July 5, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
Anti-Racism and Our Faith
Join three of our congregational leaders involved in various racial justice efforts as they discuss why we’re involved and what they’ve learned.
Worship Leaders: Sharon Copeland, Meg Cox Leone, and Susan MacDonnell
Worship Associate: Clara Haignere
Music: Victor Cristobal; Michael Banks; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

July 12, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The Useful Tree
The story from ancient China is one of a tree that is too disfigured to be of use. And so it is not used, and thus survives. Let’s follow this story into a reflection on productivity, being, and usefulness.
Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely  Worship Associate: Susan MacDonnell
Music: Courtney Orlando, violin; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

July 19, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The Art of Ambiguity
Sometimes we prefer exactness and clarity, but in matters of the spirit, a little ambiguity can offer freedom and flexibility. How can embracing ambiguity lead to growth and happiness?
Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely  Worship Associate: Bob Harris
Music: Victor Cristobal; Michael Banks; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

July 26, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
Bouncing Back
The old saying is “fall seven times, rise up eight.” It encourages resilience, or bouncing back from disappointment. And resilience is of central importance in the life of the spirit, and in life in general. How can we cultivate resilience?
Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely  Worship Associate: Marc Rubenstein
Music: Isabella Morales, alto; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

The August Worship Calendar is on the next page

To help contain the spread of the coronavirus, all Sunday services will be live-streamed on YouTube Live and Zoom until further notice. Please see Page 3, and keep an eye on your email, as well as www.uuprinceton.org for updates.
August 2, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The 4th UU Principle

Join us on this Sunday as we dive into one of our UU Principles: A Free and Responsible Search for Truth and Meaning, and unpack what such a simple sentence can mean in our complex world. This is the first of a back-to-back Sunday look at two of our UU Principles and what they mean to Pauline Nijander and Paige Cupp.

Worship Leader: Pauline Nijander, Ministerial Intern  
Worship Associate: Paige Cupp
Music: Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

August 9, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The 1st UU Principle

This Sunday concludes the back-to-back services with Paige Cupp and Pauline Nijander about the UU principles. Join us as we dive into the first UU Principle, The Inherent Worth and Dignity of Every Person, and its application in the lives of UUs.

Worship Leader: Paige Cupp  
Worship Associate: Pauline Nijander
Music: Victor Cristobal; Michael Banks; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

August 16, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The 7th UU Principle

Rev. Bill continues Paige and Pauline’s theme with a sermon on the Seventh UU Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely  
Worship Associate: Darci Erickson
Music: Jeffrey Fadden, guitar; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

August 23, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The 8th UU Principle

Our denomination is considering the addition of an 8th UU Principle that would speak to our vision of a world free of racism and other forms of oppression. Let’s learn more about the 8th principle, and how we can join the broader discussion.

Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely  
Worship Associate: Darci Erickson
Music: Victor Cristobal; Michael Banks; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman

August 30, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.
The Sources

The Sources (usually listed after the Principles) describe from where UU’s primarily draw moral guidance, wisdom, and inspiration. Let’s explore the Sources as a group, that we might better understand the foundation and form of our faith.

Worship Leader: Rev. Bill Neely  
Worship Associate: Lauren Foss
Music: Herb Foster, horn; Nick Tiberi, piano; Marjorie Herman
Gatherings are beginning to happen again, as I write these words. Groups are able to form in-person again, albeit in small sizes, with face masks, and the observance of social distancing. Businesses are actively modifying their operations to be able to reopen. Sports leagues are figuring out what is possible now, and arts organizations are trying to determine what will be possible later. Protestors en masse have taken to the streets around the globe to declare that “Black Lives Matter.” And voters have risked their health to go to primary polls in states with leaders who make voting by mail difficult, if not impossible.

Every step toward some sense of a “return-to-normal” feels tentative, for conditions could change, quickly, such that a return to a stricter kind of quarantine is necessary. But for now, there is a slight opening. Perhaps we’re enjoying the company of people we haven’t seen in a while. Perhaps we’re moving through the world with a little less fear. Perhaps we’re remembering how good it feels to be surrounded, physically, by life larger than ours; by a sense of life with which we are both familiar and unfamiliar; by the sacred presence of neighbor and stranger.

