



2022 JUNE Newsletter

Monthly Newsletter

JUNE 2022

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FROM THE MINISTER

Rev. Bob Janis-Dillon

The June theme here at UU Catskills this month is *Celebrating Blessings*. Blessings is a word with particular resonance for me. Several years back, I felt like I wanted to write more poetry and spiritual writing – but it's easy to want to write more, and not do it. So I decided to try an experiment: every Monday morning, I would write something I called "Your Monday Blessing," a little poem or blessing, and post it on my personal social media. I wouldn't overthink it or agonize about what I had written, just sit down to write for an hour or two, and then let it go, into the world.

Since then I've written dozens, maybe a couple hundred, of these blessings (I have not, in fact, counted my blessings yet). I don't always write them on Monday, and I do go weeks without writing them sometimes.

Nevertheless, the practice has connected me with art and with the world. What can I say about this world of ours? Turns out, there's quite a lot to say. "Blessing the world" isn't all that difficult, when the world has already been blessed abundantly. All I have to do is take note of what is beautiful about life, about humanity, about the world. For instance, here is a simple blessing I wrote in about 2015:

May the shining sun be itself,
 the river otter be itself,
 the saguaro cactus be itself,
 the pebble be itself,
 the red ant be itself,
 the furthest relative rock in the universe be itself,
 the unfolding lily be itself,
 the honest tear be itself,
 the breath be itself,
 the flying squirrel be itself,
 and you be yourself.

The writing of these weekly blessings has been gently transformative for me. We live in a beautiful world. We all know this. But it helps to take note of this world. You don't have to write a poem: you can take a photo, talk about it with a friend, or simply observe the blessings around us. As human beings, with our amazing opposable thumbs and curious minds, we have a lot of tools at our disposal to bless or curse the world. One of the nicer things we can do, is notice what is wonderful. Happy summer, everyone.

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Sunday Service

10:30 am

Live (and on Zoom) **June 5** and **June 19**. Other dates are Zoom only.

Zoom connection: <https://tinyurl.com/UUCC-SundayWorship>

Or call: 301 715 8592, Meeting ID: 612 724 145, Password: 342554

Celebrate Blessings

June 5 *Blessed to Be Who I Am*

Rev. Bob

On Pride Sunday, we celebrate this life of ours – in all its gloriousness, diversity, messiness and grace. We are grateful for the gift of being who we are, and grateful for the loves that give life meaning.

June 12 *Soul Matters: Celebrating Blessings*

Vickie O'Dougherty, W.A.

Calling on Wholeness - To bless something or someone is to invoke its wholeness, to help remind the person or thing you are blessing of its essence, its sacredness, its beauty, and to help remind yourself of that, too.

June 19 *Juneteenth and Flower Communion*

Rev. Bob

Juneteenth and Flower Communion are both observations that come from, and in spite of, the horrors of war and captivity. They celebrate freedom and the human spirit. Come to a very special celebration of life and freedom. You are invited to bring a flower or flowers to give away, if you wish – everyone will have a flower to take home.

June 26 *Sunday Worship from General Assembly*

Catherine Cattabiani, W.A.

Join us for the largest annual gathering of UUs in a communal service. Please note, since General Assembly is in the Portland this year, the service is at **12:30 pm**.

Half-plate donations June 2022 will go to *Hudson Valley LGBTQ Center*
The Center's mission is to strengthen, support, and celebrate our diverse LGBTQ+ community in achieving its fullest potential and creating a more equitable world. <https://lgbtqcenter.org> .

Donate online at <https://www.uucatskills.org/donate> or send your check payable to UUCatskills to UUCC, 320 Sawkill Road, Kingston, NY 12401.
Please write "half-plate" in the memo line. Please combine donations into one monthly donation.

