



Rev. Mandy Beal
Senior Minister

This month's newsletter theme is "Lost and Found." Your BUC staff and I came to this topic by discussing what's on our hearts these days. Some of us were pulling toward things we're grieving and some toward our small joys, so we decided to go with the balanced approach of exploring both sides of how our worlds have shifted in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I'll start with something that I'm missing. I miss our building. All of the BUC campus is beautiful, but I am partial to the sanctuary. Last year during the Time for All Ages on Stewardship Sunday, the kids were asked how the church would use the money. One of them (who shall remain nameless) said, "To buy more gray paint." This was one of my all-time favorite moments of kids talking in church because it was delivered with such perfect timing and completely deadpan. And it was so true! We do need a lot of gray paint! I realize that, to a fifth grader, our sanctuary is probably pretty boring. But to me, it feels light, airy, and inspirational. The lack of the stained glass, overt symbols, and permanent decorations seen in most Unitarian Universalist worship spaces is meant to encourage personal reflection without external influence. Having a worship space that is a blank canvas is a part of our Puritan heritage, and it's important to me to have that connection to our roots. I love our sanctuary, and I look forward to the day when we will gather there again.

Now for what I've found. This is a little more personal. I've been surprised by the amount of spiritual development that I've experienced during this time. As your minister, it is my duty and my honor to hold space for your spiritual and emotional processes. I can't do that effectively if I haven't dealt with my own. During this time of increased spiritual and emotional need, I don't have the option to put my spiritual health on the back burner. In order to process through my own emotions, I've taken a more rigorous approach to my spiritual practices like prayer, text study, and meditation. Writing is another very important spiritual outlet for me and I've found my sermons taking a more pastoral tone as well. Pastoral sermons and messages are the obvious need for our time, but the tenor and tone of my writing has deepened in an unanticipated way. I'm finding new parts of myself as a minister and a leader. It's been interesting and beautiful to watch this part of myself unfold, despite the circumstances in which it is happening.

All of us have days that we just need to get through, but I hope you're finding time for reflection on your experience, as well. As Baba Ram Das used to say, everything is grist for the mill. I encourage you to take an opportunity this month to reflect on what you've lost and found during this time. Also, please take care of yourself and each other. Don't forget to pick up the phone and call someone to tell them you're thinking about them. Be well.



Abha Dearing
Co-Director of Music Ministry

This Covid-19 pandemic has challenged me in ways I never dreamt of. Perhaps I speak for some of you when I say that. It is ridiculous and shocking sometimes when I am just waking, groggy with sleep, to be jolted by the recollection that I cannot go anywhere or see anyone outside of my nuclear family. Each day carries moments of mourning and moments of discovery and, since I cannot go anywhere anyway, I can afford to take time to notice these.

I miss being with a group of people who are all singing at the same time in harmony, also known as choir. There are many ways to connect with individuals and to converse, but the moment more than two people try to sing together, the delay in the airwaves makes it nearly impossible to create a cohesive, precisely-timed rhythmic phrase. This is worth mourning. In both my beloved BUC position and at the Roeper School, where I am Vocal Music Director for the Middle and Upper Schools, I have devoted

my professional life to the art of creating community and collaborating with others through my own voice and asking people to take risks and add their voices to the mix. Doing this is impossible right now.

Virtual choir, you say? Not the same thing. This endeavor requires many hours through a mostly-artificial and solitary medium: a solo singer practices, then records to a electronic “click track,” uploads it, and sends it to an engineer who compiles all of the tracks, knitting them together on software to line up all of the voices’ amplitudes so that they sound synchronized, a process that takes a lot of tweaking. The end result is sanitized, clinical, near-perfect... and completely inhuman. I consider myself a curious, creative person. My current online curriculum is proof of this. But computerizing the choral music experience is antithetical to the genuine article. Plus, there are not enough hours in the day for me to spend on things I deem less-than-worthy.

There ARE more hours in the day for me to deeply know the people I love and to love some people I know more deeply. Phone calls, WhatsApp, and Zoom have become lifelines to connect with so many dear folks whose presence in my life has provided much-needed humor, solace, and normalcy in this crazy pandemic. And I feel grateful and blessed to be cared for by my family, friends, work and church communities.



Steven Dearing
Co-Director of Music Ministry

As an introvert, I never imagined how tough things would be not seeing ANYONE outside my immediate foursome. I long for solitude so I can focus on my craft, and always thought I'd be fine on an island with a classical guitar and a pile of sheet music (shhh, don't tell Abha and the kids).

