

The Pulse

June 2021

VIRTUAL SUNDAY SERVICES, 10:00 AM on ZOOM
The Meeting ID# 819 313 1486 Password: uuchurch

June 6 – Discussion – *Topic To Be Determined*

June 13 – Rev. Larry Smith - *To Be or to Do?*

Unitarian Universalists often wish to be people of action rather than people of contemplation, yet both are important and are necessary for our free faith. What is the difference between Meaning and Purpose?

June 20 – Gail Trautz – *Scars, Seen and Unseen*

What makes us who we are - our scars tell our story - how do we interpret them - and how do others see us through our scars.

June 27 – Christina Sturgis – *End of Year Wrap Up*

List of DDUUC Officers 2020-2021

President – Christina Sturgis
Vice President – Mary Watterson
Secretary – Jennifer Steffee
Treasurer – John DeMasi
Religious Education – Trish Concannon
Social Action – Kara DeRose
Sunday Service – Joan Spengler

**The Pulse is the newsletter of
Dorothea Dix Unitarian Universalist
Community.**

It is published monthly, September through June. Articles are solicited from members and friends. The Pulse is edited by Pete Costanza.

DDUUC has services every Sunday at 10:00 AM from the Sunday after Labor Day through the end of June. Informal Sunday services are held on selected Sundays during July and August. Sunday services are provided by guest ministers, outside speakers, or members and friends of the congregation. DDUUC has an ongoing religious education program for children. We have many activities in which to participate, and are also involved with the Greater Bordentown area through our sponsorship of an Interfaith Dialogue and many social action tasks.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bordentown City-Wide Yard Sale. DDUUC will be participating in the Bordentown City-Wide Yard Sale. We haven't had a "big" fundraiser for a while, so hopefully we will have support from members and friends. The event takes place on Sat., June 5th and Sun., June 6th from 8am till noon.

You can participate by having your own mini yard sale or by donating to the DDUUC table. You can rent an eight-foot table for \$20 or a four-foot table for \$10. You can keep your profits or share some with DDUUC. It's totally up to you! Feel free to share a table with a friend. You will be responsible for setting up, manning and packing up any items you might have left.

Tables are limited, so let Kelly Hansen (kellyhansen444@ gmail.com or 609-954-3658) know as soon as possible what size table you would like to reserve.

There are also other ways to help out. You can volunteer to help set up or to man the DDUUC table. Again, let Kelly Hansen know.

In the past this has been a fun event and also a great way to meet our neighbors!
Kelly Hansen

For RE, we didn't meet with the kids yet this month but plan to. Will try to do an end of the year picnic with them next month, at the playground near DDUUC.

A few months ago, I applied for DDUUC to get free milkweed plugs. They came in the mail last week and I planted some throughout the church property (milkweed should be spread out when you plant it, it shouldn't be planted all together, to avoid predators. I weeded/tilled one of the small plots and planted some in there. I am going to weed that other plot, and try to get something in there next to it, maybe put some zinnia seed in there, but if anybody has any other suggestions, please let me know! I'm going to water the milkweed for the next few weeks. I do realize milkweed is invasive, so I will make sure I thin them out, as needed. As I was planting them, somebody walking by said that he admired our butterfly garden at the church and said he released butterflies with this toddler there over the summer. He also said his family wants to start coming to DDUUC in September.

DDUUC has a garden plot at the Bordentown city community garden again this year. Everything we grow will get donated to TASK. It's a small plot so can't fit too much in there but will most likely grow collards, basil, spinach, and Swiss chard. Fernbrook Farms donated some herbs and tomatoes to put in there too! Will most likely plant the tomatoes at my house though since the plot gets too crowded whenever I put tomato plants in there.

For motel meals, we prepared meals for 58 people, including 1 toddler and 7 kids. We just did microwavable/nonperishable meals this month. Next month, we will buy them a hot meal again. Instead of fried chicken, I'd like to get them something healthier so I'm going to most likely get food from my friend's local Italian restaurant (will probably give them a pasta/veggie dinner). Starting in July, I hope to be able to start making hot dogs again. Thanks so much to everybody who contributes to keep this program running!

