



SUNDAY SERVICE NOTES FOR MAY 2020



Sunday, May 3

Pandemic Progress Report

Reverend Tim Barger

Where are we in our congregational knowledge, actions, and reactions to the Covid-19 pandemic? When we finally do come back together, we won't reclaim all the old social ways of church. This service will explore how we're faring in coronavirus time and be a "state of the virus" examination.

Sunday, May 10

Mother's Day - Young Jesus

Reverend Tim Barger

There's not much scripture-level writing about Jesus as a child. In this installment of Rev. Tim's series of Jesus sermons, he'll look at the young Jesus according to Gnostic Gospels.

Sunday, May 17

Annual Meeting - Claiming 'Church'

Reverend Tim Barger

We liberal religious people sometimes avoid the use of "church." The term has connotations of evangelism and both narrow and extreme behavior that don't apply to us. Rather than avoiding "church," what about claiming it toward making a societal redefinition of what church says and does—and that includes the range of Unitarian Universalist theology from near-traditional religious practices to nonbelief? After a brief post-service pause, we'll continue on Zoom with the congregation's annual meeting. Please stay connected as important decisions, including our annual budget, will be up for consideration and your mail-in votes.

Sunday, May 24

Books and the Spirituality of Reading

Reverend Tim Barger

Finally, it's time for the sermon-topic-of-your-choice that was offered in the 2019 auction. Krista Schneider won the bidding and had offered her prize to Henry Doder. Their conversation started shortly before Henry's death, and in his memory, the sermon will be about books and reading.

Sunday, May 31

Flower Ceremony - Norbert Capek's Sesquicentennial

Reverend Tim Barger

Finally Let's try to fashion a congregational flower ceremony from our homes. The tradition is that we all bring one flower to church, put them together illustrating community, then take a different flower home. The flower practice will be a little different this year; how will our congregation be different?



Reverend Tim Barger

We don't know the cycle of a pandemic very well—I'm not talking about the characteristics of COVID-19, but the doings of society. For most of us, stay-at-home is a novel thing, it's starting to wear on us or we're already fed up with it, and getting out is a goal. How soon to do that, and how completely, is our challenge. We get proclamations from some politicians that "back to normal" can come this month and we need to restart going to our workplaces and public shopping in the next week or so. Then we see who is protesting the health-oriented restrictions—with reactionary devotion to guns and the current government administration—and we recognize that isolation continues to be the wise way. Know that the Toledo Unitarians aren't in a rush to get back to "as usual." We won't be on the front line of reopening. The minister and many congregation members are in the compromised category—because of age, health, and other factors. We aren't going to weigh balances of an acceptable ratio of sick to healthy that will determine going back to in-person Sunday services. Let's give it time. The board and the minister will work together to determine when to call the congregation back together. There will be reliance on science, on facts, and on what procedures are available, such as testing and developing treatment, for us to open the church doors, share the air, and even risk touch in safe ways if that's called for—but we might not hug yet or even shake hands, so don't be offended by people who stay apart. We also know that people will take their own time to return, so even when we reopen, we'll continue our newly adopted technological reach with Zoom and YouTube, giving spiritual, ethical, educational, and community content on our Toledo Unitarians channel and other media. We'll simulcast Sunday services. We might even try out telUUvangelism—well, we might joke about it. When we do meet again, it won't be in the old way. No, consider the coronavirus to have changed the how we have to conduct our gatherings. Initially, there will possibly be no coffee hour as we can't encourage close physical proximity for conversation. And no potluck, either, as an open table of food brought from many places brings risks, too—there were some early jokes about Zoom potlucks, but we might try the concept for real with a shared dinner with each of us in our own homes. You know that we have unused pew space, don't you—which means we can intentionally spread out in the sanctuary. And in the meantime, committees and chalice circles and other groups can start using Zoom, either on your own accounts or through the congregation's Zoom account (contact office@uutoledo.org to schedule). Keep tuning in to youtube.com/c/ToledoUnitarians. And, if you're a member, friend, or supporter and are not yet part of our Facebook private group, contact me to be added to the roll. We're continuing to be in community as we rebuild society and our re-form our congregation. I'm honored to be part of the Toledo Unitarians' leadership. Rev. Tim