During this pandemic, it has been hard for me to find motivation; the kind of motivation that gets one to practice the same part over and over, to study, to prepare (because "why bother" when all the plans have been postponed?). Some days, it has been hard getting motivated to get out of bed.

But I am happy to say that I've found reading through intermediate-level music as I prepare for Sunday preludes has brought some new light for me to find joy in making music.

I have always been drawn to virtuosic music and pieces that take months, if not years, to master, and that served me well as an Adjunct Professor for over twenty years. But that time commitment cannot work when a pandemic suddenly requires your job to morph from music-director into music-maker every Sunday.

Although I consider myself blessed to say that I've been able to make a living and support a family by doing music, the fact is that music is a job, and often when our passion blends into a job with deadlines (and genres you don't care for, music for the masses rather than for academia, etc.), we can lose sight of why we started the thing we were passionate about in the first place.

Going back to something that I had brushed off as "less-than-worthy" and finding its value has proven not only refreshing, but has raised my respect for some lesser-known guitar composers and their works, and has given me more repertoire to bask in.



Eva Sagolileh
Acting Director of Religious Education

My love language is touch. There is so much transmitted in the touch of a hand on your shoulder, in the feeling of someone's hand tucked securely into your own, in the feeling of a loved one's arms wrapped around your waist or your shoulders.

I live alone, in a manner of speaking. My housemates are three cats. And while I love my cats, and I'm so grateful to have them to cuddle with (all three of my cats are champion cuddlers!), it's not the same as cuddling with a human. Headbutts and nuzzles when I get home from a walk around the neighborhood don't compare to the hugs my neighbors used to share with me when I passed their homes.

I miss the ease of inviting a friend over, or of going to a friend's home. My partner and I broke up during the pandemic. It was a mutual break-up, and it feels like the right time and thing to have happened, and even so... All I wanted in the days immediately following

was to go to the home of my Michigan best friend and curl up on her sofa to pass a bottle of wine between us while watching movies. After the last break-up I had a few years ago, my friend's husband went grocery shopping before I got there and stocked up on all the essential break-up foods for us. This time, there were no friend cuddles or shared bottles of wine. There were only phone calls with compassionately held space while I cried.

Not having someone, or a couple of someones, with whom I can share touch, is by far and away the most difficult part of this for me. When this is over, there are going to be so. many. hugs.

Please do me a favor. After you read this, before you continue to the next piece: if there is someone in your space you can hug, go do that. Do it for me and those of us who have to wait.



Joanne Copeland
Bookkeeper

Thinking about this time in our lives, I am struck by how everything seems to be changed and changing every day. The future is hard to see when each day is totally unknown. Granted, that was what it was like before Covid-19, but then I was able to plan my work week and my fun time. Now, work seems to be any day even though I've tried to schedule just certain days. I have other clients who are struggling to keep their businesses afloat and applying for the loans and grants available to small businesses. It's been quite the roller coaster ride!

I'm truly thankful that we live in a time when social media and technology enable us to "see" our family and friends and attend church. I do take advantage of that; in fact, we're planning a virtual baby shower for my niece on May 9. Should be interesting. Then I circle back to the unknown again... will I get to hold the new baby (who's due June 22)? Too many unknowns...

My daily walks, sitting on my balcony, reading, crossword puzzles, my family, friends, Leonard (my cat), and watching spring slowly unfold have been the positive side of all this. And soon I'll begin to work on some of the crafts I like to do.

Take a deep breath (with a mask on, please). Somewhere over the rainbow...



Marcia Mahood
Rental Coordinator

Someone referred to this stay-at-home time as "The Great Pause." I have lobbied Neb pretty hard that we should get a puppy, thus we would call this time "The Great Paws," but alas, I think I will not be successful in my campaign. But I have been thinking about things that make me happy, given that there has been a lot of alone time of late.

I am keeping occupied with knitting, sewing face masks, trying out new recipes, daily walks, and planning a vegetable garden (once I figure out how to let our four-legged neighbours know they are not being offered my hospitality. My raised vegetable beds are not a buffet table, despite rumours circulating among the local wildlife.) I have gotten a lot of quiet satisfaction from all of these activities.

If you had asked me in mid-March what stay-at-home would feel like, "contentment" would not have been an answer at the top of my list. It makes me recall some words of wisdom from my mother. She would tell me that I should pay attention to what really makes me happy—and I would likely find it did not come from spending large amounts of money, but from the simpler things in life.

So, I have been wondering: what will be different when this is all over? How will I live my life differently? Will there be major changes (like a puppy—please, please, Neb!), or will there be quieter interior changes? My mum gave me lots of good advice over the years, and I know one thing... I will be paying closer attention to how I spend my time. How about you?



