



Sanford Unitarian Universalist Church  
UU NOTES Volume XLIV  
October 2020, Issue 4

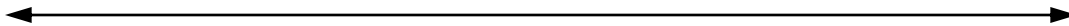
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### UUA PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, 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 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.

(Adopted by the 1984 and 1985 General Assemblies)



### Services Continue to be Celebrated Online via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2399631729> Meeting ID: 239 963 1729 Call In: (646) 876-9923

### Our October theme is **DISRUPTION**

**October 4<sup>th</sup>** – *Blessing of the Animals* – The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi - Rev. Shay MacKay - St Francis, who was born in the 12th century, is the Catholic Church's patron saint of animals and the environment. Bring your beloved pets onto Zoom with you for a special blessing! You can also bring pictures and mementos of pets you have lost and we'll do a special memorial blessing for all of the animals that have touched our hearts. And in keeping with our theme of Disruption, we'll be learning about how St. Francis and his sister, St. Claire challenged the most important foundations and assumptions of their society.

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** – *The Great Law of Peace* – Honoring Indigenous Peoples' Day - Rev. Shay MacKay

**October 18<sup>th</sup>** – Hosted by the SUUC Youth

**October 25<sup>th</sup>** – *The Suspense of Faith* - Rev. Shay MacKay

## ***Rev. Shay's Sharing...***

### **October Theme ~ Disruption**

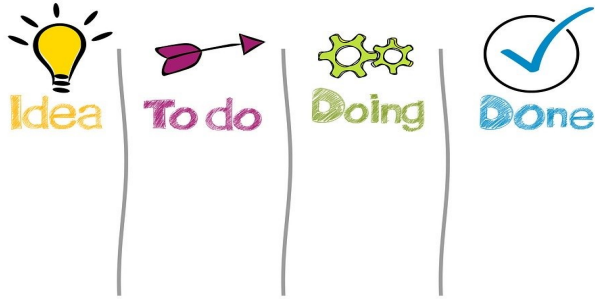


*“In times of widespread chaos and confusion, it has been the duty of more advanced human beings--artists, scientists, clowns and philosophers--to create order. In times such as ours, however, when there is too much order, too much management, too much programming and control, it becomes the duty of superior [people] to fling their favorite monkey wrenches into the machinery. To relieve the repression of the human spirit, they must sow doubt and disruption.” ~ Tom Robbins from **Even Cowgirls Get the Blues***

For the past fifteen years, I have struggled with anxiety. It has gotten so bad a few times that I have even ended up in the emergency room because of panic attacks. Over the years, I have tried a variety of therapies and medications, spiritual practices and physical activity, and have found a combination of these things that helps me live a pretty stable life these days. Looking closely at some of the approaches that work for me, they can seem pretty contradictory, but they all have one thing in common – they disrupt my body’s and mind’s internal processes of worry, fear, and anxiety.

Disruption – a disturbance causing an interruption of an event or activity. Cognitive-based therapies teach me how to disrupt negative thoughts and replace them with more helpful ones; mindfulness meditation teaches me how to disrupt my habit of dwelling on negative thoughts and letting them just move on through me; EMDR, a type of therapy based on eye-movement, actually helps rewire my brain in order to disrupt the emotions associated with traumatic memories and thoughts; the medication I take is an SSRI, a type of anti-depressant that increase levels of serotonin in the brain by preventing (disrupting) the reuptake of serotonin by nerves.

All of this is to say, change is hard and therefore, disruption has become a bad word, something we try to prevent, something we try to avoid at all costs. But sometimes, disruption is the very *key* to living a better, healthier life. And sometimes, it’s the only way to get out of a stuck place, a place we don’t want to be, a place that is unhealthy and unsustainable. Sometimes, we have to help the inevitable change along, not just a little, but a lot, by disturbing the status quo and interrupting the normal flow of things. Sometimes, that’s exactly what we have to do in order to relieve the repression of the human spirit.



## October Reflection

Although the Board of Management met in June, August, and September, we agreed that a board member should write a reflection in lieu of the president's comments each month. Many of you know that I am a retired professor of psychology. In that role, I am taking advantage of this opportunity to summarize some of the recent research on the impacts of the pandemic.

