



January 2021
Vol. 28 No. 1

HIP HAPPENINGS

MINISTER'S MUSINGS...



Rev. Julia McKay
HPCUU Minister

Welcome to 2021! Here we are at the beginning of our third year in ministry together. What a ride! This month our theme is **Imagination**. How appropriate, as we enter a year with so much that will have to be re-created. Yet, I am happy to be looking into 2021 that portends more hope, even as we engage the patience it will take to come out of COVID.

When I think about how imagination has changed the face of culture, I remember Johannes Gutenberg, German goldsmith. When he imagined the printing press in 1436, I wonder if he had any idea how that had might change the Western World -- especially the relationship that people had with religion.

You see, the printing press allowed the first public distribution of the Bible. When lay readers had equal access, people no longer had to rely on clergy to interpret scripture for them. This caused a public reckoning with the way that church operated and a reckoning with the formal priesthood. No longer would priests have the authority they once did because the public began to interpret scripture for themselves.

It became a very astute move on the part of Priest Martin Luther to actually affirm this "priesthood of all believers." And, behold... Protestantism was born! Yet, this radical shift which changed the face of Christianity also had a shadow side.

Ironically, Luther included the claim that "scripture alone" had sole authority over the lives of people (instead of the clergy). But then, as author Kathleen Norris tells us: *"Scripture alone" was eventually distorted by some Christians to mean that anything non-biblical, including [other] products of the human imagination such as poems, paintings, and even hymns, were seen as*

un-holy." In other words, people were still not granted full internal authority over their lives.

I am always fascinated by looking at these moments when there are massive cultural turns. How does the opening for something new happen? What gets distorted as some truth gets revealed?

Here we are in a major cultural turning point of our own. The unconventional nature of 45's presidency has fomented a public reckoning with America's democracy and its racial legacy. The pandemic and other natural disasters have fostered a worldwide reckoning with environmental imbalance on the planet. And, we all are confronted with the responsibility for how we imagine what is ethical and moral – especially in addressing the massive issues that confront us.

The reality is that we must begin to re-imagine ourselves in light of what we know now. The truth is, we have witnessed some things that are deeply disturbing to our sensibilities. We cannot unknow some things. We cannot unsee the knee on the neck...the semi-size