Valerie Phillips
Administrator

“Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer.”

- E. M. Forster, *Howards End*

People are fascinating creatures. They can be fun to watch and listen to and simply appreciate for the unique qualities they bring to life. I find it joyous to watch someone learn something new and see the connections made in their head. When I interact with others, I learn about their thoughts, feelings, and their different perspectives on the world. Sometimes I make a special connection with one of these people, and I feel the connection in our hearts. It can be small and temporary while talking to someone in line at a grocery store. Or sometimes, it’s something big and profound, and I feel as though I’ve finally found my people.

Just prior to our state shutting down, I was at a point where I felt I was making good professional and personal connections with my current coworkers. At the same time, I was taking initiative to reconnect with friends from my last job and continue building our friendships. We were making plans for get-togethers and looking forward to scheduling our adventures into a monthly meet up! I am sad for the pause in social interaction that was so new for me. I miss the physical closeness and seeing their happy, smiling faces.

While there are still many unknowns, I have found some joy and hope for the future. It turns out that people are resilient, creative, and very adaptable. I am impressed by their problem-solving skills that I have seen displayed in so many helpful and interesting ways over the last few weeks. My friends, coworkers, and I have found ways to continue our contact and connections through phone calls, texts, Facebook, and Zoom. I have also discovered there is no “right time” to do something, especially when it involves connections with other people. You don’t have to wait for someone else to organize an event. You can simply pick up the phone and find out if now is a good time to talk and catch up. If it’s not, you can schedule for another time. Just taking the effort to call and say hi can really brighten up someone’s day!

So for now, we continue to make plans for the future and continue to live our lives to the best of our abilities. We continue to check in with each other and help out however we can. I encourage everyone to keep refreshing your current connections, and go create and nurture some new ones!



Sara Constantakis
Communications Coordinator

It's May... already? Finally? How does time seem to pass so quickly, yet somehow so slowly at the same time, these days? Time and its passage were transformed when this pandemic hit back in mid-March, which seems long-ago and like yesterday at the same time. Like all of us, I am grieving the loss of many things during this time. The biggest is being with my family in person. I miss my niece and long for her to climb into my lap (at 7 years old, I know she won't be doing that for too many more years). I miss my mom—something that hits me at random moments and makes tears spring to my eyes—and I'm sort of dreading Mother's Day because of how strange it will be for my mom and her daughters and granddaughter to only be able to see each other through a computer screen. I'm grieving the loss of feeling safe when I leave the house for essential activity. Grocery shopping is a stressful ordeal (although my beloved Trader Joe's has been providing a wonderfully safe and friendly environment), and my heart pounds every time my husband heads to our corner store in his mask and gloves.

Despite the things that have been lost, I have made some discoveries and re-discoveries during this time that have made my heart sing. My niece is adjusting to using video chat and conference calls as the sole means of communication with her grandparents and aunts, and her organizational skills have soared. She recently coordinated an 8-person conference call with the skill and efficiency of a veteran event planner and sounded like an adult on the phone as she briefed me on how things would go.

Some of the grocery-shopping stress has been alleviated through fortuitous trades with a friend. On two separate occasions, the gaps in my grocery supply have lined up with the gaps in hers, and we made porch-to-porch trades of black beans for frozen berries and coconut milk for asparagus.

An important spiritual practice for me is calling on the influence and protective presence of my late grandparents during difficult times. One day awhile back, I dug through an old box and found a couple framed photos of my grandparents that I put on my desk as tangible reminders of their protection and love. All my grandparents were infants during the last global pandemic in 1918, and they lived through it, along with many other hardships like several wars and the Great Depression. Their strength is in my DNA, and I am grateful for that gift.

By far the best discovery of this time, however, has been the resiliency of this beloved community. It's been such a joy to see so many of you embracing the technology that, even with all its frustrations and limitations, is keeping us connected and able to hear each other's voices and see each other's faces while we cannot physically be together. Seeing your faces on Zoom calls and hearing how much you value connecting in this way is a comfort and a gift that will keep me sustained as we head into the uncertainty of the future with love and hope. May it be so.

Calendar of Events

All church events and meetings are now taking place on Zoom (with the exception of the Wednesday Fireside Chats, which take place on Facebook Live). For resources on downloading and using Zoom, click [here](#). If you're part of a private committee or group that is meeting on Zoom, your organizer will send you the Zoom access info for your meeting.