Sandra Kosek-Sills, Board President

What strange times these are – staying at home while staying connected. And instead of a lot of showers, we ended up with a cold April. I hope May is bringing you flowers anyway. Speaking of staying connected, I hope you have been able to join us online. I think we are reaching a new audience with Toledo Unitarians on YouTube. This May we will have our Annual Meeting online as well, so that we can conduct some needed business in a timely manner despite everyone's concerns about large in-person events. Look for the link to join in the UUFYI. We have been using the UUFYI as an important communications tool, so please sign up for it and open and review it for updates. We have sent a snail mail letter with the meeting instructions, but it will be a lot easier to open an email with a link. If the technology remains a challenge to navigate – we are planning to do the vote that would normally be done in person, by mail. So expect to see a letter coming the week of May 18 with a ballot, and if you are a voting member, please fill it out and return it so that we are sure to have the required minimum votes to count. And, speaking of voting – don't forget to be sure to register to vote for the November election, and if you are so moved, follow UU the Vote. There are opportunities to help get out the vote even from home. Perhaps we will be mailing ballots in November as well. In the mean time, enjoy the fine spring weather – we can still get outside and enjoy some communion with the earth this spring. In Fellowship, Sandra



Kristin Olson, Acting Religious Educator

Greetings from RE! I hope that you are all safe and trying to stay healthy. As you know we are livestreaming the service on Sundays and we are livestreaming an RE program for grades 3rd-6th. This will be a continuation of our *Timeless Themes* curriculum. This curriculum teaches our youth the stories from our Judeo Christian roots from a UU perspective. We are also exploring having several mini lessons that have been previously recorded available at any time during the week. This will enable our youth to review stories that we have done in the past. We are working on recording mini lessons for our older youth too. This will be a continuation of the curriculum *Why Do Bad Things Happen?* This unit explores how people and cultures throughout time have tried to explain why disasters have happened. This unit seems particularly pertinent considering the pandemic that we are living through. We miss seeing your faces. We will make it through this. In Fellowship, Kristin Olson



Mickey Miller, Director of Music

It has been surreal to switch to virtual services this month. I can't wait to see our congregation all together and well again, but this has been an opportunity for me to appreciate the hard work and dedication of my colleagues at First Unitarian. Keeping up with you all via phone calls, Youtube, Facebook, and Zoom is a testament to the spirit of this church. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to share your musical talents virtually as we weather this storm together! In faith, Mickey

ANNUAL MEETING AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Annual Meeting will be held as a conference call/video through the Zoom platform on May 17, 2020 at 1 pm. Call information will be provided in advance via the UUFYI. The Nominating Committee Slate for Election at the Annual Meeting includes: Officers for a two-year term ending June 30, 2022, Krista Schneider for Vice President, Heidi Ralston for Treasurer Officer for an unexpired term ending June 30, 2021. Tom Sheehan for Secretary, Member at Large position for a two-year term ending June 30, 2022, Teresa Betts-Cobau, Mary Souther. Board members continuing their term ending June 30, 2021, President Sandra Kosek-Sills. Members-At-Large: Colette Cordova, Mike Davison, Arun Nadarajah.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The annual national gathering of Unitarian Universalists, will be entirely online this year. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the planners canceled the Providence, Rhode Island, meeting and are making the transition to a virtual convention. It will still take place June 24-28. If you would like to take part in General Assembly, the fee is \$150. You can sign up at uua.org/ga/registration. If you'd like to be a delegate, our congregation gets four, and we've filled only two places, with Abigail Humphreys and David Strickler. Contact Board President Sandra Kosek-Sills if you'd like to be an official representative with voting privileges. You can also attend without being a delegate. For more information go to: uua.org/ga

OUR CURRENT SCHEDULE ON YOUTUBE AND ZOOM

Sundays 10 am Spiritual Adventures on ZOOM, 10:30 am Religious Education, 11 am Sunday Service, Noon Coffee Hour, Wednesdays 7 pm Midweek Meditation are all on YOUTUBE. Connect to Zoom through the link in the FYI. Connect to all of our productions by searching YOUTUBE for Toledo Unitarians.

