. But just as importantly, all activities in the church are led by either staff members or volunteers. Financially supporting our congregation and volunteering to organize or support its operations are combined in one word: *stewardship*.

When we had an outside review of our readiness to buy a building, we were told that until we increased our understanding of both kinds of stewardship, we would not be wise to start a building search. This is not to say we don't have a lot of hard-working volunteers, or very generous donors—we do—it is saying that true stewardship responsibility must be ingrained in our culture for all members and friends. In our case, finding people willing to donate their time is much harder than getting them to donate their money. Probably that reflects the area we live in. But until we recognize that we are all called to share our treasure and our talents and time, we will not achieve our potential.

What can you do? Become involved in one (or more) of the many support opportunities of the church, even in a small way. At pledge and auction time, be generous with your money. At all other times, look for areas that need your help. When you find somewhere you can help, let one of the Board members know. Help make stewardship responsibility part of our UUCS culture.

OCTOBER HOSPITALITY

*If your last name begins with D, E, or F,
please bring food to share during Fellowship,
which begins at 10:30 am.*

October Justice Allocation

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy

In October, half of our Sunday morning offerings will go to the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is a local all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats throughout Loudoun County, Virginia. They work to build an understanding of the value of nature by offering free environmental education events, producing publications, tracking habitat health and species populations through environmental monitoring programs, and engaging in habitat restoration projects. For more information, please visit www.loudounwildlife.org.

Note: The "fifth Sunday" collection in August put \$366.25 in the Minister's Discretionary Account.

GENERAL NEWS

Family Circle: Talking With Your Children About God, Life, Death, and What You Believe

When your children start asking the big questions, how will you respond? Should you give them the room to develop their own beliefs, or should you guide them? How will you respond when your child asks, "Is there a God?" or "What do you believe?" This class is for parents, guardians, grandparents, and others who care for children of any age. Our time will be devoted to learning new techniques, building relationships, and sharing our own wisdom. Rev. Anya and Linda Weaver will lead the sessions together from 12:30–2:00 pm on November 8, November 22, January 10, and February 21 in the Charles Darwin Mezzanine. There is a requested donation of \$20.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sharing the Monthly Theme With Children: Change



Linda Weaver,
Director of Religious
Education

Childhood is full of change. Children become taller and their bodies mature. They learn new things, try out different activities, and experience evolving friendships. These changes can be both exciting and scary for children. You can support your child by celebrating the changes, providing opportunities that encourage their continued growth, modeling the acceptance of change as a part of

life, and welcoming your child's questions and expressions of discomfort. To help in this, we invite you to share the story of the month and try out a few of the family activities.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Take a walk and notice the changes autumn brings. Consider photographing a favorite tree or location you pass every day and compare the photos throughout the month.

Bake yeast bread together. Observe the changes that occur when ingredients are combined and when heat is added.

Spend an evening viewing family photographs and share memories of different stages in your children's lives. What was each person's favorite memory from the various times? Share stories of your own childhood and adolescence, especially stories about challenges that you successfully faced.

Many families already mark birthdays, lost teeth, and first days of school. Consider ways you might celebrate other events, such as being home alone for the first time, taking responsibility for pet or lawn care, or getting a driver's permit.

Taking more responsibility within the family is important for a child's developing sense of self worth and self sufficiency. Hold a family meeting and together determine how household chores will be divided. Most toddlers can help pick up their toys. Preschoolers can help set the table and may enjoy sweeping the floor. Seven year olds can rake leaves, load and unload the dishwasher, and take care of pets. Twelve year olds can mow the lawn and do laundry.

Revisit the list of chores at least every year to recognize your children's changing skills and interests.

Children's Religious Education topics and a list of programs and events for children and families is on the calendar at the UUCS website, www.uusterling.org.



SACRED STORY FOR ALL AGES

A Cup of Tea: A Zen Wisdom Tale

Nan-in, a Japanese master during the Meiji era (1868–1912), received a university professor who came to inquire about Zen.

Nan-in served tea. He poured his visitor's cup full, and then kept on pouring. The professor watched the overflow until he no longer could restrain himself. "It is overfull. No more will go in!"

"Like this cup," Nan-in said, "you are full of your own opinions and speculations. How can I show you Zen unless you first empty your cup?"

Questions for Discussion

What opinions or speculations have you given up? What beliefs have you had that changed?

Do you feel like your cup is overflowing? If so, how might you empty it? Consider trying a family meditation to help quiet your minds. Perhaps light a candle and silently watch the flame for a few moments.

What other changes are occurring around or within you?

A MONTH OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Change

Members of our congregation are invited to engage the practice of *lectio divina*. *Lectio divina* is Latin for divine reading, spiritual reading, or holy reading, and represents a traditional practice of scriptural reading intended to promote communion with that which is ultimately meaningful. It is a way of praying or meditating with sacred words that calls one to study, ponder, listen and, finally, rejoice within the soul. Unitarian Universalists embrace a wide-reaching definition of scripture, finding words of profound meaning in the works of the world religions, scientists, poets, and the experiences of our own lives.

Find the time in your day to read each piece every day. Read, pause, read again, pause, and then reflect. You may choose to write each quote in a journal and add notes from your reflections. You may choose to read each piece to your family at the dinner table. You may choose to read in the morning or before sleep. You may choose to use the piece to gather your spirit for prayer or meditation.