I am a carrot woman; keep your sticks to yourself

Back in the 1980s when I was a cub reporter at the Press & Sun-Bulletin of Binghamton, NY, I had a friend who had a paid job as a volunteer coordinator for a Health Fair. The idea was that she would get paid to get people to work for free running an organization that distributed health screening kits at an annual event. She said she had to keep an eye on whether her volunteers were receiving satisfaction in lieu of money. Otherwise, they might quit and she would have to do the whole thing herself. She said forgetting to thank someone or using a brusque tone of voice could make her wish she could turn the clock back and mend her ways. Sometimes the volunteer and all their free labor would walk out the door never to return. The organization doled out awards, recognition and snacks in hopes of securing volunteer labor even though the people claimed the perks were not necessary.

This experience reinforced the idea that some people have all the money they need and would be willing to work for free if it felt good. Perhaps I should not tell anyone this, but I will. I have refused volunteer positions specifically because I was treated harshly or talked down to.

All these years later, my friend is back in the realm of not-for-profit management. She told me she was shocked to hear “strong-arm tactics” being used in the recruitment of volunteers. She was ordered to try to make folks feel guilty if they didn’t volunteer or give enough hours. The approach was all sticks, no carrots. It seemed so wrong for everyone involved.

Yet, I know I have been manipulated, flattered and encouraged into volunteer positions. Enticements, or carrots, were offered that didn’t always materialize once I had signed up. I was left with the choice of accepting the available satisfaction, which might have been less than what had been promised, or quitting the whole thing. Most times I chose to do the work for lesser rewards and reframe the experience as a college course about my own gullibility. I chose to see that I had learned a life lesson without paying tuition or attending early morning lectures.

Even if I didn’t actually get every single carrot mentioned in the original offer, I still kind of liked being flattered and encouraged. It’s a little hard to admit this, so I reserve the right to later deny it. As for the strong-arm or stick approach, there is universe of clichés about what pushy folks should do with their sticks!

Finally, June is here. The month of the zenith of the sun. Although today we say that the first day of summer is the Solstice in the olde times this was the middle of summer. It always struck me kind of odd that summer would begin on the day that the sun starts spending less time in the sky.

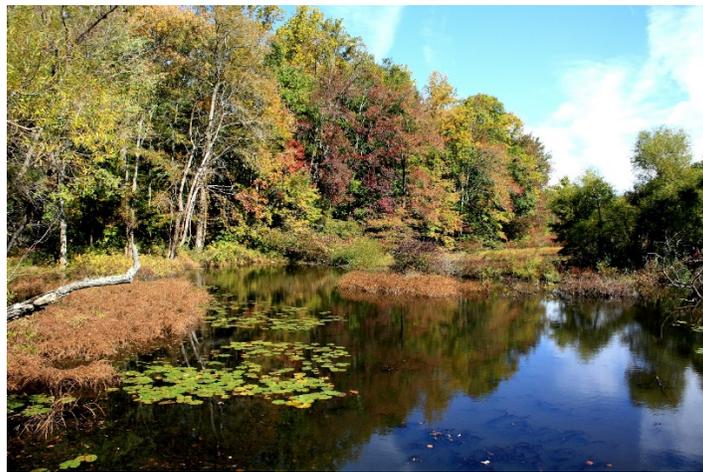
Summer would begin on Beltane (May 1) and end on Lammas (August 1). Maybe this worked best in warmer climates, but it makes sense to me. Midsummer/Solstice celebrates the high point of the sun. Although it takes a while for the heat to really hit us like it does in July and August, it is summer!

I enjoy summer the best when it is summer. I enjoy every season for different reasons, but summer is special. The local animal population is evident, and the fawns are sooooo cute. The baby rabbits and squirrels are fun to watch. And the produce is starting to come in.

The strawberries are done but all the other fruits and vegetables are getting ready to inundate us. That's okay, I can eat every Jersey tomato I grow and whatever you want to pass on to me.

Although summer is usually associated with fire, like the hot sun, I tend to favor water. I swim in it, I float on it, I dive into it. Water becomes my favorite element. Water can be so calming. Except in the lightning storms which are common in NJ summers. Then water becomes invigorating and cleansing.