CARING COMMITTEE

If you or a member of our congregation is hospitalized, or need assistance, please let the Caring Committee know. Contact Marsha Gamble, Chair, at: marshagamble548@gmail.com

GUEST AT YOUR TABLE

To donate online, go to uusc.org/givetoguest and fill in the information there. Please make donations directly and not through the church collection. Matching funds are available for a donation of \$125.00 or more. On a budget? Consider a monthly pledge. As little as \$15.00 monthly would cover the membership fee and a bit more for this fiscal year. Your pledge would continue until you choose to cancel it, so future cumulative donations would be eligible for the matching funds. Your donations are tax deductible.

SPIRITUAL ADVENTURES CHAIR

Susan Spiegel is retiring as Chair of Spiritual Adventures. Will you consider making a time-limited commitment to the continuation of Spiritual Adventures? If you would like more information, please talk to any committee member: Alieah White, Ginny Washing, Patt Church, or Susan Spiegel. This is an exciting and interesting way to serve our church—with lots of opportunity for personal spiritual growth. Perhaps this will be your way of combining passion with service!

ZOOM

There are several ways to connect to Zoom. You can go to <https://zoom.us> and sign up for free. Or you can access Zoom meetings from the links in the special FYI's that are emailed. Read the FYI and follow the directions clicking the links. You can also call in if you have the meeting ID and password. Nationwide phone numbers are: (253)-215-8782 or (301)-715-8592. We look forward to much congregational connection with Zoom. Please be a part of the many opportunities to connect with your church family. See you online!



2020 at First Unitarian Church of Toledo

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|----------------------------|---|--|----------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| | | | | | 1 May Day | 2 |
| 3 10:00 am Spiritual Adventures YouTube 10:30 am Children's RE YouTube 11:00 am Worship Service YouTube 12:00 pm Fellowship YouTube 5:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 4 | 5 Cinco de Mayo 6:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 6 7:00 pm Meditation - YouTube | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 Mother's Day 10:00 am Spiritual Adventures YouTube 10:30 am Children's RE YouTube 11:00 am Worship Service YouTube 12:00 pm Fellowship YouTube 5:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 11 | 12 6:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 13 7:00 pm Meditation - YouTube 7:30 pm Budget Meeting | 14 | 15 | 16 10:00 am Budget Meeting |
| 17 Annual Meeting 1:00 PM 10:00 am Spiritual Adventures YouTube 10:30 am Children's RE YouTube 11:00 am Worship Service YouTube 12:00 pm Fellowship YouTube 5:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 18 | 19 6:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 20 7:00 pm Meditation - YouTube NEWSLETTER DEADLINE | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24/31 10:00 am Spiritual Adventures YouTube 10:30 am Children's RE YouTube 11:00 am Worship Service YouTube 12:00 pm Fellowship YouTube 5:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 25 Memorial Day | 26 6:30 pm Meditation - Zoom | 27 7:00 pm Meditation - YouTube | 28 | 29 | 30 |

MEDITATION

I'm happy to say that we are holding our mediation sessions virtually using ZOOM! We have found this to be a wonderful way to experience our interconnectedness. Our MultiFaith Meditation will continue on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7:30PM. If you are interested in attending please email kbchristie@bex.net and I will include you in the email invitation to join the meeting. During this time of COVID-19 isolation, we are going to hold our Sunday evening meditation sessions every Sunday from 5:30-7:00PM. If you would like to join us please email kbchristie@bex.net and I will include you on the email invitation. Each session will include a guided meditation, a 30 minute silent meditation followed by a period of reflection. May you all be safe and protected. Contact Karen at kbchristie@bex.net with any questions.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Church office hours are temporarily suspended. Please reach us by phone or email at: office@uutoledo.org, bookkeeper@uutoledo.org, carols@uutoledo.org, or minister@uutoledo.org

MINI FOOD PANTRY

Please remember to bring non-perishable food items and place in the Little Pantry in the parking lot. Popular foods include peanut butter, jelly, macaroni and cheese, soup, juice boxes, fruit and pudding cups, cereal, granola bars, and tuna, toothpaste, baby shampoo, soap, and hygiene products. Note the expiration date on the items--**no expired items may be given**.

