Minister’s Musings...

In This Great Turning
We Shall Learn to Lead in Love

Dear HiP Family,

There is powerful melody and harmony — created by a female duo called MaMuse — paired with these lyrics:

We shall be known by the company we keep
by the ones who circle round to tend these fires
we shall be known by the ones who sow and reap
the seeds of change alive from deep within the earth

It is time now
It is time now that we thrive
It is time we lead ourselves into the well
It is time now, and what a time to be alive
In this great turning we shall learn to lead in love

This month, I have watched as more than a 1/3 of the congregation courageously engaged in study and discussion about the legacy of slavery in this country — learning about how we have created the current context of racism we are living within.

This month, I have watched as people from both the HiP and Unity communities have come to reconnect with the land and tie blessings on our big tree out front — affirmations for the original stewards of this land, and now the care, connection, and continuity of our campus.

This month, I have watched multiple groups of volunteers in our congregation dig into the work of the church and train with heart and vigor in order to make a more substantial difference.

This month, I have watched our congregation serve and financially support like minded organizations in this city who help to actualize the values we uphold.

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Minister’s Musings

Continued from front page

This month, I have watched and heard encouraging, hopeful words about reclaiming the soul of this nation and voting as if the life of our democracy depends on it — because it does!

It is true:

We shall be known by all these things.
We shall be known by the company we keep.
We shall be known by the seeds that we plant and sow.
We shall be known by the deep well we drink from.
We shall be known by the fruits of our labor.

So, I hope that you will continue to contemplate and be renewed by our centuries long Unitarian Universalist experiment of love-in-action. Leading in love is what enables us to keep our heart open when things get quite, quite heavy. This is how we can stay courageous and interested in the world, when we feel such a temptation to discouragement.

As Universalists, we know that if we actually believe in the inherent worth of each being, then we will naturally do the work of upholding the humanity of all beings to the greatest extent possible. Understanding and believing in the inherent beauty at the heart of all life becomes both the impulse to action, as well as a strategy for non-violent resistance.

Our ancestor Unitarian Transcendentalist, Henry David Thoreau, published his essay on Civil Disobedience in 1849. Thoreau was concerned that individuals not allow the government to overrule their consciences — that if we acquiesce to unjust government, we become agents of injustice by our complicity. The late congressman, John Lewis, implores us to get into “good trouble.” Joanna Macy, Buddhist environmental activist, years ago coined the phrase, “The Great Turning” to signify the present time that we are living — turning from the colonial industrial project to a sustainable way of living on this planet. So, this month I ask you: What way will you commit to relearning and renewing the wisdom of our ancestors? What can YOU carry forward? How can you find ways to train yourself in love-in-action? How do WE lead in love?

Finally, I will say that the chorus from this song was the inspiration for a recent UU the Vote live event, “How We Thrive,” which featured powerful words from special guests Paige Ingram from Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism; Analise Ortiz from ACLU of AZ; and Desmond Meade from the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition. There were also healing words and spiritual balm offered by our president, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, and Organizing Strategy Director, Rev. Ashley Horan.

You can watch the full event here: youtu.be/p3bSvh0zdJM

Yours in love and action,

- Rev. Julia
September Services

All Services begin on ZOOM at 3:30 pm unless otherwise noted

September 6
We're Here!

Labor Day is an annual celebration of workers and their achievements. The national holiday originated at the height of the industrial revolution during one of American labor history’s most dismal chapters. As we live into the next major revolution -- out of the industrial complex to green industry and sustainability — what can we learn from revolutions of the past in order to inform our present? Rev Julia speaks.

September 13
Ingathering 2020: Renewal

In this year of separation, it is especially important that we intentionally renew our connections with one another. The water communion was originally created in 1980 by Unitarian Universalist women who wanted to shape new ways of practicing religion. They were looking for new and inclusive symbols that allowed them to step outside a model of religion where meaning was assigned by authority outside their own being. They wanted to create a ritual that allowed the meaning carried inside of each of them to have a chance to speak. They wanted a ritual that moved beyond lifting up the few in power, to instead lift up the significant strengths, insights and understanding, ways of coping and thinking of women and others who were undervalued. The water service is designed to experience the intermingling of our own stories, and to sense something richer in ourselves deepened by that exchange. Although we change it up each year, this annual water communion is whole church worship that renews our commitment to one another and to our faith tradition. Don't miss this one! Rev. Julia and Dianne will facilitate.

