



# FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF CHICAGO

## August 2018 Newsletter

First Unitarian Society of Chicago 5650 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago IL 60637 (773) 324-4100

For Absolutely Nothing but Joy  
Rev. Teri Schwartz



*Ella ascending to the pulpit to practice her forthcoming sermon, "Barking Up the Same Tree: Canines and Universalism in an Era of Authoritarianism"*

We are entering the "dog days" of summer: The days following the rising of the star Sirius in the night sky. Sirius is also known as the "dog star," because it is a key part of the constellation Canis Major. In this part of the world, the dog days of summer mean the hottest and most uncomfortable time of the year. For the Ancient Greeks, "dog days" meant days of intense heat, drought, sudden thunderstorms, lethargy, fever, mad dogs and bad luck. Sound familiar? Sounds like Chicago under Sirius in August.

My dog days of summer this year are also literal dog days. My family recently adopted a two-year-old Anatolian Shepherd dog named Ella. (What more fitting dog for a pastor than a shepherd?!). I have wanted a dog for over 14 years. Adopting a giant dog was one of my "bucket list" items. One of the bittersweet blessings of the ministerial office are the regular reminders of mortality. No one gets out of here alive. We don't get much of a say in how long we get to stick

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around, either. We have now, and are guaranteed nothing more. When I forget that, my vocation will offer me reminders, sometimes gentle, sometimes heartbreaking.

Ella brings much joy, along with some challenge—as do most living beings, including humans. I walk more now, some days over five miles. Walking her forces me to slow down and put the other demands of daily life aside for a while, and that is a respite, of sorts. At its best, it's a time for reflection, thinking, listening to audiobooks, prayer...and while those all might sound like noble endeavors, it is also true that when a family member's bathroom is outside of the house and you wish to keep it that way, it's a very strong motivation to stop what you're doing and take that individual outside to conduct business.

Biological pragmatics aside, if I'm paying attention, I see her explore her world, and I become acutely aware of the limitations and subjectivity of my own sensory perceptions. We may walk down the same sidewalk, but we have very different experiences. That's true for all of us. And if I keep paying attention, I remember why I have her: Life is short. Rarely does one get to their deathbed wishing they had worked longer hours. It's usually the opposite. There are only so many days to fit in as much joy as possible.

Even in the long, hot, dog days of summer, the seasons pass quickly. Look for what stars are setting in your life, with an eye to the ones about to rise. The earth will turn toward the morning, the constellations will change, and the seasons will shift. There are times when it is good to forget ourselves, and times to pursue pleasure over obedience, and there are times to live "...for nothing, for absolutely nothing but joy."

## The Dogs at Live Oak Beach Santa Cruz by Alicia Ostriker

As if there could be a world  
Of absolute innocence  
In which we forget ourselves

The owners throw sticks  
And half-bald tennis balls  
Toward the surf  
And the happy dogs leap after them  
As if catapulted—

Black dogs, tan dogs,  
Tubes of glorious muscle—

Pursuing pleasure  
More than obedience  
They race, skid to a halt in the wet sand,  
Sometimes they'll plunge straight into  
The foaming breakers

Like diving birds, letting the green turbulence  
Toss them, until they snap and sink

Teeth into floating wood  
Then bound back to their owners  
Shining wet, with passionate speed  
For nothing,  
For absolutely nothing but joy.

May it be so,  
Rev. Teri.

## Greetings from the DRE

### Beth Moss, Director of Religious Education (RE)

#### Summer Schedule Changes

A reminder that although classes continue during the summer months, our Sundays look a little different!

- Time for all ages will not occur regularly
- Students should proceed directly to class at the start of services
- Classes are NOT separated by grade level in the summer
- There is one class held each Sunday held during services
- Childcare continues to be available
- Nursery hours are only 9:30-11:30

This summer we are using the curriculum *World of Friends*. Each stand-alone lesson has the students "meet" a child from a

different religion though hearing their pretend story. The lessons include a bit of geography and history, common customs, and crafts related to the material. We are about halfway through the curriculum. Listed below are the dates for each remaining religion, and the name of the imaginary child who will help our kids learn about that religion and contextualize the basics from a UU perspective.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lesson</b>
Aug 5	Taoism: Meet Mei
Aug 12	Earth-centered Religions: Meet Rowan
Aug 19	Earth-centered Religions: Meet Tiva
Aug 26	Sikhism: Meet Devasheesh

## Gratitude from the Bietila Family

### Mary-Clare Bietila

My family and I are beyond grateful to receive the basket of gift cards for groceries and necessities. I am overwhelmed with the love you have shown us during a very difficult time.