The first study, done in late March, collected data on mental health symptoms through an on-line survey. They found that 19% had a high level of symptoms of depression, 22% for generalized anxiety disorder, and 16% for post-traumatic stress disorder. Loneliness was a strong predictor of mental health symptoms, while spiritual well-being was a strong protective factor. A second study examined Google searches in April. They found an early increase in searches related to worry and panic, followed by searches regarding anxiety symptoms which were more enduring. That was followed by a notable increase in searches on deep breathing and body scan meditation techniques.

The third study examined the effects of COVID-19 on feelings of autonomy (defined as powerlessness and lack of authenticity). Previous research had assumed that, as stress increased, feelings of autonomy could only increase if stress declined. Instead, what they found was that, as soon as workers began to feel stress, efforts toward autonomy restoration emerged even as the pandemic worsened. Workers showed decreasing powerlessness and increased autonomy despite the stress they were experiencing. In a final study, researchers found that perceiving oneself to have knowledge about COVID-19 was associated with greater emotional well-being.

What I loved about these studies is they support the notion that we are fundamentally problem solvers, even in the face of a global pandemic, but we need spiritual and emotional well-being as well. Yes, there was the initial depression, anxiety, and stress, but spiritual well-being could protect us from their impacts. We felt the worry, panic and growing anxiety, but our response was to seek relaxation and meditation practices to help us cope. Yes, the early feelings of powerlessness were horrible, but we responded by quickly seeking autonomy – seeking authenticity and power where we could find them. Finally, we turned to knowledge and science to better understand what was happening world-wide and felt better as a result. In the end, I have found my connection to SUUC and all the ways the church has responded to these horrific times have been major factors in my feeling less powerless, more resilient, and more authentic.

Karen Nelson

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## Our New Banner

Does anyone have a connection to someone or a company with equipment to install our 7' x 8' banner above the outside Sanctuary door? This will be a paid job. Please let the office know at [info@sanforduuchurch.org](mailto:info@sanforduuchurch.org).

Thank you.



## Relief Committee Update

The Covid Relief Team continues to respond in new ways to the hardships created by the pandemic.

In the past month, the team approved funding for the following needs:

Stuff the Bus – School supplies for students, which makes up for funding that would have been received by the big annual fundraiser that was cancelled due to Covid.

Sanford School Department and Eastside Youth Center – Face mask lanyards for students. Also water bottles for students since water fountains are closed.

Project Community – Tents, tarps and other materials so members of homeless community don't have to share tents with non-family members. Also vouchers to local restaurants.

Trafton Center – Vouchers for seniors to purchase produce from Sanford Farmers Market

We all expect to be responding to more individual requests in the weeks and months ahead. We are also exploring ways to support people through skill building rather than just immediate relief.

Team members are themselves learning more about Covid's impact on the community, as the following quotes indicate.

*"Personally, I need to be more open-minded about how we help people,"* said Pat Herrick.

*"It was gratifying to provide Wanda [Parent] with funds that literally saved her program [Stuff the Bus],"* said Diane Whiteside Peck. *"I have learned how isolation has impacted the homeless, seniors, businesses and students in unimaginable ways, and how our funds help fill the cracks these people would have fallen through."*



### ***Fall colors and future garden surprises brought to you by the Garden Buds***



## **A Musical Note from UUCSB Choir Director, Ellie Rolnick**



The 'Bi-Choir' is here! Members of the UUCSB and SUUC choirs have joined their voices together to sing in a virtual format this year.

We had our first rehearsal on 9/20, the day I'm writing this. We had some technical glitches, including a limited 40 minutes to be together which turned into 25 minutes while people found the working zoom link! Alas, small problems in our current world and things that can be fixed easily for our next rehearsal.

This fall the choir will be meeting virtually after church via Zoom 3 Sundays every month. We will focus on:

- deepening out connection to one another
- rehearsing songs for audio or video recording (don't let this deter you – it's easier than you think!)
- learning music theory (like how to read music) for those who are interested

All are welcome who love to sing or who want to be involved with our Music Ministry.