September 20
We Were Made for These Times

Our faith is needed now more than ever! Many of us sense that we are living in unprecedented times, sailing uncharted waters. Certainly, there is evidence that the very worst in humanity has been legitimized and unleashed — and consequently is driving more bad behavior. We might want to withdraw, go numb, or collapse. Instead, come explore what strategies best unleash and renew the resilience, empowerment, and creativity needed to fulfill the promise of our covenanted tradition. Rev Julia speaks.

September 27
UU the Vote

The national office of UU the Vote has created this fall worship service focused on themes at the intersection of faith, democracy, and justice. UUA President Susan Frederick-Gray will offer a homily. More details coming soon on the UU the Vote website (uuthevote.org). Worship Team will moderate.
Reverend Julia and I were approached by members of the congregation and asked if we could meet their needs better during the After Worship Fellowship hour. We immediately saw that we could respond the very next Sunday and so began a Reflection Space break out room after church. Who knows what new ideas will come from these discussions?

So why was that a timely request? Because I think our teams and our Board have unique opportunities this year to respond to the changing times we are in, to facilitate requests that continue to respond when our congregation needs us, because we are charting new ways to be a church. What will rise up this year for High Plains? What does our loving community need this year?

This month's topic for Soul Matters is renewal. Renewal “can mean breathe new life into” or “to awaken.” This year will challenge us to awaken to what's happening in our country and in our church. One part of the Board's covenant is to be open to all input and opinions. So one new idea can awaken us to action if we choose to listen when we need to.

Who knows where that will take us and how it will help our community grow spiritually? The Board promises to be actively involved in our church goals this year by empowering teams to explore new ideas in support of our church’s goals for this year.

We want to add to our Board's Covenant, language that says the Board will lead by example. So the Board will, when possible, along with the congregation, become better educated about racism, or become more knowledgeable about non-violent responses to conflict, or collaborate with local organizations for Social Justice, or find creative ways to give our children religious education.

I, along with The Board look forward to this year of ideas and response to our times.

In Peace.
– Gretchen

GOAL #1: ENHANCING THE SUNDAY EXPERIENCE
In partnership with a dedicated worship team, the Minister will work to make Sunday services and the overall Sunday experience transformative and spiritually engaging. This would include worship team planning, inviting guest speakers, supporting lay worship leaders, music and sound production, and on-line “virtual” worship production, etc.

GOAL #2: SOCIAL ACTION AND PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY
The Congregation and the Minister affirm our mutual commitment to address the systemic prejudices and biases found within all parts of society, by, among other things, working to ensure that the Minister(s), members of the Congregation, and staff are trained to understand, welcome and better serve a multiracial, multiethnic, increasingly diverse community and enhance the ability of each individual to live our values of justice, equity, and interdependence. It is also a priority to further develop and strengthen HPCUU's partnerships and leadership in the city of Colorado Springs and El Paso County with organizations working on social justice matters, e.g. poverty, racial justice, environmental justice, immigration reform, and support ways for congregants to engage and better live into the third part of our mission: “Acting for Social Justice.”

GOAL #3: SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT AND CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF OVERALL VISION AND MISSION OF LIFESPAN FAITH FORMATION MINISTRIES
In partnership with a dedicated team of members — including the Board, Shared Ministry Team, Church Council, and the Faith Formation Team — the Minister will support the congregation in renewing its Lifespan Faith Formation vision and implementing its purpose in the larger community and the world. This may include a review of current approaches, changes in organization and structural management of volunteers, partnership with regional staff for trainings and workshops, and development of approaches to fulfilling the vision of Faith Formation ministry that the congregation identifies as its own.
Sweet Fundraiser
Butter Braids Are Coming Soon!

