



Minister's Monthly Update

September 2020

This Wednesday evening, at the end of another lovely Vespers service under the canopy in the Memorial Garden, I was reflecting on how much has changed during these summer months. Way back in June, when the leaves were still young and green, it seemed a bit terrifying to leave our houses and go out in the world when we didn't have to. We were still getting used to wearing masks, carefully calculating six feet of distance in every direction, wondering how any of us could survive these strange and uncertain times.

The times are still strange, and definitely uncertain. But over the past weeks many of us have found new ways to work, interact, and even to celebrate - safely. Some of us have become quite proficient on Zoom, discovering that real conversation and learning and sharing *is* possible online. We're getting better at taking breaks, too: taking time away from our devices to be outside, remembering to check in with people we're thinking about. Meeting a friend for coffee (outside) or gathering on the Meetinghouse grounds isn't scary anymore, at least not so much. Some of us have been to the encampment in Battery Park to bring supplies and encouragement, or joined the marches and vigils. Schools are open – in new and different ways, to be sure, but open nonetheless. Children playing outside, masks and all – almost nothing makes me feel more hopeful.

The pandemic is still with us and will be for a while. But we're managing, most days... not just to survive, but to be engaged in our communities, to be kind, and to pay attention.

It's Not Too Cold, Yet...

The Memorial Garden canopy has been used for meetings by a variety of groups in the congregation, with much success. It will stay up through October, so there are still opportunities for you to experience being on the Meetinghouse grounds. Vespers is scheduled through September 30 (Wednesdays at 6), and if you can come early (5:15) the Love & Justice vigilers are always happy to welcome new people. Watch for news about Children's programs in the Garden on some Sunday mornings – and don't miss the "Electric Car Show & Tell" this Sunday afternoon, September 20! Many thanks to FUUSB's caretakers for setting up and taking down chairs and equipment for all these events – not to mention Woody Fulton, for his expertise in managing sound.

For all these outdoor in-person events, please remember to wear your masks, and stay home if you are not feeling well.

The Society calendar is filling up with online events this fall, too – including a new and improved Auction, and wreath sale! The Finance Committee is hosting a first-ever Zoom

“Happy Hour” this Thursday, September 24 – bring your questions and great ideas about how to spend the Society’s financial resources in service of our mission. Watch for the Enews every Thursday for details, for Christina’s “The Links” email on Saturdays, or go to the website (uusociety.org).

A reminder: though you can always get to the current week’s video of the Sunday service via the website or Facebook, you can also go directly to our channel on YouTube, where you’ll find all past services, too. Search for “First UU Society of Burlington” and subscribe while you’re there – that makes it easy to find all FUUSB videos whenever you want.

We’re still collecting “Family Photos” –

As the congregational year begins, it means so much to see one another – even if it’s online.

So - we are gathering pictures of as many First UU’ers as possible. Thanks to all who have sent in pictures so far, or signed up (with Mary mary@uusociety.org) to have a volunteer photographer come to take your house or apartment to snap your photo.

We want to see all of you! If you’ve got a great picture to share with your fellow congregants, please send it in – all pictures we get by next Thursday (Sept 24) will be part of the September 27 Sunday service. And if you can’t send a picture this week, that’s okay too... We’ll keep asking!

I am so grateful for the community of this congregation -- for your faith in all the possibilities around us, and one another.

Many blessings!

Rev. Tricia

As I was about to send out this Update on Friday night, we all heard the news of the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Perhaps like many of you, I have been struck by a sense of the torch being passed in this urgent, important time – from that one remarkable woman to ... us! These words from Annie Dillard come to mind --

There is no one but us. There is no one to send, not a clean hand or a pure heart on the face of the earth or in the earth—only us... unfit, not yet ready, having each of us chosen wrongly, made a false start, yielded to impulse and the tangled comfort of pleasures, and grown exhausted, unable to seek the thread, weak, and uninvolved. But there is no one but us.

- Annie Dillard, b. 1945

May we find the strength and faith to do the work of redeeming the world, and each other.