



## Minister's Monthly Update

October 2020

*Out of a great need  
we are all holding hands and climbing.  
Not loving is a letting go.*

*Listen,  
the terrain around here is far too dangerous for that.*

- Khwāja Shamsu d-Dīn Muhammad Hāfez-e Shīrāzī - known as **Hāfez** (1325? – 1389?)  
(Persian: خواجه شمس‌الدین محمد حافظ شیرازی)

We are almost at the end of October: that heartbreakingly beautiful month from which we all slide into the uncertainties of winter. This year is bound to provide more uncertainties than usual – one of many reasons why we need each other, now more than ever.

The Meeting House is still closed on Sunday mornings as it will be during the uncertain months to come. But that doesn't mean the building is silent. There is actually a fair amount of activity inside and outside these days:

- The Memorial Garden canopy has stayed up all month, and small meetings happened there even on some drizzly days. Erika and Margo created and hosted **faith development programs on the grounds** almost every Sunday this month. It has been wonderful to see children and parents gathering (safely) in person, along with youth – not to mention the delight of dozens of pumpkins that were decorated and delivered to members of the congregation who are not able to get out and about in these COVID days. You've probably noticed pictures from all of these events in our recorded Sunday worship services.



- **Caring & Belonging Retreat** - Members of FUUSB groups within the Caring and Belonging “umbrella” gathered on September 30 in the Garden. Rev. David Ruffin led about 20 members of the Membership Team, Pastoral Care Associates, Care Network, Chalice and Theme Circle facilitators, and Healthy Congregation Team in a shared re-imagining of how they all might work together to strengthen connections and engagement in these unusual times. Expect to hear more about some new initiatives to keep us connected this winter.
- The **Community Room** has recently been used on weekdays by classes from Burlington Technical Center, as well as the AA group which resumed meeting weekly. Both of these are happening on a trial basis, with strict safety protocols. We hope to learn about how small groups can gather inside while COVID infection rates stay low.
- Love & Justice vigils continue each Wednesday at 5:15, as does the first Sunday Vigil for Racial Justice from 1-1:30pm. Newcomers are always welcome (wear a mask – we’ve got signs)!
- Finally – and certainly not least! – the **new ramp** has been a beehive of activity. Many volunteers, under Chip Patullo’s able direction, are building a beautiful new access ramp and steps. Some materials remain on back order, so we’re not sure exactly when the project will be complete – in the meantime, it’s another thing to look forward to when the Meeting House is again fully open.



There is lots of activity on Zoom as well. Here are just a few examples:

**New UU Classes – parts 1 & 2.** The Membership Team has created a fabulous online version of these classes, and the response has been exciting. Watch for occasional newcomers to show up in Online Coffee Hour!

**The Internship Committee** was appointed by the Board, consisting of Louis deRosset, Zoe Hart, Rodney Lowe, and Amelia Schlossberg. They have begun the process of searching for a Ministerial Intern to work with First UU starting next fall.

The Board has been working hard on the first ever all-online **Auction & Wreath Sale**, which is coming right up in November. Go to [auctria.com/auction/FUUSBtogether](http://auctria.com/auction/FUUSBtogether) to check out the catalog and make your donations!

I've been thinking a lot about the decades-(centuries?)-long tradition of opening the doors of the First UU Meeting House when a major event happens in the community or the world. This election is certainly a major event; I wish there was a way to continue that tradition now. We considered it as a staff, and decided that there just isn't a way to do it safely.

There are, however, a couple of opportunities for people to get together, in person or online:

On Monday, November 2, there will be an Interfaith Service at 6 pm. Hosted by College St. UCC, this brief service will involve clergy from many city congregations (including me). It will be held outside, and also livestreamed.

And on Election Day, November 3, Christina will host an Election Night "Get Together" on Zoom from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. I hope you will drop in, even if only for a few minutes, at [bit.ly/34kziel](https://bit.ly/34kziel)

Thank you for being good friends to one another – it matters now more than ever. I am so grateful to be part of this congregation.

Many blessings!

*Rev. Tricia*

#### **Reminders –**

It means so much to see one another's faces – even when it's only online. **We are gathering "Family Photos" of as many First UU Society folks as possible.** Many of you sent in pictures earlier this fall – but if you haven't joined in yet, it's not too late! Send a favorite photo of you – with your loved ones, a beloved pet, or just yourself – to Mary Williams ([mary@uusociety.org](mailto:mary@uusociety.org)). We will add it to the growing collection!

**How to find Sunday worship:** The link to the current week's video of the Sunday service is available in several places, including the website ([uusociety.org](http://uusociety.org)) and the Facebook group. And, you can also go directly to the [FUUSB channel](#) on YouTube. Search for "First UU Society of Burlington" and subscribe if you haven't already. To share a service with a friend just copy the link and include it in an email. It's even easier than inviting a friend to a Sunday service – though perhaps when we're once again gathering in person, your friend will want to do that, too!