The Fellowship Team’s Butter Braid fundraiser for HPCUU starts next Thursday, 9/10 and will run through Sunday, 9/27.

Frozen Butter Braid pastries (9 yummy flavors), delicious frozen gluten-free cookie dough from Yumbana and Coda Coffee (K-cups & whole coffee beans) will be available for purchase by HPCUU members and friends. We hope everyone will want to stock their freezers with these yummy treats for those chilly fall and winter mornings!

Stay tuned next week for a special email with the link where you can place and pay for your order online. You’ll be able to pick up your products from the Unity campus parking lot on Saturday, October 3rd.

And don’t forget that HPCUU will earn 40% on ALL sales to go towards next year’s church budget.

Questions? Please send an email to: fundraisers@hpcuu.org.

Thanks for your help and support,
The HPCUU Fellowship Team

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High Plains Church UU is excited to launch its first-ever ONLINE AUCTION! Even though we can’t meet in person this year, we have new and exciting ways to bid and buy cool auction items, support the church, and join in on some Auction Night fun! Mark your calendars for the HPCUU Auction Night and Zoom Party on November 14th, 2020 — it’ll be a BLAST for the whole family!

Auction Night is HPCUU’s BIGGEST fundraiser of the year!. 2020 is the year of our 25th anniversary and now, more than ever, we need to thrive, grow, and connect as a loving, caring community and as a liberal voice in Colorado Springs.

To have a successful auction, we need lots of fun and interesting items to bid on! This year, because of the pandemic, your auction offerings will need to be adapted in order to meet all CDC recommendations and other precautions to keep us safe.

Start thinking about what you might like to offer NOW! Your Auction Team has compiled a list of “Auction Donation Ideas” for inspiration (And we will include a live link with a PDF of ideas, incase you need it on our website and in our next weekly eblast), but we are also happy to brainstorm with you! We can be reached at: auction@hpcuu.org

In the coming weeks, you will receive an email with more information about the upcoming auction AND a link to our very own auction website where you will find everything you will need all in one spot, including an Auction Catalog and an Item Donation Form... stay tuned!
Faith Formation
Heather Southard
Faith Formation Coordinator

September is a month of transition for many people and many traditions. It is the time for Summer to give way to Autumn. I look forward to the leaves as they transition from their Summer phase of green into their true and vibrant reds and yellows and oranges. For Judaism this is the month of the New Year and Day of Atonement, which are times of renewal and forgiveness. Kids are going back to school and transitioning into the school year in a new and different way than ever before. These transitions are all a part of the cycle of life, and are what drive us forward to learn and grow.

What is special in Faith Formation this month? We are taking a look at the programs we offer for kids, youth, and adults, and are looking for new pathways. The Faith Formation classes for Kindergarten through Seventh grades are taking the month of September off in order for us to refresh our program and think about how we do religious education at High Plains. This transition might be something completely different than the current program, or it could be an improvement upon the current set system. If you are reading this and thinking to yourself that you would love to be a part of this change, please call me or anyone on my team to volunteer your ideas.

The theme of Renewal also refers to this time when Unitarian Universalist congregations typically renew their commitments to one another and the way they covenant together. In this way, I promise that myself and my team will do our best to reboot our program, starting when the time comes with an exciting program. It will be a program with a new commitment to religious education. Renewal doesn’t always lead to change. It is also a time of reflection and time to make a deeper commitment to the same passions and the same truths that make one whole.

May this time of renewal allow us to deepen our commitments to ourselves so we may move forward with more passion. May our commitments to our loved ones be refreshed with nourishing care. May our renewal of spirit and purpose bring us closer to our High Plains community and to the world around us.

New Class for Adults: “Playshop”
with Rev Julia and Rev Lydia
First Saturdays, 9:30-11am

Join Rev. Julia and a growing band of playmates for this fun and empowering monthly gathering. Playshop is a time for embodying our monthly themes. Using the tools of Interplay (interplay.org), we improvise with story-telling, movement, singing, and stillness — all based in play — to bring more ease to our lives and integrate body, mind and spirit. Our monthly theme for September is RENEWAL.