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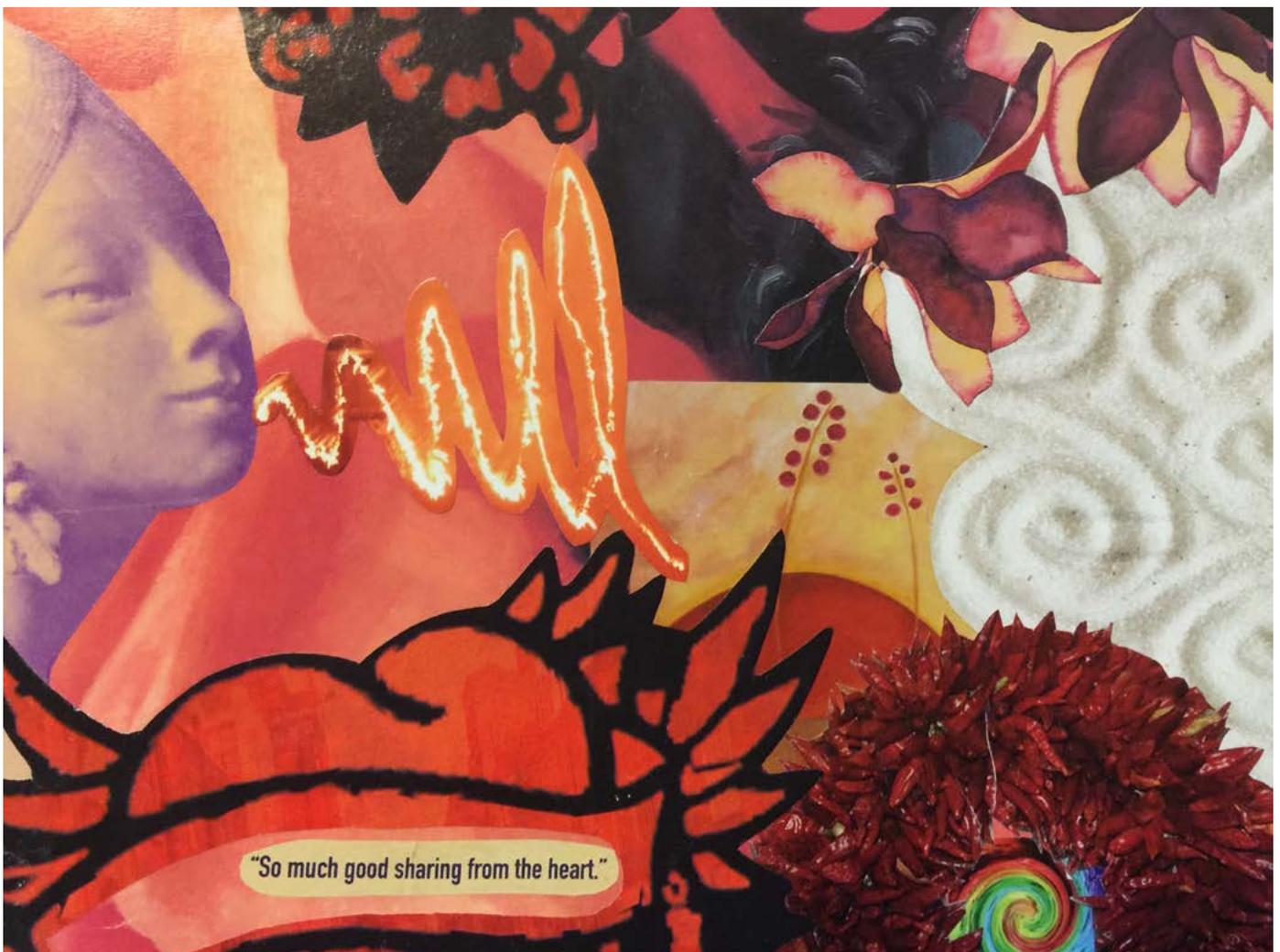
trailer-truck morgues...the clear air and water all over the planet when our cities shut down worldwide.

Fortunately, there have been many to assert that our imaginations **are** not only part and parcel of being human, but even a **sacred** aspect of who we are. Imagination, at the core, is about believing that another world is possible. It is about the part of us that can create something new. Imagination is something within that comes from the deepest parts of our minds and our hearts. It is the part of us that can respond when we cannot remain in our illusion of how we thought things were any longer. It's like being able to read for ourselves again for the first time.

It has often been said that religious humans imagined ourselves: "*Made in the image...*" As the poet writes: "*our imagination flies – and we become its shadow on the earth.*" So yes, it's religion's responsibility to cultivate images that enculturate a sense of responsibility and imaginative capacity in each of us to create the world we wish to see.

Here's to the New Year!

Rev J



Soul Collage, Jan 2018, Rev Julia McKay

THEME: IMAGINATION

JAN 3 - A Church of Many Sensibilities

Guest Speaker, Rev. Tet Gallardo is the President of the UU Church of the Philippines, which has 20 active congregations and 2 fellowships. 95% of all families come from farming communities, many are in unreachable places. They provide free-thinking faith communities as an alternative to the extremism that tempts the least educated. Over 200 farmers have already been killed this year due to the highly political atmosphere and the average age of farmers is now at 60. As a successor to a well-established leadership, Rev. Tet introduces a ministry of the most unorthodox kind in her approach to education for the masses, leadership development of the future church, and climate action that reclaims indigenous culture. She will speak about how UU inclusion is tested by our different sensibilities and how our cultural location influences us in ways that may not be well-discussed or well-articulated. Come join Rev Tet Zooming all the way across the globe! Here are two articles about her ministry that you can read to get to know a bit about her [here](#) and here [The Beloved Community Lab in the Philippines](#).



JAN 10 - The Magic of Re-imagination

As we rededicate our lives to moving forward in a new year after a very tough era, we pause. How things have originally been imagined may have become distorted or stagnant and need to be re-imagined again. What in this congregation or our individual lives was imagined but needs to be re-imagined again? Rev Julia speaks.