I hope that one day, when this is really over, we all remember how good it feels to gather again, even in these very limited ways. By all educated estimates, we are many months away from being able to gather in-person as a full worshipping, learning, and serving community again, but there are small gifts popping up here and there: lunch with a friend, outside and spaced apart; kids riding their bikes around empty parking lots, racing and laughing and enjoying each other’s company; parents and their adult children and grandkids finding ways to safely be in each other’s presence again. Each gathering is a gift, and while our larger ones will need to remain online through the summer and into the fall, the blessings of smaller gatherings with family and friends are to be embraced with gratitude and lifted up in praise. And they’re to be remembered, with joy, when things feel more “normal.”

Online and in-person, blessed be the ties that bind our hearts in human love. And may we praise the Source of that love, who calls us, in ways ancient and very new, again and again, to the sacred presence of neighbor and stranger.

From Rev. Bill – Thank you so very much to everyone who contributed funds for the purchase of a year-end gift for me. I was very surprised and deeply moved to receive that gift at our Annual Meeting. Even though I know you as a beautifully generous and loving congregation, I never expected that kind and thoughtful surprise. Thank you, deeply.

I’m like a kid in a candy store when I enter Labyrinth Books, so the gift card that you purchased for me there is a tremendous treat. And the cash gift card is so thoughtful as well. Shannon and I will use part of that for some date nights, and once the staff is able to gather again, part of that gift will go a celebratory lunch for all of us. I receive that gift grateful for the staff, Meg Cox Leone and the Board, and the numerous volunteers and lay leaders who have helped our beloved faith community thrive during these challenging times. I am beyond grateful to you and to those who helped our congregation become who we are. And I’m eager for our next year together, which will be our 10th. Whatever we face, we’ll face it as one. And we’ll come through it strong, and together.

Mission Statement of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton

In our open, welcoming community we live our message of hope, love, justice, and joy.

Approved at the 6/3/2012 Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton Annual Meeting

JOIN US FOR LIVE-STREAM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

As we continue to plan for the immediate future, we hope you’ll join us for our live-stream worship service on Sunday mornings, at 10:30 a.m.!

View via Zoom:
Every Sunday morning we will send an e-mail message with the access information.

View via YouTube Live
https://www.youtube.com/user/uuprinceton
July / August UU Princeton Spiritual Theme – Our Principles and Sources

By Rev. Bill

Our Monthly Spiritual Themes guide our Chalice Circles, which are small, intentional groups of members and friends that gather for spiritual enrichment through personal sharing. For more information on Chalice Circles, please email Linda Benson at chalicecircles@uuprinceton.org. Our Chalice Circle themes for July and August are the Principles and Sources of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

You’re invited to reflect on any or all of these expressions. What are some examples of how a Principle takes shape in your life? How does a Source offer you guidance?

The Principles

- 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 the 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.
- (Being considered at denominational and congregational levels) Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.

The Sources

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.
**Faith Development for Children and Youth**

**Summer 2020**
This summer our youngest children will continue to meet every Friday afternoon from 12:30pm-1:00pm for a virtual Children’s Chapel via ZOOM. Please check the weekly Happenings every Friday for the updated log-in information. While this gathering is designed for our Youngest Group -- All Ages are Welcome.

Older children interested in reading their favorite picture book to the littler kids during one of these Chapels are invited to contact Rev. Jennifer at either (609) 577-7600 or at jennifer@uuprinceton.org to sign-up.

**Developing Friendships between Children, Youth & Adults at UUCP**

**NEW! for the 2020-2021 Congregational Year**

*It has been shown that to grow up healthy, our youth need to be supported and known by at least five adults in addition to their parents or caregivers who are willing to invest their time with them personally and spiritually.*


In the coming congregational year, we will be launching a new process with the goal of being more intentional about connecting our members across the generations. This exercise is for families interested in having a personal adult friend in the congregation for their child or children and for adults who wish to be a friend to a child. We’ll begin late this summer or early fall, maybe as pen pals, and we’ll ask you to continue investing time with one another over the coming years. Like imagine the eventuality, post-quarantine, of sitting together in worship, going to see the child perform in a school play, celebrating a birthday together, being at their graduation party. This isn’t meant to be a short-term program -- although group classes and chapels will still exist in some fashion -- but a long-term, live-giving, mutually beneficial relationship. One of which you will be supported by me and others in Faith Development leadership.