The Fall Schedule – all rehearsals are at 11:30 a.m. Zoom links will be sent to all those on my choir list.

October 4, 11, 18

November 1, 8, 15

December 6, 13

For more information, use the email in the church directory or contact UUCSB [uuchurch@gwi.net](mailto:uuchurch@gwi.net)

Ellie Rolnick

Choir Director, Unitarian Universalist Church of Saco-Biddeford Maine

*Composer*

"Your Life is an Occasion! Rise to It!" *Mr. Magorium*

## **Our Sister Church**

Visit our sister church's website at <http://www.uuchurchsacobiddeford.com/>





### **OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION**

**Weekly Vespers Services – Every Thursday from 7pm to 7:30pm on Zoom.** Join Rev. Shay for a time of reflection and stillness, music and poetry, meditation and connection.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83734173380>

Meeting ID: 837 3417 3380

Call In: (646) 876-9923

**Coffee Hour with your Board Members and Rev. Shay – Every Sunday after our worship service,** join Rev. Shay and members of your Board of Trustees on Zoom for small group discussions based around the monthly theme, that day's sermon, and other relevant topics from your lives. Here is the zoom link for our Sunday services and Coffee Hour:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2399631729>

Meeting ID: 239 963 1729

Call In: (646) 876-9923

**The Soul of Aging with Rev. Shay – Every Tuesday from 10am to 12pm on Zoom** - In this program, we will creatively approach “the art” of aging intentionally, and the many soulful invitations our maturing years offer us. In a time when so many of us are entering the last season of our lives, this is for those who yearn to understand, surrender to, and be transformed by the aging process. The themes address many of the spiritual aspect of this season of our lives and include: our visions of aging, living our unlived lives, completion & forgiveness, our relationship with time, how to nurture our mystical nature, and the notion of befriending our own deaths. We will use poetry, story, music and art to explore these topics, all within the fellowship of a trustworthy community.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84624720782>

Meeting ID: 846 2472 0782

Call In: (646) 876-9923

## Sharing Our Stories

Basically, as understanding of the virus evolved over the past months, so have I evolved. When clients began canceling appointments mid-March, I worried about money. I'd just had three weeks of not working in January to nurse my knee back from surgery; would my bills get paid with another stint of non-work ahead of me? that worry vanished quickly as I heard about the serious financial troubles of so many others, and reminded myself that I had savings and friends to help; I'd be okay.

By May, I was beginning to feel a slight despair around my lack of routine, and I knew I had to recreate daily activities, something to look forward to. I used to treasure a day off, a day to not adhere to any schedules or deadlines, but now almost every day was a day off. It was a matter of choosing to either watch "Escape to the Country" or "Orange Is The New Black" on TV and do crossword puzzles, noticing the sun move from the front rooms to the back yard, or to explore something new. The funny thing is, I'd just experienced a sort of year-long, personal metamorphosis, born of a realization in early 2019 that I had always put work and others first, and a deep knowing that I had to start defining What Gives Me Joy. The loss of routine, coupled with the extra time at home, were the perfect impetus to do this!

I now play Beginner piano pieces everyday for at least a half hour, feeling my brain tingle as I learn the notes by sight and hand positions by feel. I am leading an elder client in simple exercises that will benefit both of us. I've swum in a local pond and picked blueberries with my daughter and grandchildren, and they've slept over at "Baba's" many times. I've picked lots of summer squash and tomatoes from my garden, and made sauces and casseroles out of them. I've read at least a dozen novels, and am seeing more clients after frequent disinfecting and while donning a mask. I attend Zoom meetings of the Wells Maine Democrats group to promote the vote and the Biden-Harris ticket. Last but not least, I have the rewarding work of the Covid Relief Fund team to do, and with some retroactive Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for the self-employed at last in my checking account, there may be a weekend getaway in the making soon! I am thankful for my blessings, and eager to hear your story.