Rev. Bob's
First Thursday Hangout (on Zoom)
Thursday, JUNE 2
11 am

<https://zoom.us/j/97469875728?pwd=cXNzWGZUaTItc1NtSGs4ZmNNN040OT09>
+1 646 558 8656 US (New York) Meeting ID: 974 6987 5728

President's Column

June 2022

Mark S. Howenstein

Please attend the UUCC Annual Meeting which includes the passing of our budget for fiscal year 2022-23, elections of those nominated to the Board and CoSM, and the Outstanding Service Award. Unitarian Universalism is based on democracy: the inherent dignity and worth of every person, the individual quest for meaning, truth and justice, and the collective support toward that endeavor, all of which is grounded in congregational autonomy and democratic process. Come and be a part of it. Your voice and your vote count!

UUCC ANNUAL MEETING

June 5, 2022 following Sunday Service

Childcare will be provided

From the Treas\$urer

Pledge Reminders

We are coming to the end of the 2021-2022 pledge year.

Please make your final pledge payments before **June 30th**. We'll be sending statements to those with balances remaining.

The 2022-2023 pledge year begins on July 1st.

If you made changes to your pledge and are signed up for automatic payments either through your bank or through the UUCC online payment option (Vanco), please make sure your monthly payment is up to date.

Contact Carma at uucctreas@gmail.com if you have any questions.

PROCESSION
of the SPECIES
CELEBRATION

As we create, we learn.
As we learn, we love.
As we love, we protect.

Please join us for the children's *Procession of the Species* on Sunday, June 5th during the last portion of the Adult Worship Service. The *Procession of the Species* is an artistic pageant, embracing the language of art while raising awareness about endangered species.

In R.E., we are creating endangered species in the form of art, learning about them, loving them and acting to protect them.

The purpose of the *Procession* on June 5th is to awaken everyone to the knowledge that we humans are connected to the natural world, to nature and to animals.

May 17th was "Endangered Species Day", and we know that the interdependent web of life on earth is in trouble. Wildlife populations are declining. The United Nations estimates that one million species are going extinct in the coming years.

As Unitarian Universalists, we want to do something about that. Our 7th Principle calls us to be agents for change in these troubled times for wildlife: *We believe in caring for our planet Earth, the home we share with all living things.*

And we can do it. Stay tuned...



The UU Ministry for Earth led a *Procession of the Species* at General Assembly in Spokane, WA, June of 2019

Bedtime Story: Every Thursday at 7pm on zoom at THIS LINK (copy and paste):
<https://zoom.us/j/99249467998>.

Caring Connections

Christie Billeci
caring@uucatskills.org

Connect with your local UUCC members and friends! Email caring@uucatskills.org if you want to be connected. And check your email for updates about circle meetings and topics from your circle coordinator.

COMMUNITY CIRCLE COORDINATORS

Dutchess (Includes Northern Dutchess and Columbia Counties): Christie Billeci and Kathy Kassner

Hurley+: (Includes Rosendale, Rifton, Bloomington, Accord, St. Remy) Kathy DeMatteo

Kingston Central: Bill Lindsay

Kingston East: Nancy Emery and Roselyn Daniell

Kingston West: Karen Miller

Woodstock/Mt. Tremper/West Hurley: Mark and Karen Howenstein

New Paltz/Poughkeepsie (includes Modena, Gardiner, Brooklyn): Marie Young and Barbara Kidney

Saugerties/Lake Katrine (includes Catskill, Delmar, Albany): _____

NOTE: The Saugerties/Lake Katrine Community Circle is in need of a coordinator!

Please, if you live in this area, consider stepping up to organize your fellow UU neighbors for some local gatherings! Contact Christie Billeci at caring@uucatskills.org.

*Thank you to these folks who volunteer their time
to coordinate community circles!*

*The July 1 UUCC Member Directory
will be distributed at the beginning of July.
If you need to correct or update your own information
or if you need email or phone information for others,
contact the UUCC office at uuccoffice@gmail.com.*

All members can use the **UUCC online registry** which records contacts for all members. E-mail Tom Hackett (secretary@uucatskills.org) for instruction that will give you access to it.

UUCC Updates

Social Action Updates

from the **Social Action Committee**

Donna Schlachman

The Social Action Committee's (SAC) quarterly meeting was held on April 26, with representatives from each of our Teams/Task Forces/Working Groups. It was our first meeting since the Social Justice Survey (see April Newsletter for details) and the Committee felt the survey to be a positive reflection of the importance of social justice to the majority of our congregation and of their support for the work currently going on, even if many are no longer as active as they have been in the past. Gratitude for the efforts of all those engaged with justice work was expressed by many survey respondents. The committee is pleased to find that 20% of our congregation is consistently actively involved in social justice work, both with our congregation and with the larger community.