October 1–7

*There been times when I thought I couldn't last for long
But now I think I'm able to carry on
It's been a long, been a long time coming
But I know a change is gonna come, oh yes it will.*
—Sam Cooke, musician

October 8–14

How many _____ does it take to change a light bulb?
Pentecostals: Ten. One to change the bulb, nine to pray against the spirit of darkness.
Presbyterians: None. The lights will go on and off at predestined times.
Roman Catholic: None. You only need candles.
Episcopalians: Three. One to call the electrician, one to mix the drinks, and one to talk about how much better the old one was.
Mormons: Five. One man to change the bulb, and four wives to discuss it.
Lutherans: None. Lutherans don't believe in change, their light bulbs never go out.
Amish: Why would you have a light bulb?
Unitarian Universalists: We choose not to make a statement either in favor of or against the need for a light bulb. However, if in your own journey you have found that light bulbs work for you, that is fine. You are invited to write a

poem or compose a modern dance about your light bulb for the next Sunday service, in which we will explore a number of light bulb traditions, including incandescent, fluorescent, three-way, long-life, and tinted, all of which are equally valid paths to luminescence.

October 15–21

An excerpt from the Buddhist scriptures

*Everything changes,
nothing remains
without change.*

October 22–28

*God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace.*

—Reinhold Niebuhr

October 29–30

We all have the power to give love. And if we do so, we change the kind of person we are, and we change the kind of world we live in.

—Rabbi Harold Kushner

Want to share something in the new quarterly Winter newsletter?

- ✓ **Announcements (including those related to events that will take place in December through February)**
- ✓ **Group or committee updates (what you accomplished, what's planned for next month, etc.)**
- ✓ **Recent photos taken at UUCS or during UUCS events.**

Please send anything you'd like to include to newsletter@uusterling.org by November 15.

CALENDAR

Stay Up to Date With UUCS Events

OCTOBER	
Sunday, 10/4	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Worship service: “Do You Feel Me?”</p> <p>A service exploring emotional intelligence, led by Rev. Anya. The 11:15 service includes an animal blessing—bring mementos of your pets to be blessed. There will be special music by Stephanie Illetchko at 9:30, and the choir will sing at 11:15.</p> <p>12:30 pm — Inquirer’s class in Rev. Anya’s office</p> <p>All newcomers are welcome.</p>
Wednesday, 10/7	<p>7:00–7:30 pm — Weekly Spiritual Practice</p> <p>Come and unwind! Today’s session will be directed, silent meditation with Rev. Anya. No RSVP required.</p>
Thursday, 10/8	<p>7:30–8:30 pm — NOVA Pride Multifaith Worship Service at Unity of Fairfax: “The Faithful Road; A Shared Journey of Gratitude and Commitment”</p> <p>Join with people of faith to gather in gratitude for gains in LGBT civil rights, the opening of doors of a growing number of faith communities, and to celebrate the second annual Northern Virginia Pride Festival. We gather to work toward affirmation in our faith communities and equality in our civic life. Rev. Anya, Paul Roche, and John Monroe will be participating. Unity of Fairfax is located at 2854 Hunter Mill Road in Oakton, VA. Visit our Face-book page.</p>
Sunday, 10/11	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Evening worship service: “Is Repentance a Dirty Word?”</p> <p>JA service exploring the path to forgiveness and change by Rev. Anya and Intern Minister John Monroe. Our band, jUUsUUUs, will play at both services..</p>
Wednesday, 10/14	<p>7:00–7:30 pm — Weekly Spiritual Practice</p> <p>Come and unwind! Today’s session will be a healing prayer circle. No RSVP required.</p>
Sunday, 10/18	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Worship service: “Define Me?”</p> <p>This service explores the multiplicity of identities, the dangers of assumptions and labels, and how we heal through truth speaking and building community. There will be special band music for both services.</p>
Wednesday, 10/21	<p>7:00–7:30 pm — Weekly Spiritual Practice</p> <p>Come and unwind! Today’s session will be play as a spiritual practice. No RSVP required.</p>
Sunday, 10/25	<p>9:30 and 11:15 am — Worship service: “You Don’t Choose Who You Love”</p> <p>Rev. Anya prepared this sermon for Paul Roche, who won a sermon at the last UUCS Auction. The youth choir will sing at 9:30 and the adult choir will sing at 11:15..</p>
Wednesday, 10/28	<p>7:00–8:00 pm — Weekly Spiritual Practice</p> <p>Come and unwind! Today’s session will be a one-hr. Soundbath meditation by Woven Green. No RSVP required.</p>

CALENDAR

Continued

Friday, 10/30	6:30–8:30 pm — <i>Campfire Stories</i> All ages are welcome to bring stories! We'll have pizza and s'mores while listening to stories around a flashlight campfire. Halloween costumes are welcomed..
NOVEMBER	//////////////////////////////////////
Sunday, 11/1	9:30 and 11:15 am — <i>Worship service</i> 12:30 pm — <i>Inquirer's class in Rev. Anya's office</i> All newcomers are welcome.
Saturday, 11/7	6:00–9:00 pm — <i>Jazz Poetry Slam</i> For more information on our annual Jazz Poetry Slam, visit www.uucsjazzpoetryslam.net .
Sunday, 11/8	9:30 and 11:15 am — <i>Worship service</i> 12:30–2:00 pm — <i>Family Circle</i> This will be the first of four sessions in "Family Circle: Talking With Your Children About God, Life, Death, and What You Believe." Please see the article on page 2 for details.
Sunday, 11/21	6:00 pm — <i>19th Annual UUCS Auction & Dinner</i> Save the Date!