In 2014 I was diagnosed with AML leukemia. I like to think of it as my lost year. The hands fell off the clock, so to speak. Time was distorted by rounds of chemo and the magic of a stem cell transplant that saved my life.

In 2017 my leukemia returned, and though I have been in isolation due to my treatment, I am determined to live each moment.

I am grateful to sing and pray with you each Sunday—special thanks to Richard Pardo for sending me mp3s of each service.

To quote Sarah Dan Jones, "When I breathe in, I'll breathe in peace; When I breathe out, I'll breathe out love." These precious words bring me hope and fond memories of you.

I measure my days breath by breath. I find clarity, hope, and joy in the uncertainty of being in the moment.

The simple act of breathing is life, but taking seven breaths together with you each Sunday renews my spirit.

I am grateful for seven simple breaths and you who inspire me with poetry, song and purpose. Your generosity and community mean the world to me and my family. It is a joy to call First Unitarian home!

With a full heart,  
Mary-Clare, Dave & Twila Bietila

## August Worship Services

August 5<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM

*The Paradox of Choice Revisited*

Joseph Harrington

*The Paradox of Choice* is a book by Barry Schwartz about how consumers make choices, and the tyranny of choice. It was also the impetus for my first sermon at First Unitarian in 2006, "*The Paradox of Choice and the Gift of Another Day.*" In Chapter 5 Schwartz makes this assertion: "Autonomy and freedom of choice are critical to our well-being, and choice is critical to freedom and autonomy." Today's sermon will explore the relationship between autonomy and freedom of choice, the external factors which can influence our choices and the connection to our well-being.

Like many in his generation, Joseph Harrington was a beneficiary of the civil rights movement and found his passion and life's work in the social justice arena. A native Chicagoan, raised in Woodlawn, he has worked in the fields of education, social services, mental health, healthcare and public health. He has worked for two Academic Medical Centers, a Community Hospital and served for six years as an Assistant Commissioner at the Chicago Department of Public Health. He retired in August of last year after five years with the State Health Department as its Regional Health Officer for Cook County, where he also served as an Administrative Law Judge.

This service will feature special musical guests. **Kopano Muhammad** is a gifted vocalist who has performed at First Unitarian many times in the past. She was the featured vocalist for our January 15th King Day Service and will be entering her sophomore year at Oberlin College in the Fall, where she is a Music Major. Not only is **Dr. Ronald Rembert** a family physician, he is a gifted musician and no stranger to First Unitarian. He started

Anointed Sax Publishing and describes himself as a musician, produce, singer, physician from Chicago using music to touch and encourage people to live better lives. Olu Shakoor is also a frequent guest at First Unitarian. He is a Master African drummer and the co-founder and conductor of the African Drum Village for the Annual African Festival of the Arts. He specializes in both traditional and contemporary styles of African Drumming and excels in the Djum-Djum and Djembe Drum.

August 12<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM

*Noah, Babel and Borders:*

*Dividing up the (Known) World*

Allen Harden

Noah and the Ark is among the most familiar narratives from the Book of Genesis. The Noah story is more than the flood, the ark, animals, and a rainbow. After finding dry land, Noah and his family go about the business of settling and repopulating our earth. The events from this part of the story helped define how the people of the biblical era saw themselves and others, and these narratives have echoed in how groups relate throughout history and into the present. How do deeply engrained cultural understandings of being of "a people" or "a nation" resound today?

Allen Harden is a long-term member of First Unitarian Church. He began to prepare for the Unitarian Universalist ministry at the age of 60, and graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School in 2017. His candidacy for ministry was sponsored by First Church, and he hopes to enter preliminary fellowship this Autumn, when he meets with the UU Ministerial Fellowship Committee. While in seminary, he spent two years as a Ministerial Intern with the UU Fellowship of DeKalb, IL. He currently serves as Minister to the Unitarian Universalist

Congregation of Rock Valley in Rockton, Illinois. He is deeply pleased and gratified with his choice of retirement career.

August 19<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
*Chaplaincy and Spiritual Healing*  
 Rev. Michelle Latanzio

In my work of performing pastoral care as a hospital and hospice chaplain, I have found that it is not only the patients who lives change during times of sickness and health, but mine as well. In this sermon, I will share some of my experiences as a hospital chaplain and hospice volunteer, and talk about the ways in which I have both witnessed and experienced spiritual healing take place among folks dealing with various life changes, and sometimes, even in myself.