The SAC brought to the UUCC Council meeting in April the idea of introducing **Social Action Sundays** several times year. Our thoughts are to reflect on how our 7 Principles are aligned with our current social justice work via shared conversations, as well as to offer concrete actions that can be taken during our time together. Some discussion on this proposal took place at the Council meeting. More time needs to be given to this percolating idea. If you are interested in sharing your ideas, contact Karen Miller or Donna Schlachman.

Reproductive Freedom Task Force - Thank you, Karen Howenstein, for stepping up to take charge of keeping our congregation educated and engaged with regard to the mounting threats to Reproductive Freedom in the U.S. Please reach out to Karen when you hear of an event happening, an opportunity to partner with others, or a need for our voices to be raised in whatever way. Karen will ensure that the word gets out.

Anti-Racism Task Force (ART-F) - Donna Schlachman

May was our month to dive deeper into what it means to have "white privilege" and its sister term "white fragility" by reading/listening to the work of Robin DiAngelo and others. See the May Newsletters for links to specific resources or simply do some googling. The internet is a rich source of education on this subject.

Unfortunately, our monthly meeting was canceled due to technical issues with our UUCC Zoom account. The June 14 meeting will be LIVE in Kingston during the time of the Sacred Ally Quilts. Please check the Updates for a possible opportunity to engage with the wider community at that time.

If you are interested in sharing your ideas, contact Karen Miller or Donna Schlachman.

(continued)

UUCC Updates

Social Action Updates

Jane Podell did a wonderful unit on racism in Religious Exploration. She was teaching kids what it means to try to be *anti-racist* and offered this poster which speaks to all ages and is worth reposting here. One adult who was with Jane said “I use the poster as a reminder of what I should be doing.” Contrary to what certain racist voices would have us believe, confronting racism is not about making people (or children) feel guilty. It is about understanding the culture we were all raised in and the myriad of subtle ways racism has crept into the fiber of our being and influenced how we see things, or don’t see things. We will continue to discuss “**white privilege**” and find ways to be a positive force for changing in the racist power dynamics it feeds.

HOW TO BE A RACIAL TRANSFORMER

Here’s a sample illustration to remind you of the many possible ways to use your power—your superpowers—as a Racial Transformer.

1 OPEN MIND: learn about others’ histories, plights and aspirations, and make conscious choices that prioritize racial equity and inclusion.

2 ALERT EYES: keep your eyes on the prize by envisioning real solutions to the realities of racism, using an equity-conscious lens, rather than colorblindness.

3 BIG EARS: listen to, and learn from, people of color.

4 VOCAL MOUTH: speak up and speak out about injustices—and help others find their voice by knowing when *not* to speak.

5 STRONG BACKBONE: muster the courage to take risks, go against the grain and even make mistakes.

6 LOVING HEART: respect and uplift the dignity and humanity of every person.

7 ROLLED-UP SLEEVES: dig in and do the work—not just talk—of racial justice.

8 OUTSTRETCHED ARMS: join hands with others unlike you in organizing and building power for change.

9 DECODER RING: watch out for coded racism and expose it.

10 SMART PHONE (if you have one): inform and activate your networks—blog, share, tweet, comment, and post prolifically about race issues and actions.

11 POCKETBOOK: donate to social change causes (especially those lead by people of color); and support good businesses and boycott the bad ones.

12 MOVING LEGS: visibly “vote with your body” by showing up in support and solidarity at public actions, marches and rallies.

13 GROUNDED FEET: dig in for the long haul—holding onto your values, allies, aspirations and spirit—eager to dance in the delight of being on a worthwhile and winning road to justice.