**Questions?** I’m happy to chat by phone or ZOOM. Email me to set up a time.

**How to sign up?** If you are a parent who would like to have your child participate or an adult that would like to take part let me know today by reaching out via email: jennifer@uuprinceton.org.

**Sunday Services Book List**
I’ve had a number of requests for the books we’ve recently presented in Sunday worship, as many of you wish to add to your libraries for your children or grandchildren. They include:  

- *Mindful Bea and the Worry Tree* by Gail Silver, Illustrated by Franziska Höllbacher
- *Tomorrow I’ll Be Kind* words and pictures by Jessica Hische
- *I AM HUMAN* by Susan Verde, Art by Peter H. Reynolds
- *The Stuff of Stars* by Marion Dane Bauer, Illustrated by Ekua Holmes

**Raising our Children to Be Anti-Racists**
Our commitment to dismantle white supremacy and live into a world where Black Lives Matter begins within our own hearts and at home. Thanks to the commitment of the Racial Justice Task Force here at UUCP, this month I am participating in an online workshop with the Center for the Study of White American Culture called "Raising Anti-racist White Children". Studies show that long before kindergarten children learn racial biases. This is often not because they were taught bias at home but often because conversations about race, specifically in white families, are not happening at home.

**What are these conversations you ask?**

Well that is a good part of what I'll be learning in this webinar and sharing with you. I commit to do so because our work to be anti-racist is deeply spiritual work. Our UU ancestors believed our call was to "create heaven here on earth" and "heaven" is a place where we are realized fully equal in the Spirit of Life and Love.

To start us off, I am sharing the following Story Times, Lessons, Podcasts, Texts and Music as resources for you to use in your conversations with the children in your life right now:

**Stories & Videos for Children and Their Grown-Ups:**

- *The Breaking News by Sarah Lynne Reul* (not specifically about race, but about how children feel the emotions their grown-ups feel and how they try to make sense of them)  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-U3lF5Er_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-U3lF5Er_E)

- *Woke Read Alouds: Wings by Christopher Myers* (put together by Woke Kindergarten, a fantastic lesson-based reading for younger children)  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgVgZVYBS-oY&fbclid=IwAR1bY7ykyHYvufBVmzrcsc_OyAnD_YpeAIBaRUIjzk2wVODU0WMkWtsT2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgVgZVYBS-oY&fbclid=IwAR1bY7ykyHYvufBVmzrcsc_OyAnD_YpeAIBaRUIjzk2wVODU0WMkWtsT2Y)

- *Sesame Street explain Black Lives Matter*  
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBUFcv0y0yk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBUFcv0y0yk)

**Black Parents Explain How to Deal with the Police | Cut**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBUFcv0y0yk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xBUFcv0y0yk)

(Children & Youth continued on page 6)
(Children & Youth continued from page 5)

Animation Series: Something Happened In Our Town by Marianne Celano (directly addresses the killing of black person by police officer)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leOh0FGcWm8&fbclid=IwAR0zOXkPIZZGZJogDfTiyKAK3nSXv5v1mucY461Zg-jXDsMvLYk_MSQj6I

Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness
Free PDF Download: https://www.dottirpress.com/not-my-idea
Online read: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_f2IGrv44o

Anti-racist Baby: A Board Book
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07YJW445R/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1

ADULT AUDIO:
How White Parents Can Talk To Their Kids About Race, NPR https://www.npr.org/2020/06/03/869071246/how-white-parents-can-talk-to-their-kids-about-race
Brené Brown with Ibram X. Kendi on How to Be an Antiracist https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-ibram-x-kendi-on-how-to-be-an-antiracist

ADULT TEXT:
PDF Download: https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/publications/beyond-the-golden-rule

MULTIGENERATIONAL MUSIC:
Common Hymnal: Rose Petals featuring Dee Wilson
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-3KikfQo_E

I Need You to Survive: Dr. Glen Thomas Rideout leading a gathered community (at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly in 2016) in the song, “I Need you to Survive” by Hezekiah Walker.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GURBo8jk_n8

You are most welcome to share with me any additional resources you may have that help us talk with our children about race and ethnicity. When we gather back after summer learning and excursions, I’ll share more articles, stories, videos and podcasts aimed to advance our commitment to anti-racism.