All services be on Zoom at 3:30 pm unless otherwise noted. [HPCUU Zoom Link](#)

JAN 17 - Music Has Been My Refuge

To celebrate her second anniversary of her ministry with High Plains Church, Rev J will speak from the heart about her personal journey from music teacher to performer to minister. Rev J addresses how music (and artistry of any kind) has the power to heal and bring people together. And taps the creativity and imagination that resides in each of us as she shares the journey of an evolving artist -- from one who once played the keys on a piano, to one who now vibrates the strings of human hearts.

JAN 24 - The Broken Mishkan: Creativity, Disability, and the Journey in Between

Guest speaker Sara Nesson is an artist, writer, and teacher living in Northern California. A lifelong creative, she has led Taizé candlelight services in churches, performed with A Traveling Jewish Theatre, mentored Jewish teenagers, and traversed the United States as a travel writer. Now living with chronic illness, she is learning that while the body does what it does, the soul journeys on. Her presentation will explore the biblical idea of mishkan (“dwelling place”) as a metaphor for each person’s visionary dance with the sacred. Sara is a graduate of Harvard University, the Graduate Theological Union, and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. www.saranesson.com



JAN 31 - Forming. Storming. Norming. Performing.

Come explore a powerful model of group development that was first proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965, who said that these four phases are not only necessary but inevitable in order for any partnership, team, or community to grow, face up to challenges, tackle problems, find solutions, plan good work, and deliver results. We move in and out of these stages with varying degrees of success. Where do you suppose HiP Church is these days? Rev Julia speaks. ****This service will be followed by our mid-year Congregational meeting.**



Gretchen Hein
HPCUU President

On December 15th, Santa came early! The headline in the Denver Post read “End in Sight” and the Gazette read “Electoral College Confirms Biden Win.” The virus and election dominated our 2020, but let’s hope that 2021 will give us a year beyond anxiety and heartbreak. Let’s make ministry our goal, and then we will grow

into it. This year we have accomplished a lot...

- Our Sunday ministry has been on zoom for ten months now, and our attendance remains steady. A tremendous effort has been made to give us varying services to challenge our spiritual growth and provide us time to see each other and connect.
- Eleven people attended the new member class, called Starting Points, with Rev. Julia and the Membership Chairs.
- We’ve added members to the Worship, Hospitality, and Lay Pastoral Care teams, and the Finance Committee.
- The Board tasked a Policy Committee with updating the By-Laws and Policies.
- We’ve shared worship services with Unity and participated in putting ribbons on our tree. We had two joint board meetings that clarified our relationship. We weathered difficult conversations about staying at Unity campus this year and are stronger in our commitment to interfaith exploration.
- We are a covenantal religion, so this year our ministry teams have written new covenants as have our Soul Matters groups and the Board.
- The MCAT (Multicultural Action Team) has given us several excellent educational opportunities to study anti-racism.
- When the Filmore Center was sold we moved everything out, and then with the help of Mark Platten, we moved the RE shed.

- The Auction was a tremendous success raising almost \$12,000 for our Congregational ministries. We also enjoyed seeing Eddie perform and be our Auctioneer.
- Thanks to zoom, we have enjoyed game nights, coffee klatches, and happy hours!
- Thirty five people attended A Bluest Night joint service with Unity.
- We were lucky enough to see each other in-person for the Board Holiday Gift Bag Drive-By. Thank you to the worship team for a beautiful Winter Solstice service.

All of this solidifies our commitment to each other and the church. Nevertheless, there will be times we are weary, wondering if we are just going through the motions. I believe crises present opportunities, and this COVID crisis could force us to reconsider who we are and what we value, and, in the long run, it could help us rediscover a better version of ourselves and our church.

This next year, we have an opportunity to study the COIC report (The Commission on Institutional Change) appointed by the UUA Board of Trustees in 2017 to conduct an audit of the power structures and analyze systemic racism within the Unitarian Universalist Association. This is a high priority for the UUA, and the Board feels we as a congregation should respond to it. Is there something we need to unlearn within our congregational culture in order to center marginalized voices and create a beloved community? And though it may be difficult for us as a church, we should let what will rise, rise up. Let’s recognize the challenges we’ve had, see how it changed us, and then unite together.

Finally, we will have an mid-year, non-voting, Congregational meeting on January 31st. The Policy and the Finance Committees will have presentations, and the Board and Rev. Julia will present information on HPCUU’s infrastructure and stages of church development. So much to look forward to!