Meeting on-line has offered me the capacity to collaborate with my colleague Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, who is the minister at Boulder Valley UU Fellowship and has been leading a Playshop there for a while. We are also both certified InterPlay leaders, and recently both attended the International Interplay Leaders Gathering in July (on Zoom) which gave us great ideas for lots of fun new ways to interact on-line!

As we progress in building this on-line community, we are also committed to regularly including some RET ‘play’ — Racial Equity and Transformation — into our time together. (Trust me, it really is possible, and even freeing, to bring ease and embodied story-telling into the topic of racial equity!)

We will meet in Rev. Lydia’s Zoom Room:
https://uuma.zoom.us/j/7202728284

Hope to see a lot of you there Saturday, Sept 5!
Please let Rev. Julia know if you think you would like to attend. If you have questions, please contact her via email at minister@hpcuu.org
THANK YOU to EVERYONE who came out to the Unity campus to share their blessings on August 27th!
In August, our congregation’s theme was Continuity. It seems apropos that this comes around our 25th anniversary — we have continued a long time! The Soul Matters discussion guide on the topic of Continuity contains the question, "How do we listen to stories we’d rather not hear?" As I read this question, I feel concern for our beloved congregation. A few years ago, our Social Justice Team tried to engage with the congregation around racial justice issues, and we lost some members. Those stories of prejudice and injustice were stories some folks would rather not hear. I hope that doesn’t happen again. Our congregation has been through a lot, and it seems like a tender bud. Can it weather the possible storm of conflict around social justice issues?

I remember how hard it was when I was starting my own anti-racist journey, reading "White Fragility" and feeling challenged about my beliefs and feelings and behaviors. I was glad to have the company of the other members of the Multicultural Action Team along with me to discuss and react with, to be honest about the ways that I felt uncomfortable. I hope that our members will find trusted friends with whom to talk and walk on this journey. This kind of support helps us with truth-telling, it helps us to keep our hearts open, so that we can move together towards justice.

From Michelle Bull,
Member of the Multicultural Action Team

As I think about Continuity, our Soul Matters theme for August, it hits me in the gut how continuous and pervasive the pandemic of racism is in our country. Ours is a country founded on genocide and slavery, with a history of racial injustice that continues to present day. For too long, our country has ignored this reality, preferring to not talk about it and convincing ourselves that ours is a “post-racial” society. We can no longer delude ourselves that this is the case. I think Bryan Stevenson, the founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and author of Just Mercy, says it best: “We must truthfully confront our history of racial injustice before we can repair its painful legacy.”

I am proud that our congregation has recognized the need to confront this legacy and that our board has included a church-wide goal around this issue. This is such important work. It won’t be easy, and I am sure we will stumble, but I trust that we can live into our covenant and support each other through the process. I look forward to learning and working together as we live more fully into the third part of our mission: Acting for Social Justice.

From Julie Feuerbach,
Co-lead of the Multicultural Action Team
Support

Grief Support

Pikes Peak Area Chapter of Bereaved Parents of the USA
Next meeting is on Sept. 23rd

A grief support group for bereaved parents, adult siblings, and grandparents. Monthly meetings, every fourth Wednesday from 6:30pm to 8pm MT, via zoom. We are the parents whose children have died. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren.

We come together to provide a safe space where grieving families can connect, share our stories, and learn to rebuild our lives. This group is a local chapter of Bereaved Parents USA.

Register by emailing Sonya Bergeron at: aspirant@hpcuu.org

Neighborhood Groups

If you are a current member or active friend in our beloved community and you are still not in a neighborhood group, but would like to be, please contact Dawn (office@hpcuu.org) so she can email you some information regarding instructions about neighborhood groups. (Please know that these are "a different animal" than our covenant groups — with a very different purpose). These groups are intended to be extra support and safety as we make our way through this COVID-19 pandemic over the long haul.