With abiding love, Rev. Jennifer Kelleher, Assistant Minister

(Social Justice continued from page 9)

Meeting July 18, 20 - via Zoom – registration instructions below

One of the core principles of our model legislation, "the American Anti-Corruption Act" (www.anticorruptionact.org) is: "Let all voters participate in open primaries." We, in New Jersey, are saddled with closed primaries. Only by declaring for one party or another can one vote in our primaries. As of December 2019, there were 2.39 million independents in NJ, comprising 39% of the electorate. New Jersey is one of 10 states where independent voters outnumber Democrats or Republicans.

On July 18, 2020, Sue Davies, who heads NJ Independent Voters, will make "the case for open primaries." To register for this Zoom event, email (davidgoodman382@verizon.net). We'll send you the quick and easy steps. For more info contact Debra Lambo (UUCP member of RepresentUS ) at deblam52@gmail.com

UU FaithAction NJ – Annual Meeting
UUFA Skylights 6/14/20
The Virtual UUFA Annual Meeting was held June 6, 2020 and was a chance to meet with friends and colleagues online from congregations all over the state to discuss critical issues and to plan action. There were 97 participants.

The Keynote Speakers, Dr. Ana Baptista and Dr. Nicky Sheats, represented the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance (NJEJA) which is a statewide alliance of organizations and individuals committed to working together to create healthy, sustainable and just communities by eliminating environmental injustices in low income and communities of color. They support and work with communities through local, state, and national policy development, targeted campaigns and organizing, education, advocacy, training and technical assistance focused on critical environmental justice issues. The speakers

(Social Justice continued on page 7)
Newcomers’ Events

The Mission of the UU Princeton Membership Ministry is that all who enter feel welcome, known, and loved. Newcomers experience personal and congregational connections that lead them to become committed UUs and members of our congregation.

We hope to resume our newcomers’ events soon.

If you have any questions about our events, membership or our congregation, please email us at membership@uuprinceton.org. We look forward to getting to know you better.

Joys and Sorrows

Pastoral Associates is a group of trained and caring members of the congregation that offers support and assistance to congregants facing difficulties, crises, or life transitions. If you believe that someone within the congregation or you, yourself, might benefit from the PA program, please send an email to PA@UUPrinceton.org, or contact Judy Malsbury or Lauren Foss.

The Pastoral Associates are here for you. Even in this time when we’re cautiously navigating COVID-19, there are services we can offer to coordinate. These include phone calls, virtual (Zoom) or social distance visits, preparing and delivering meals, running errands, or writing cards. Additionally depending on circumstances and the comfort of individuals and volunteers we might be able to assist in coordinating or advising how to obtain other services. If you are interested in being a volunteer for any of these services, please let us know.

If you’re feeling isolated or anxious or in need of some other service, please contact the church to be in touch with our PA’s. We’ll connect with you.

Remember if you develop flu-like symptoms: stay home, call a doctor, and then let us know so that we can check up on you.

With any of the services we offer, we will work within the confines of keeping our volunteers and you safe.

SPRING SALE Postponed Again!!

After considerable early planning, recruiting, and launching start-up activities, the pandemic necessitated postponing such a major community-wide event. Our initial hope was to re-schedule for Fall 2020, but it is unlikely a vaccine or treatment would become widely available by this September. Therefore, the organizing team now recommends cancelling 2020 and planning for a May 1st, 2021 Spring Sale. To our knowledge, this is the only time that UU Princeton has not hosted a Sale since it began in May 1959.

Many of us have been setting aside furniture, clothing and household items to donate, and we know that this delay is a significant inconvenience. We’ll be monitoring the situation, and hope to resume recruiting volunteers and making plans for this wonderful community event as soon as congregational life returns to normal. Please stay tuned and reserve our newly-proposed date!