In Peace, Gretchen

Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2021 finally! I'm relieved that 2020 is now over and I can think about ways to make 2021 better.

December ended well with a successful and fun Holiday Bazaar and Toys for Tots drive. The kids all did some shopping for gifts for friends and family. Each active youth in K-12th grades also received holiday gift bags filled with goodies for themselves as a special treat from High Plains and Faith Formation. Thank you to all who helped and participated.



The Bee and Beads of Kindness are now travelling on their grand adventure. I can't wait to see all the fun things they do as they travel around to our church community households. As you spread good cheer and do your acts of kindness, take a photo of yourself with the bee and send it to us.

January is typically a time for resolutions to make changes in ones life and to accomplish big goals. This month is all about imagination. Resolutions are about imagining how things can be different and planning for how to make them come to be. This month, I suggest to start small. We have been through a lot and need to be gentle on ourselves. Small steps are easy to imagine and to accomplish. Maybe if you started a habit of gratitude in November, that can continue on as a habit making affirmations about change. Perhaps you can use mine, "I choose to be kind to everyone I encounter today." Imagining a new you can be fun. Be creative.

The other thing I can do to help with my emotional well-being is to imagine the world differently than

what it is. Can you picture the world as if the pandemic wasn't here? What things would you be doing differently? When I imagine life with the freedoms and safety I had before it began, then it doesn't seem as unsettling, and it feels within reach.

Imagination is a creative and safe way to escape reality. It is also a great way to help bring about change. Just like when I escape into fantasy in a book or a movie, imagination gives me hope for a better tomorrow. If you could jump into a chalk drawing like Mary Poppins, or land in Oz with Dorothy, how would the land of your imagination look?

With our imaginations, the possibilities are endless. With imagination, a list of reachable goals, and friends beside us, hope is active. We can dream our lives into a world without hatred, without a pandemic, without oppression. Will you help imagine a new world with me?

*In love and support,
Heather Southard
Faith Formation Coordinator*





INVITATION:

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.

For more information on being a part of a small group please contact the co-leaders Barbara Mitchell and Beth Blakney of the Small Group Ministry team at sgm-steering@hpcuu.org

We look forward to getting to know you in the Covenant Groups. Connection is really needed!

Looking Ahead Together: Our Themes for 2020-2021

September **Renewal**
October **Deep Listening**
November **Healing**
December **Stillness**
January **Imagination**
February **Beloved Community**
March **Commitment**
April **Becoming**
May **Story**
June **Play**



Playshop

January 2nd, 9:30 am – 11 am

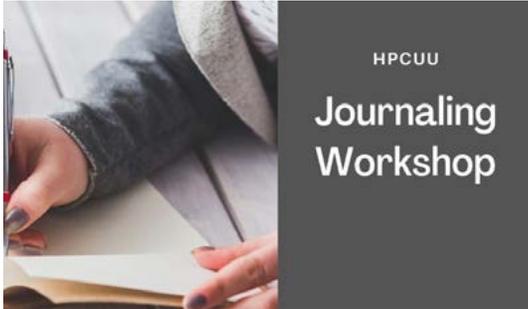
Join Rev. Lydia and Rev. Julia and a growing band of playmates the first Saturday of each month from 9:30 – 11:00 am for this fun and empowering gathering. Playshop is a time for embodying our monthly themes. Using the tools of Interplay (interplay.org), we improvise with story-telling, movement, singing, and stillness — all based in play — to bring more ease to our lives and integrate body, mind and spirit. Our monthly theme for January is Imagination.

Meeting online has offered Rev. Julia the capacity to collaborate with her 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 online!

As we progress in building this online 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!)