Dr. Michelle Lattanzio is currently serving as a Hospice Chaplain and Spiritual Care Coordinator in Skokie, IL. Michelle is in Preliminary Fellowship with the UUA and is a graduate of Meadville Lombard Theological

School. She holds a PhD in English from the University of South Florida and taught undergraduate classes at USF. She frequently presented conference papers for academic conferences in the literary field, with her absolute favorite entitled, "From Cowpunchers to Console Cowboys: The Transformation of the Cowboy Figure from the Wild West Frontier to the Cyberworld Frontier." Michelle also loves spending time with her dog Axel, creating art, reading, writing, dancing, and rooting for her favorite roller derby teams.

August 26<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM  
*Real Words in an Ugly Age*  
 Rev. David Schwartz

In an era when we are lied to daily by our leaders, when voices call for us to avoid, deny, and minimize reality, when we are exhausted with personal and collective burdens, we turn to poets who cut through to truth.

## August Meetings and Events

### Gettysburg Project

8/3/2018 Friday–8/5/2018 Sunday  
 On August 3–5, 2018, three members of the Executive Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Unity Action Caucus will be traveling to the Gettysburg National Cemetery. Finley C. Campbell and Allan Lindrup of First Unitarian Church of Chicago, and Carl Wolf of First Unitarian Church of Hobart (Indiana), will be presenting a program culminating with laying a wreath at the 20th Maine monument. The program will commemorate the courage of the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment at the fight against Confederate forces at the Little Round top during the Battle of Gettysburg. Their victory helped to win the battle.

Come to the Social Justice Council table during social hour, help decorate the wreath,

and make a donation (if you so desire) for expenses. Leaflets about the trip will be available. All are welcome at the information session and discussion on July 29.

For more information, please contact Finley Campbell at [finleycampbell5222@comcast.com](mailto:finleycampbell5222@comcast.com) or 773-230-3883.

### Dances of Universal Peace

8/5/2018 Monday 2:00 PM–4:00 PM  
 Hull Chapel

Dancing and moving in circles, with hands joined and voices raised in song or chant, happens all over the world. To celebrate community, as a symbol of unity, Dances of Universal Peace bring people together in joyous and meditative dance circles. The dances are easy to learn and open to all. We will be guided by Dance Leaders who

choose from the more than 500 dances from many different sacred traditions around the world. Join us on our beautiful wooden dance floor as we honor the Cross Quarter Point of Lammas, the ripening of the early harvest, honoring of Mother Earth, and more!

For more information, please contact Barbara Randolph at 773-391-1292 or [dreamweaverb@yahoo.com](mailto:dreamweaverb@yahoo.com).

### Criminal Justice Task Force Meeting

8/9/2018 Thursday 6:45 PM

Chris Moore Parlor

*Note that this month's meeting is scheduled a week later than usual.*

We will discuss the several initiatives underway to enable Chicago Police to serve and protect Chicago citizens and to secure civil rights of poor people in the justice system. All are welcome.

For more information, please contact Evan Freund at [evan17@evanfreund.com](mailto:evan17@evanfreund.com) or 773-624-0333.

### First U Humanists

8/13/2018 Monday 7:00 PM–9:00 PM

Chris Moore Parlor

Join us for a lively discussion of ideas and events from a humanist perspective. For

more information please contact Hank Henriques at [mrgonwa@hotmail.com](mailto:mrgonwa@hotmail.com).

### Climate Solutions That Work

8/26/2018 Sunday 2:00 PM–3:25 PM

Universalist Unitarian Church of Joliet,  
3401 West Jefferson Street, Joliet IL 60431

*Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming* is one of the most important books for this century. A four-person panel from the UUSJ Environmental Task Force will introduce attendees to this book and share important and inspirational highlights.

There will be some time for questions and comments. Light refreshments will be available. The program will be followed by UUSJ's quarterly board meeting.

For more information, please contact Allan Lindrup at [uusj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:uusj@sbcglobal.net) by August 25.

### UUSJ Quarterly Board Meeting

8/26/2018 Sunday 3:30 PM–5:00 PM

Universalist Unitarian Church of Joliet,  
3401 West Jefferson Street, Joliet IL 60431

The board meeting of Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice is open to the public.

For more information, please contact Allan Lindrup at [uusj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:uusj@sbcglobal.net) by August 25.

## Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

## Co-Ministers' Office Hours

Rev. David Schwartz, by appointment on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday

Rev. Teri Schwartz, by appointment on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday

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5650 S. Woodlawn Ave  
Chicago, IL 60637

Phone: (773) 324-4100

Fax: (773) 324-1136

Email: [administrator@firsttuchicago.org](mailto:administrator@firsttuchicago.org)

Website: [www.firsttuchicago.org](http://www.firsttuchicago.org)

Editor: Tim Arehart  
[timarehart@gmail.com](mailto:timarehart@gmail.com)