-- Judy Vee, Binnie Thom & Cathy Bauer-Koggan
Spring Sale Coordinators

(Social Justice continued from page 6)

described some of the current concerns and legislation that are being addressed, such as curbing disproportionate pollution in burdened communities. The breakout sessions for the various Task Forces were held in the afternoon and delivered lively discussions and plans for the future.
Gracenotes

Music on Zoom

Having settled into our Zoom worship services, our Music Ministry is starting to participate in full form, thanks mainly to our 2 techie musicians, Nick Teaberry – pianist, and Victor Cristobal – tenor section leader. Through their expertise and experimentation, the sound of our music offerings has improved immeasurably, and we’re now able to have individual pieces that are part pre-recorded, and part live that are enmeshed together to great effect. We’re hoping eventually to use the Virtual Choir technology to slowly add voices one by one to the mix.

We’ve been given a lucky break, a blessing from the pandemic if there is such as thing. We thought we would lose Nick in June, as he and wife Emily have been planning from the start to move back to Pittsburgh, which is their home. But because we’re continuing our online services indefinitely, Nick can still be with us on Sunday’s on Zoom. Many of you have commented on Nick’s playing, and we, the musicians who have had the joy to work with him, are continually blown away by his keyboard skills, his inventiveness, his flexibility, and his overall good humor. We count our blessings, Nick, for every day that you remain in our midst!

Music Ministry Ensembles – Even though our ensembles will not be meeting in the foreseeable future, below is information about the ways we hope to resume participation as soon as the fates allow.

Adult Choir. The ensemble has 25-30 members, and now includes several people from the community who have come to sing! We’re looking for singers in all sections, but altos and basses especially are needed. If you hesitate because you think your voice isn’t good enough, or in shape, come and be surprised at how quickly your voice will expand when surrounded with voices just like yours. Even a minimal amount of choral or music-reading experience, recent or long ago, is all you’ll need to add your voice to this wonderful and welcoming ensemble. Rehearsals are every Wednesday evening, from 7:30 to 9pm; the Choir sings for services about two Sundays per month. To sing in the Adult Choir, contact Marjorie at marjmuse@verizon.net, or just come and check us out any Wednesday evening at 7:30pm.

Bell Choir. Our Director, Joelle Piercy has been leading our enthusiastic ensemble of bell ringers for many years. AND, for the 2019-2020 season she will be taking a much deserved sabbatical as her new baby is due in the fall. Our interim director is Princeton University student Thaddeus Whelan, who now serves as a lead percussionist with the Princeton University Band. Rehearsals for the Bell Choir has changed to Sunday afternoons at 12:30 in Room 1. Please note that we not only have 3 octaves of bells, but we also have three octaves of chimes, with a softer, sweeter sound. If interested, contact Marjorie at marjmuse@verizon.net.

Kids’ Chorale. Director Evan Corn is off to college in the fall, and we are in hot pursuit of a replacement. The Kids will continue to rehearse most Sunday mornings at 9:30am. It’s a great time to consider this kid-friendly bunch, so contact marjmuse@verizon.net for a complete rehearsal and performance schedule.

Oompah Band. This jolly ensemble is for woodwind and brass players. This ensemble is always looking for more instrumentalists. The Oompah Band is the group that adds so much color and charm to church events such as the Hanging of the Greens. With the addition of a few more musicians last year, the Band sounded fuller than ever. If interested, contact Herb Foster at Herb_foster@yahoo.com.

House Band. Our new House Band, under the superb direction of John Burton, has gone great guns in its first year under the able leadership of John Burton. We’re still looking for interested a guitarist, bass player, and percussionist to join accomplished Gig-meister John to will add energy (not necessarily volume) to our services. You can reach John at johnmburton@gmail.com

Music Ministry Mission Statement

To provide, through the power of music, a dynamic ministry that will inspire transcendent personal experiences, draw the congregation into greater kinship, and bring inspiration to the wider community.
**Social Justice Ministry and Related Meetings and Events Changes and Cancellation Updates**

**Social Justice Steering Committee Meetings:**

Our Social Justice meeting steering committee will break for the summer and resume on September 22 at 7PM. Zoom details will be sent separately. Contact Louise Senior (drLSenior@gmail.com) with any questions or topics that need to be addressed via email or other virtual means.

**Looking for a way to become involved or know someone to recommend?** The steering committee is looking for a person or rotating people who would be interesting in taking the role of scribe/secretary to record meeting minutes, compose monthly Skylights updates and other recording activities. The committee meets every other month from September to June, so a commitment of a few hours each for five months. Meetings will always include Zoom so you can do this from the comfort of your own home if you cannot easily travel. It is a wonderful opportunity for someone who would like to get involved but has limited time. Contact Francesca Vollaro at 202-486-6874 or favollaro@aol.com for more info!