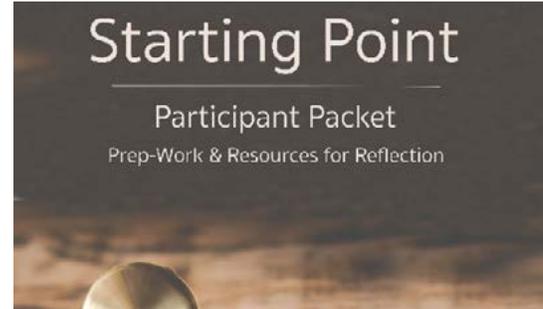
[We will meet in Rev. Lydia’s Zoom Room.](#)

Password: Chalice



Join Us for Journaling!
January 16th, 9:30 am

Journaling helps us to see and know ourselves. It is a way to expand on half-formed thoughts — bringing to the light parts of ourselves that reside only in our unconscious mind. Once acknowledged, we can start to work with those once hidden emotions and beliefs in a new way. In this workshop we will talk about the value and the practice of journaling. We will have several short writing sessions (that won't require sharing). Please bring a journal with blank pages and a pen. [Learn more.](#)



Starting Points Classes
January 7th, 6:30 pm

The Membership Team is hosting the fourth session of the Starting Points class for anyone who is new to Unitarian Universalism or anyone new or returning to HPCUU. Our final session of this series will be on Thursday, January 21st, from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm. If you have any questions please contact Gloria or Lynn, Membership Team Co-Chairs. membership@hpcuu.org

Church Meetings

Combined Leadership Meeting
January 9th, 2021, 9-11am
Rev J's Zoom Room

The Board, Core Team, and Multicultural Action Team will meet to discuss practical application in our congregation of the recommendations coming out of the Commission on Institutional Change report entitled: Widening the Circle of Concern. The report and other supporting resources -- including hearing the COIC reflections at General Assembly 2020 -- can be found here: <https://www.uua.org/uuagovernance/committees/cic>

If you have any questions or would like to be part of the leadership discussions about this topic, please contact Rev McKay, minister@hpcuu.org.



Mid-year Congregational Meeting
January 31st, 2021, 4:30 pm
High Plains Zoom Room

The Board and Rev McKay invite you to attend our second annual mid-year congregational meeting on Sunday, January 31, following the worship service. This will be a non-voting meeting providing updates on congregational progress so far this year. The Board continues their commitment to building trust through transparency, and you are encouraged to attend. You will hear how HiP Church is doing on all of its goals and initiatives, including financial and suggested policy updates. If you have questions for the Board that you would like a considered response to, please send them to President Gretchen Hein, president@hpcuu.org by Monday, January 11th, 2021.

HiP New Year's Eve Game Night!

December 31st, 7:30 pm

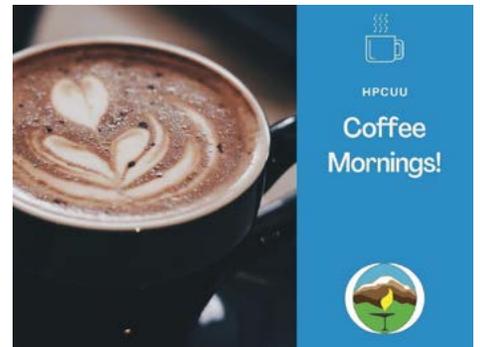
Bring your party hats and your party people for a game night that will be suitable for all ages. We'll enjoy a fun combination of Pub Trivia, Scavenger Hunt, Family Feud and Dance Off....then we'll have an early celebration of the new year! If you've been looking for an occasion to dress up in your cocktail attire, please do! If you prefer to be comfy, do that too! Since we're virtual, you can even do BOTH if you want to dress for a party on top, and be comfy on the bottom!! Be sure to invite family and friends from near or far to join us in the [HPCUU Zoom Room](#).



Coffee Mornings

Every 1st & 3rd Tuesday, 9-10 am

Join us on Zoom for morning coffee and a visit every 1st and 3rd TUESDAY of the month from 9-10 am. This is a casual time to chat and kick back with your HiP pals. All welcome! Join us in the [HPCUU Zoom Room](#). ID: 719 260 1080, Password: 25Years!



FRIDAY NIGHT HAPPY HOURS

Fridays, 5:00 pm

Grab your favorite adult beverage and join us for Happy Hour EVERY Friday evening from 5-6 pm. This is a lively, fun, and purely social time to get together over Zoom. See you then! Join us in the [HPCUU Zoom Room](#). ID: 719 260 1080, Password: 25Years!