COLORLINES.com

UUCC Updates

Social Action Updates

Climate Action Team – Kathy Kassner

Spring has sprung; trees have leafed out. It is a time of hope, looking forward and planning. Many of us have been busy planting flowers or vegetables in our gardens. Planting is a way to sequester carbon from the atmosphere back into the soil, slowing climate change. Gardening is a way to get outdoors, relieve stress, and eat a fresh plant-based diet with minimal carbon footprint. If you didn't start from seeds, what to do with all the empty plastic containers and pots from the seedlings? Some nurseries will take them back and reuse them. We are in the process of compiling a list, so if you know of any nurseries that take them back, please let us know. You can also bring your plastic pots to the UU and leave them behind the sanctuary. Karen Miller will take them to the Garden Shed at the New Paltz Transfer Station.

On the state level, time is running out to make comments on the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. It is important that our leaders hear from us and fully fund the law if we are to reach the goals established back in 2019 of 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040 and 85% reduction of GHG below 1990 levels by 2050. See below for an easy way to make comments on various topics from NY Renews.

Opportunities to be an Environmental Steward

What we do on the small scale sets the pattern for the whole system.
~ Pastor Robert Sweeney

Public comments on the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act ends June 10th. Follow the link below from NY Renews for an easy way to submit comments on various topics. Click on tabs at the top to pick a topic.

<https://www.nyrenews.org/submit-a-public-comment-on-nys-draft-scoping-plan>

Bring your food scraps and Terracycle items to containers behind the Sanctuary. You will find a list of accepted items on the Climate Action Team Bulletin Board, and on the containers behind the Sanctuary. Contact Karen 845.399.2805

Next Climate Action Team meeting Tuesday, June 21st at 5pm

<https://zoom.us/j/96954354063?pwd=STVOVENNVmJZMCtCN250TWRnam54dz09>

Meeting ID: 969 5435 4063 Passcode: 096367

One tap mobile +16465588656,,96954354063#,,,,*096367# US (New York)

UUCC Updates

Social Action Updates

Food Justice Working Group – Karen Miller

Those members who make weekly donations to the Blue Community Fridge say that they find the fridge and pantry shelves empty.

Our donation box, in the Sanctuary hallway, is also empty.

The rise in food prices has seen an increase in the need for the Community Fridge.

People's SNAP, the nutritional assistance program, is just not enough to last the month.

Food insecurity is on the rise.

Let's fill the donation box, in the Sanctuary Hallway, every in-person Sunday Service, with non-perishable food items which will be delivered to the Blue Fridge pantry.

If you are able, bring perishable food items(eggs, fruit and whole milk are most appreciated) directly to 122 Clinton Avenue, Kingston.

Reproductive Freedom Task Force – Karen Howenstein

May 14th 2022, Kingston Women In Black held their vigil, as they have done for many years, in front of the Kingston Post Office on Cornell St. Their banner reads:

Kingston Women In Black For Global Peace and Non-Violence

This vigil/ worldwide network began in the 1980's in solidarity with the Palestinian and Israeli women standing together for peace, The Kingston Women in Black began in response to the Afghan war.

On May 14th, they also included the protest to uphold **Roe v Wade** with signs stating:

**Motherhood is a Women's Choice,
I Stand With Planned Parenthood and
Pro Choice or No Choice.**

This was my first time joining this vigil, and it opened my eyes to the importance of standing up for what is important to me. We were greeted with honks, thumbs up, and conversations with people walking by. Fortunately we did not have any negative encounters (although I did hear from the women standing for years that they have encountered uncomfortable situations).

I am writing this to encourage all people, UU or not, to join these women once a month on a Saturday from 10:30 am - 11:30 am (check the Weekly Updates for date) in front of the Kingston Post Office on Cornell St. It can be an hour of meditation or conversation but for me, it was an hour of knowing that I was doing something to stand up for what is important to me and the future of **all people** of this world!

UUCC Updates

from the Thirty Plus Group _____

Erin Hilgart

We had a fun meetup on a 90+ degree afternoon in May, gathering in the shade in Erin Burton's backyard. Five adults attended, and five children.