**Rainbow Ministry**

Our ministry actively seeks to provide welcome, acceptance, celebration and support to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning and other (LGBTQ+) persons of all ages, all genders, and all sexual orientations in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton and in outreach to the larger community. Our rainbow flag hangs in Robinson Lounge as a beacon of our welcoming congregation.

Our events are postponed until we can safely be together again. Meanwhile feel free to contact us at LGBTQ@uuprinceton.org.

**Citizens Climate Lobby:** Normally 2nd Saturday each month,

Citizens’ Climate Lobby is pleased to have the support of UUCP (see recent UUCP resolution: [http://www.uuprinceton.org/new-climate-resolution/](http://www.uuprinceton.org/new-climate-resolution/)). CCL’s normal monthly meetings in Fahs have been converted completely to virtual meetings: – The upcoming National broadcasts will be on Saturday, July 11th and August 8th starting at 1:00PM (log in 5-10 minutes early for soundcheck); this will be followed by a separate Zoom chapter meeting. Stay tuned through our weekly e-Happenings emails for the zoom link once it is known or contact Dunbar Birnie (UUCP member of CCL) at dunbar.birnie@gmail.com.

**RepresentUS Central NJ Chapter:** Normally 3rd Saturday each month, Fahs Auditorium at UUCP

(Social Justice continued on page 6)
Racial Discussions with your Kids

“Change isn’t enough Dad, we need to tear it down completely...”

Discussing police reform and racial justice with the family

Kevin Trayner, co-chair Racial Justice Task Force

That was the beginning of one of the many long conversations I have had with my two children and wife, about racial justice these past few weeks. In the past month, we’ve marched in several local protests, and had more family discussions about race and its current and historical impact - on police, prisons, economics, education, and politics than I can ever recall.

And although we are clearly on the same side, after an hour or so of raised voices and impassioned discussion, it didn’t feel that way. This particular discussion was about “Defund the Police”. We were talking about the recent tragic shooting of Maurice Gordon, an unarmed black man by a NJ State Trooper.

My initial comment that sparked the debate was that “he was not trained properly”. My son immediately jumped on this and said that just making changes to this system was not enough, we needed to tear it down completely and put something else in its place.

In my defense, I was trying to understand how someone that is a police officer (“Protect and Serve” right?) went from helping his disabled car, to firing six bullets into his body and ending his life on the same highway. For me, I needed to empathize and think of how a different outcome could have been achieved. For example, if the officer had de-escalation training in diffusing a potentially dangerous situation, might things have been different? (Most police forces do not require or use this training, although all are trained in the use of deadly force.)

My children argued against this approach. (I should stop here and mention that my son is legally an adult, and my daughter nearly so, but hey they’ll always be my kids.) Training doesn’t matter when the role of the institution is to maintain the racial status quo and oppress and terrorize non-whites, and there is no accountability for when black lives are taken. It is certainly true that murder trials are rare for police officers, and convictions even rarer.

We also got into the philosophical/ethical discussion: “are the individuals who become cops inherently racist and violent and willfully participate in their roles?” The humanist in me does not believe this – my kids were less convinced. But in the end, does it even matter? A chant we used in a recent protest in Hamilton I think answers this: “No good cops in a racist system.” Even if you are a good person – and the few cops I have known personally seemed good citizens to me – what does it matter, if the system is corrupt. And at least in the South, you can trace a pretty clear line from the 13th Amendment which established freedom for all except prisoners, to the widespread use of sheriffs and slave patrols to round up and terrorize former slaves, to modern police departments. (Check out the very informative movie “13ths on Netflix for more on the prison system, “war on drugs” and corporatization of prison labor).

Certainly, the phrase “Defund the Police” evokes resistance and concern from many. I found I had a very visceral negative reaction to it the first time I heard it as I took it quite literally. However, the scope of the movement varies depending on who you talk to – ranging from entirely disbanding the police force, to re-focusing resources on community involvement, and maintaining a smaller group for response to violent crime.