Fellowship Game Night

January 23rd, 6:30 pm

Holidays are over; the days are long and dark; you're tired of reading in front of the fire. Even hot cocoa doesn't sound appetizing! Yes, it's January. Why not get your heart rate up a little and your mental juices flowing again. Join the Fellowship Team for another exhilarating (well, maybe not exhilarating, but fun) Game Night on January 23rd from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Watch the weekly E-blasts for more details on games we'll be playing and times. You know you'll have a good time! Hope to see you there.

*Save
the
date!*



The New To YUU (NTY) Shoppe is a virtual thrift store where members and friends of High Plains Church can donate and buy new and gently-used items and ALL proceeds benefit High Plains Church!

Donating and buying in NTY is a win-win-win: members can feel good that the things they can no longer use will find a new home and stay out of landfill; buyers can feel good about getting a bargain all while helping the church; and HPCUU can put some extra funds to good use to enhance our quality church programming.

The NTY Shoppe has raised nearly \$900 extra dollars for High Plains Church. To shop or donate, [CLICK HERE](#) or contact [Heather Ashbee](#) for further information or help.



Zoomin' with Joe!

February 6th at 7:00 pm

Join us for a fun evening of music and laughter with our beloved Joe Uveges!

High Plains members, friends and alumni - you won't want to miss this special Zoom concert as Joe performs for us LIVE from his studio. You'll hear his greatest hits and some of his new music too. Kick back with your favorite libation, visit with your HiP friends, and enjoy some really great music from Colorado Springs' (and our!) favorite entertainer! Got a song you would especially like to hear? Drop a note to auction@hpcuu.org and we'll see what we can do!

\$15 per ticket for Individual

\$30 per ticket for couple, family or pandemic pod

[CLICK HERE](#) to purchase your ticket!

If you registered for the auction, you can use the same User ID and password to access your account and pay for your concert ticket.

Join Us On Zoom

Sundays at 3:30pm join our live Online Service!

[HPCUU Zoom Room](#)

<https://zoom.us/j/7192601080>,
Meeting ID: 719 260 1080, Pass-
word: 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. We will record services for later play on YOUTUBE with the link sent by email distribution.

Join the Conversation!



[Facebook.com/HighPlainsCUU](https://www.facebook.com/HighPlainsCUU)



[Instagram.com/hpchurchuu/](https://www.instagram.com/hpchurchuu/)



[Soul Matters January](#)



[Facebook.com/HipDiscussionGroup](https://www.facebook.com/HipDiscussionGroup)

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!

Office Hours

Dawn Bergacker, our office administrator. Dawn is working Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 1-3 pm, Wednesday: 12-4 pm, Sunday: 2:30 - 5 pm. You can email her at office@hpcuu.org. Requests received on Saturday will be responded to on Sunday mornings. She also answers the church phone, 719-260-1080. If she doesn't pick up please leave a voicemail and she'll get back to you. If you need to reach her quickly she will also respond to texts to her personal phone, 719-337-9529.



HPCUU
 1945 Mesa Road
 Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Member of Unitarian Universalist Association
 Sunday Services at 3:30 pm

Come Join us!

HiP Board

Gretchen Hein, President
President@hpcuu.org

Jill Forney, Past President
PastPresident@hpcuu.org

Rick Carpenter, President-Elect
PresidentElect@hpcuu.org

Danielle Jernigan, Secretary
BoardSecretary@hpcuu.org

Sam Waller,
Church Financial Officer
CFO@hpcuu.org

Office: 719.260.1080

www.hpcuu.org



[Facebook.com/highplainscuu](https://www.facebook.com/highplainscuu)



[Instagram.com/hpchurchuu](https://www.instagram.com/hpchurchuu)

All submissions for the newsletter must be received by the 23rd of each month. Please send to communications@hpcuu.org.

Office Hours:

Sunday: 3pm–5pm
 Phone calls and emails answered during week day hours.

Bookkeeper's Hours

Mondays, 10 am – 2 pm

Rev. Julia's Hours

Tuesdays – Thursdays, Noon – 9pm

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 23th of each month to communications@hpcuu.org.

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

ReVISIONS by Jonathan

Specializing in Creative Home Improvements – Where ideas Become Reality

Do you need something in your world — fixed, added, or removed?

Projects include: Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing, Painting, Plastering, Dry walling, Tiling, and many more... Decks, Kitchens, Basements, Bathrooms, Windows, etc.

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