The planned June meetup, a picnic at the Bard campus, has been rescheduled to **July 27**. Please contact erin.hilgart@gmail.com for details.

from the Women's Conversation Circle _____

Joanne Steele

This group meets via Zoom on the **fourth Tuesday, 7:30 pm to 9 pm**, of every month

Tuesday, June 28

Join Zoom meeting; <https://zoom.us/j/98539336771> Meeting ID: 985 3933 6771

One tap mobile +16465588656,,98539336771# US (New York)

Sunday, June 5
UUCC Annual Meeting
following Sunday Service

Childcare will be provided

UUCC Updates

Sacred Ally Quilts Travel to Kingston

June 13 – June 18

Don't miss out! The ten quilts, stitched to memorialize George Floyd's last pleas, are in Kingston. They will be at the gallery space at the **Pine Street African Burial Grounds, 157 Pine Street in Kingston**. The dates have recently been modified: it opens June 13th and runs through the 18th from **4 pm - 7 pm weekdays, noon to 6 pm on Saturday** (and possibly on Sunday).

The evening of **June 15th** at 6:30 pm, there will be a special ecumenical conversation facilitated by the **Sacred Ally Quilt Ministry**. Consider participating in this event. The documentary *Stitch, Breathe, Speak: The George Floyd Quilts* will be shown then (and at other times).

Saturday June 18th is the big **Juneteenth Celebration** in Kingston, and the Quilts and the film will be part of this event. There will be activities for all ages that day. Please look for more information in our UUCC Updates as the date gets close.

Donna Schlachman

Let's dance!

Barbara Kidney and **Andrew Dalton** are interested in putting on an outdoor traditional community dance event for the congregation and public in the early fall, and need some help with organizing and publicity. **Musicians** who can play traditional jigs/reels/waltzes–sheet music can be made available–are also very welcome to be involved. All who are at least potentially interested should email Barbara Kidney at bask999@yahoo.com or text/call 845 313 8035.

Summer Newsletter Notice

(Combined) July/August Newsletter

Deadline July 11 Distributed by July 20

September Newsletter

Deadline August 22 Distributed by September 1

Dates to Gather

Page numbers listed with events refer to where you can find more information and links in this newsletter

Sundays	Grief Support Group 7 pm If you would like to know more about this group, email uuccoffice@gmail.com for Zoom connection.
Thursday evenings	Bedtime Story and More! 7 pm <i>It's a peaceful, joyful time of connection.</i> Children and youth of all ages are welcome. Zoom: https://zoom.us/j/99249467998
<hr/>	
Wednesday, June 1	Writing Group 5 pm on Zoom Contact Elisa elwin12@icloud.com .
Thursday, June 2	First Thursday Hangout with Rev. Bob 11 am (p. 2)
Friday, June 3	Soul Matters Friday Group 12 pm
Monday, June 6	Soul Matters Monday Group 7 pm
Tuesday, June 14	Anti-Racism Action Group (p. 6-7) See Weekly Update for Time and Location
Thursday, June 16	Board of Trustees Meeting 10 am – 1 pm Contact uuccpres@gmail.com
Tuesday, June 21	Climate Action Team 5 pm (p. 8)
Sunday, June 26	General Assembly Sunday Worship 12:30 pm
Tuesday, June 28	Women's Conversation Circle 7:30 pm – 9 pm (p. 10)

JUNE 2022

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 5 pm Writing Group	2 11 am First Thursday Hangout 7 pm Bedtime Story And More!	3 12 noon <i>Soul Matters</i>	4
5 10:30 am Service LIVE at UCC plus on Zoom 7 pm Grief Support Group	6 7 pm <i>Soul Matters</i>	7	8	9 7 pm Bedtime Story And More!	10	11
12 10:30 am Service on Zoom only 7 pm Grief Support Group	13	14 TBA Anti-Racism Task Force	15	16 10 am Board of Trustees Meeting 7 pm Bedtime Story And More!	17	18
19 10:30 am Service LIVE at UCC plus on Zoom 7 pm Grief Support Group	20	21 5pm Climate Action Team Meeting	22	23 10 am Board of Trustees Meeting 7 pm Bedtime Story And More!	24	25
26 12:30 pm General Assembly Sunday Worship on Zoom only 7 pm Grief Support Group	27	28 7:30 pm Women's Circle	29	30 7 pm Bedtime Story And More		