Rev. Julia’s Schedule

New 3/4 time schedule! Rev. J will generally be working the first three weeks of the month, and taking the last week of the month as a non-working week. This will vary a bit during holiday season. Please watch the weekly eblast for current schedules and information. Please feel free to contact Rev. Julia via cell phone 720-975-6235, or email minister@hpcuu.org anytime. She will get back to you as soon as possible!

Journaling Workshop

Will be taking a break for the month of September but will resume in October

OFFICE HOURS

Dawn Bergacker, our office administrator, can usually be reached weekday afternoons by email office@hpcuu.org or phone calls to the church number, 719-260-1080. Please note that she can use the church number remotely, and will endeavor to answer the church phone during daytime hours. If you need to reach her quickly she will also respond to texts to her personal phone, 719-337-9529.
INVITATION:
A new Covenant Group is forming!

Covenant groups are small groups of church members and friends who meet monthly to discuss the Soul Matters theme for the month. This theme is also used for the worship service and religious education. Led by a volunteer facilitator, the groups share with each other and discuss the topic. The friends made in these groups are often very supportive and long-lasting.

If you have not heard from us about being placed in a group, please let us know! We will be meeting with your group in September. If you are in a group and would like to switch groups for any reason, just do the same thing as new members. We look forward to getting to know you in the Covenant Groups. Connection is really needed!

September theme: What does it mean to be a people of Renewal?

John Lewis wrote an article to be published in the NYT after his passing. In it he said “Though I am gone, I urge you to go answer the highest calling of your heart.” Perhaps that is one of the thoughts to guide us into renewal this year. Is it time to renew your commitment to carry on the work of those who came before us? Is it time to renew your responsibility to those who will come after you?
Stay Connected!

https://www.zoom.us/join

Join us on
Zoom
Sundays at 3:30pm

Joining us on Sunday at 3:30pm for our live online Service!

Download the free Zoom app on your phone or on your computer by going to www.zoom.us.

Zoom:
https://zoom.us/j/7192601080
Meeting ID: 719 260 1080
Password: 25Years!
(Password is case sensitive)

Or by phone:
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 719 260 1080

Once you are in our Zoom personal meeting room, there will be a message about waiting to enter.

Our admin will let you out of the waiting room when the service starts.

If you still need help, here is a one-minute video that outlines those steps:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFhAEoCF7jg

We will record services for later play on YOUTUBE with the link sent by email distribution.

Ways to Continue Social Solidarity

1. Sundays:
   • 3:30pm Worship with Rev J and Community
   • 4:30-5pm Fellowship Time
   • 4:30-5pm Reflection Space – A place to have deep discussion about the themes of the service

2. Strictly Social Gatherings on Online:
   • Fellowship Time
   Sundays, 4:30-5pm after Worship this meeting.

3. Covenant Groups:
   This is our small group ministry – check with your group leader for meeting information, day/time and Meeting ID numbers. For more details, see page 8.

4. Neighborhood Groups
   • Please let us know how your neighborhoo group is going

Current updates are being posted to our Facebook page. So make sure you join and “like” our page: /www.facebook.com/HighPlainsCUU!

There is also an informal sharing and discussion group for HiP members. This private group page is a great place where you can ask questions, share poetry, art, music, ideas... and be more casual amongst friends: https://www.facebook.com/groups/286403054759530/ or search: “HiP Discussion Group” to join.

We will keep them all updated as best we can. Any announcements or changes in events or group meetings need to be submitted to Michele, by email: communications@hpcuu.org.

Also, if you would like to connect online but are unable to figure out how to get online via ZOOM, please let Dawn know: office@hpcuu.org or call the office: 719-260-1080.

Also, if you aren't in HiP's Directory (or have corrections), please also reach out to Dawn.
All articles for the October newsletter must be received by the end of the day on Sept. 22

Send articles and photos to: communications@hpcuu.org

In an effort to live more deeply into the reality of beloved community, we will be offering a small space in the newsletter each month for members and friends to share important milestones in their lives. If you have something important happening personally that you would like the congregation to know about, please submit a small 2–3 sentence note about it by the 25th of each month to communications@hpcuu.org

Interested in placing an ad in next month’s newsletter? Email: communications@hpcuu.org