At its core, “Defund the Police” is about public safety reform – which sounds a lot less scary, although no less radical. It asks the questions - how money is spent on police, what it is paying for, how is this contributing to the goal of public safety, and could the money be better spent elsewhere to achieve that objective. Police budgets in cities like New York or LA are in the billions of dollars. And even in a relatively smaller town like Princeton, police salaries accounted for $7.4 million in the 2020 budget.

In our family discussion, we kept coming back to the same questions:

If police are meant to keep us safe, why is it that most people (I’m including myself here) feel less safe when they are around?

Why do police have guns? They don’t in many other countries. The Guardian has a database from 2016 which tracked fatal police shootings in the US. Here’s a statistic to chew on – England and Wales have had 55 fatal police shootings in the past 25 years. We are averaging around 1,000 + every year.

Why do the police seem to have less accountability for their actions than civilians they protect?

How is it OK for a police officer to shoot someone because of a “perceived” threat?

(Racial Justice continued on page 11)
UU History

Notable UU Birthdays in July

Here is the question once again: “Why does a faith with so few members include so many who have made significant contributions to society?”

Enjoy! ~ Carl Haag

Find out for yourself. Select at least one name from the list below and click on a site mentioned at the bottom. Find out what they did, the other UUs they knew, and about the life they lived!

Five of the individuals below you probably know. One of the others was the first President of the UUA, another was the first woman to receive an honorary D.D. degree, still another lived a life that reads like fiction, and finally a WWII vet who became the Executive Director of the Urban League.

UU July Birthdays

4* - Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804)
5 - Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810), and Dana McLean Greeley (1908)
11 - John Quincy Adams (1767)
12 - Henry David Thoreau (1817)
16 - Augusta Jane Chapin (1836)
28 - George de Benneville (1733), and Beatrix Potter (1866)
31 - Whitney Young (1921)

[Editor’s Note: Carl’s Birthday is July 3. Happy Birthday Dear Carl!]

* There are two UU deaths on July 4, two men who intensely disagreed but finally reconciled, both Presidents of the United States: John Adams, 90, and Thomas Jefferson, 83.

[1] Unitarian Universalist Biographical Dictionary

(Racial Justice continued from page 10)

How is their life worth more?

How can we allow this system which kills, locks up and terrorizes people of color to exist?

I realized a few things at the end of our discussion. We (my generation) are not going to be the ones to change our broken system. Our children are the ones that have the uncompromising vision and passion for a different vision of the future. They don’t accept what is. They don’t feel any obligation to. We are still too much in the past and believing that those systems can be fixed rather than scrapped.

Also, the idea of “Defund the Police” is sitting better with me - although on some level I still resist the thought of disbanding police entirely. If you want to start simple and small – imagine first a world in which police do not carry guns. How would I feel when I saw a police officer? What would his new job be without a gun? Would his authority come from a different place than fear?

I find this idea contagious and I am hopeful. I encourage you take this rare opportunity that the COVID quarantine has provided to have challenging, but respectful dialog with your family and friends about racial justice.

Further reading on Defunding the Police (thanks to Susan MacDonnell).
https://demcastusa.com/2020/06/06/the-case-to-abolish-the-police-and-how-to-replace-them/

Check out the Racial Justice Task Force webpage for links to articles, videos and books on racial justice and related topics.
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**Skylights**

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**Meeting with the Ministers**

Rev. Bill and/or Rev. Jennifer are happy to meet with you individually at church, for lunch, over coffee, etc., at a time that works for everyone. Please email either of them to make an appointment. You’re also welcome to drop in, but visits, meetings, denominational events, etc., regularly pull them out of the office, often with very little notice. It’s always a good idea to call before dropping by to visit:

**609-924-1604, ext. 111 (Rev. Bill), or ext. 118 (Rev. Jennifer)**

In the event of emergencies needing the attention of a minister, please contact Rev. Bill by phone or email first. If necessary, then contact Meg Cox Leone, President of the Board of Trustees, at meg@megcox.com

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**About Skylights**

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Please submit your article as an attachment in our preferred font, Times New Roman, 11 pt. Describe your submission in the subject line of your e-mail and tell us under which ministry it should appear.

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**Next Skylights Deadline:**

**AUG 17**

Submissions due for the SEPTEMBER ISSUE

skylights@uuprinceton.org