BOARD SPECIAL SESSION INFORMATION

Churches have been exempted from the shelter in place order, but we have reduced the number of people holding the online services and some of the other elements such as RE will be pre-recorded and/or remotely recorded to maintain physical distancing. Expect a few changes with the service on YouTube but it will still be there for now. Again, much appreciation to our minister, CLMs, and staff for their dedication to serve. We will be limiting access to the building to everyone except staff, security, cleaning, and building and grounds. **The code has been changed, so please do not attempt to access the building.** We hope to have expanded Zoom access soon so we can have committee meetings by conferencing. Pastoral care is still available by phone and email, please do continue to let the Caring Circle know if you have needs. The new web site has been constructed and we will be moving to a new host service ASAP. The existing online donation system is preserved on the new site but we are also going to get set up in PayPal and/or Venmo. Effective immediately, if you are on a committee that has a budget, please limit discretionary spending even if you have money left over. We have enough operating reserve that I am confident we can weather this storm financially, but it will help a lot if everyone can continue to pay pledges and make collection plate offerings. Most of our financial commitments are to our hard working and dedicated staff. Please take advantage of our new online capability and come to the Toledo Unitarians YouTube channel to participate in Spiritual Adventures, RE, services and meditations. Hope to see you there!

STYROFOAM

Churches The recycling station at Ann Arbor where we take our Styrofoam is currently closed due to the pandemic with no definite date to reopen. If you are able to store your accumulated Styrofoam at home, that would be great since the church garage is filling up, but if that isn't a possibility, you can still bring it to church rather than throwing it into the garbage. Check with Karen Porter for further instructions.

FREE TREES

Tree Toledo (the local environmental organization hoping to plant one tree for every Toledoan) currently has 1500 Norway Spruce seedlings to give away. These are great for privacy fencing, windbreaks, a future Christmas tree, or just to beautify your yard. These are 10-18" bare root seedlings that are fast growing and long-lasting, often growing to 60' in height. If interested, call Tom McDonald (419-474-8801), Bev Bingle (419-508-6644) or email treetoledo@gmail.com

SPIRITUAL ADVENTURES

The SPIRITUAL ADVENTURES COMMITTEE invites your ideas and suggestions for programs in June--in our new ZOOM! interactive format. Our programs continue at 10 AM on Sundays, but now are limited to 30 minute online programs. Can you lead a discussion on a topic of your choice (how about SPRING or GARDENING or HOPE?), host readings of stories or poetry, enlighten us with your expertise or experiences, or suggest a speaker (within our church or in the larger community) who can adapt to our new program format? Contact the Spiritual Adventures Committee...Susan Spiegel (saspieg@yahoo.com), Alieah White, Ginny Washing, or Patt Church. ALL IDEAS ARE WELCOME!

ORDERS OF SERVICE

Orders of Service will be available electronically each week. Please look for the Saturday email with a link to the Order of Service, to read along, while watching our Sunday service on our YouTube Toledo Unitarians channel. Also links to our ZOOM interactive meetings can be found there.

COMMITTEE ON SHARED MINISTRY

The Committee on Shared Ministry is available to handle your concerns/questions/comments on all aspects of church life. You may contact us by email at: cosm3205@gmail.com or speak directly to any of our members: Phil Teitlebaum, Bonnie Rowe, Rich Miller, Kathy Crowther, Rev. Tim Barger

FREE MONEY

Are You Signed Up? Earn free money for your church! Sign up at krogercommunityrewards.com and smile.amazon.com. Email the church office with questions. office@uutoledo.org

FREE MASKS

We have quite a few volunteers making fabric masks in support of health care workers to protect against Covid-19. Our congregants are important, too, and it sounds from the governor's briefings that we will be encouraged to wear masks for everyone's protection for several months. If you need a mask, please contact Cindy Gilmore at: sudymjw@yahoo.com

THANK YOU

Thank you to all who purchased hanging flower baskets from our Mother's Day flower sale. We raised over \$200 for the general fund.