~Diane



### Gail Burnett: Covid 19

Because of Covid 19, I now have my own room for the first time since I was in my 20s (a really long time ago). This is not a bedroom; it's an office in the basement room that belonged to our son and then our daughter in their teenage years. It opens onto a patio that right now is shaded by vines dipping with nearly-ripe grapes. It's sunny, secluded and above all quiet.

For me, this space replaces a corner of the living room where for years I had parked myself to send email, pay bills and write. But when the adult education program where I teach moved all its classes online last spring, that busy corner of the house - a few feet from the front door, the kitchen, the landline, and the sidewalk - became my classroom. It was tough to keep teaching when the oil delivery truck was backing up just over my shoulder.

Now, I retreat downstairs, where my noisy neighbors are the boiler, the washer and the dryer.

In this quite literal way, Covid 19 has made me withdraw from the world sometimes. And it's not just the office: Like everybody else, my husband and I mix less, isolate more, stay in our house as if it were our shell. I'm a fairly introverted person who has always liked seclusion in moderate doses, but this isn't really the way I want us to live. We have too many walls, too many fears about what reckless strangers might do to us. I look forward to the day when we can stop being quite so withdrawn.

In the meantime, though, I have to admit: I love having my own room.

## Board 2020-2021

**Vice President:** Karen Nelson - June 30, 2021

**Clerk:** Judi Reis - June 30, 2022

**Financial Secretary:** Ginny Howe - June 30, 2022

**Treasurer:** Marcel Gagnon - June 30, 2021

**Liaisons:** Janie Waterhouse - June 30, 2023, Natasha Nolan Parker - June 30, 2022, Diane Whiteside-Peck - June 30, 2021

**DREs:** Ryan and Mesha Quinn

## Church Leadership 2020-2021

Building and Grounds: Marcel Gagnon

Capital Projects Building Committee: Howard Dupee, Bill Ouellette

Choir:

Church Historian: Helen Kane

Corner Cupboard: Peg Sawyer, Judi Reis, Dee Ames, Helen Kane, Marcel Gagnon

Covenant of Right Relations Team: Aileen Fortune, Melody Wood, Lee Burnett, Karen Nelson, Rev. Shay

FiAT (Faith in Action Team): Patty Kidder

Finance Committee: Peg Sawyer, Pat Herrick, Ginny Howe, Deb Folsom

Fundraising Coordinator: Jan Sacco

Homesteaders: Jan Sacco, Melody Wood

Investment Management Committee: Peg Sawyer, Art Dumas, Howard Dupee

Members and Friends: Tonia Chase

Ministerial Relations Team: Tom Huber, Dee Ames

Music Committee Chair: Melody Wood

Nominating Committee: Deb Folsom

Stewardship:

Women's Alliance: Nancy Farnham

Worship: Rev. Shay MacKay

Worship Associates: Rev. Shay MacKay, Patty Kidder, Mesha Quinn, Tom Huber, Beverly Brent, Jan Sacco, Georgia Renfro

**Rev. Shay's Fall Schedule** - Monday is Writing Day, limited availability. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday completely available to you, please email, text or call to set up an appointment time! Friday is day off, emergency availability only. Saturday on call for pre-scheduled meetings and events; available for emergencies. Sunday is Worship and Coffee Hour. \*\* I will be away on study leave Oct. 16th-24th. Email [revshaymackay@gmail.com](mailto:revshaymackay@gmail.com) Phone/text 207-518-8059

**Administrative Office Hours** - Church office is closed due to pandemic, working from home - [info@sanforduuchurch.org](mailto:info@sanforduuchurch.org)  
Email anytime, always available

**Co-Directors of Religious Education** - Mesha and Ryan Quinn - [dre@sanforduuchurch.org](mailto:dre@sanforduuchurch.org)

## Newsletter Deadlines for 2020-2021 FY

October 26th  
November 23rd  
December 28th  
January 25th  
February 22nd  
March 22nd  
April 26th  
May 24th  
June 21st

**The church is closed to  
all activities, events,  
meetings, etc. until  
further notice.**



*#Stay Safe*

**ARE  
you  
OK?**

**SUPPORT  
SMALL  
BUSINESSES**