Yes, I really do like summer.



We are taught you must blame your father, your sisters, your brothers, the school, the teachers - but never blame yourself. It's never your fault. But it's always your fault, because if you wanted to change, you're the one who has got to change. Katharine Hepburn

You take your life in your own hands, and what happens? A terrible thing: no one to blame. Erica Jong

We all know that it's not very mature to blame someone else for your failures, but then, who can you blame? I think, for your own mental health, you've just got to blame someone or something. During the Trump administration, I developed the habit of blaming Donald Trump for, well, everything and anything. If anyone was caught lying, cheating, conning someone, I would blame Trump. Still do. And if I were caught doing something wrong, I would naturally blame Trump. Right or wrong, it seems to make my life a bit easier. History is full of scapegoats the worst of which has been the suffering of Jews for the past 2000 years. But I like to think having a tyrant-type for a scapegoat is somehow acceptable. But, yeah, not exactly the mature way to go.

Today while playing golf with a couple other super seniors, we were complaining about how long the fairways were. So, we were blaming the course management, our old clubs, the fairway conditions, everything but ourselves. And we agreed that we can't really blame ourselves. That's no fun. Besides, life, what's left of it for us old duffers, is too short to blame yourselves. And we realize it's not very responsible blaming people and places and things for our short-comings. But we do it anyway. Like, I blame my father for my late start in golf. Why? He was left-handed and had left-handed clubs. I couldn't swipe them and sneak out onto the local golf course.

So, insofar as responsibility and blame are concerned, I like to think that responsibility is for the young and people of all ages in responsible positions, like being are the president of the United States.

Note: If you have taken offence from this column, and well you should, you are most probably a mature, responsible person who finds blaming others reprehensible. In my defense, I'm going to have to blame indolence, sloth, and creeping senility.

Springtime at The Pond

About the only thing I have in common with the great Henry David Thoreau is that we both love ponds. His was Walden's Pond. Mine is in the Enchantment senior development in Hamilton. Formally the Birch Willow Basin, it is better known by local residents as "The Pond." For the past three years since we moved here, whenever the weather is amenable, I will drive down there, park my car and enjoy the natural surroundings. A 500 by 125-foot expanse, it is my respite from everyday chores in which I can observe a myriad of flora and fauna. As the name implies, the pond is surrounded by birch and willow trees carefully landscaped, encircled by a paved walking path. Aerated and run-off-fed, the pond features a central fountain flowing spring through fall. Swimming and fishing are prohibited. On any given day depending upon the season there are ducks and geese, a blue heron or two with their huge wing spans, a white egret or a red-tailed hawk. In the pond there are frogs and turtles, sunfish, and non-poisonous water snakes. Floating above are turkey vultures waiting to find some morsel to eat down below.



I sit in my car while observing the scenery, listening to my CDs, or WMMR out of Philly, or Alan Watts lectures on tape. Before long an entire series of pond lovers may stroll by my car to say hello and chat about life in general, often extolling the beauty of the pond. There will be Barry, Bill, Marjorie, Ann, JoAnn and her sister Sandy, another Barry, and Jennifer, Mike and Bob. Some walk their dogs; some ride bicycles; some simply check out what's in the pond that day.

I recall the sermon by Rev. Larry Smith in February and realize what he meant by religious naturalism.

FURTHER MEMORIES OF ELLY

Betsy Young

Because I had agreed to a family event Zoom before Elly Leonard's memorial service was scheduled for the same time, I didn't want to try to share this memory of Elly in case I had to leave for the family Zoom. I share it now.

Shortly after I began attending DDUUC in 2011, Elly, Ruth Cristy and I met for lunch. There I discovered that in addition to all Elly's qualities and strengths mentioned during her service, she was also an effective interrogator. Throughout the meal, she grilled me about my life. She wanted details. She was genuinely interested in getting to know me. Her questions became more personal, more probing. Ruth kept saying, "Elly, enough. Stop it", but on we went, Elly asking, me blabbing without any thought of stopping. She was relentless and mesmerizing! For years we laughed about that memory. It still makes me smile.

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