To join an event, simply click on the meeting's Zoom link. If you're not using a computer to access Zoom, you can dial into meetings with your phone by calling the number and entering the meeting ID and password listed below.

Church-wide events are listed a week or so in advance on our [website](#), under Calendar of Events. New events are being added all the time, so watch your email and our Facebook page!

Weekly Events

Weekly Worship Service

Sundays | 10:30 a.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/196899450?pwd=RXJuNFpHdWMraENaZmFDWFVvaSExqUT09>

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 196-899-450

password: 882131

Sunday Discussion Group

Sundays | 3:00 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/328155806?pwd=SXFESjhnajhzc1lPQUhvVlk0UGZ3QT09>

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 328-155-806

password: 531879

Coffee with the Minister

Mondays | 10:00 a.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/445635030?pwd=ZXZoQndmRW1BdkZaNIzqYjV2UGO2UT09>

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 445-635-030

password: 196960

Living by Heart

Mondays | 1:30 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/332255974?pwd=eDBNbGMxRTZaVUJVT0pUdDBYWTFkUT09>

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 332-255-974

password: 558564

Chatting with Church Friends

Wednesdays | 12:30 p.m.

(through May 13)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84907660302?pwd=RU85V09WamttSWhEOVY0Z2NzSU1yZz09>

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 849-0766-0302

password: 042292

Fireside Chats with Rev. Mandy

Wednesdays | 7:00 p.m.

[Click here to watch on Facebook](#)

May Events

Issues and Ale

Friday, May 1 | 6:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/420440809?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/420440809?pwd=N0ppaTN6dGN1UnZkOVlydlFZb09UQT09)

[pwd=N0ppaTN6dGN1UnZkOVlydlFZb09UQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/420440809?pwd=N0ppaTN6dGN1UnZkOVlydlFZb09UQT09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 420-440-809

password: 740992

Presentation on the Climate Change Resolution

Thursday, May 7 | 1:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/95393308648?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/95393308648?pwd=bEcbwbzN2QXFfsTk9wS1lLbEJBK0ludz09)

[pwd=bEcbwbzN2QXFfsTk9wS1lLbEJBK0ludz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/95393308648?pwd=bEcbwbzN2QXFfsTk9wS1lLbEJBK0ludz09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 953-9330-8648

password: 468401

Beyond Voting Session 2 (speaker TBD)

Thursday, May 14 | 1:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99503603875?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99503603875?pwd=NDgxaDNrRmtKdDlNYkhzSStteHF4UT09)

[pwd=NDgxaDNrRmtKdDlNYkhzSStteHF4UT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99503603875?pwd=NDgxaDNrRmtKdDlNYkhzSStteHF4UT09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 995-0360-3875

password: 379678

Phone-in Presentation on the Climate Change Resolution (for those with only phone access)

Wednesday, May 27 | 1:00 p.m.

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 834-5081-4063

password: 177088

Humanists of BUC with Randy Block, MUUSJN President

Saturday, May 30 | 1:00 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84561963042?pwd=NFICMFo2UGFSWUw3cDkyZUxlcUzqQT09>

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 845-6196-3042

password: 695257

Chasing Coral film discussion

Sunday, May 3 | 7:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99205771390?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99205771390?pwd=UGhPYXV3TIRZeEpFV0pkOUJlOTA0dz09)

[pwd=UGhPYXV3TIRZeEpFV0pkOUJlOTA0dz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/99205771390?pwd=UGhPYXV3TIRZeEpFV0pkOUJlOTA0dz09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 992-0577-1390

password: 204691

Town Hall

Friday, May 8 | 7:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85978084141?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85978084141?pwd=bmZMQkZhcW1iZCtvcjJqZjRVamVYdGFmUT09)

[pwd=bmZMQkZhcW1iZCtvcjJqZjRVamVYdGFmUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85978084141?pwd=bmZMQkZhcW1iZCtvcjJqZjRVamVYdGFmUT09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 859-7808-4141

password: 380190

Presentation on the Climate Change Resolution

Thursday, May 21 | 7:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/98401970514?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/98401970514?pwd=K3QwS3VvRzdScmJPZjRVamVYdGFmUT09)

[pwd=K3QwS3VvRzdScmJPZjRVamVYdGFmUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/98401970514?pwd=K3QwS3VvRzdScmJPZjRVamVYdGFmUT09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 984-0197-0514

password: 988010

Beyond Voting Session 3 (speaker TBD)

Thursday, May 28 | 7:00 p.m.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/96745185060?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/96745185060?pwd=M0FJMGIgTnJ6M1EvcjhRU0pOQ2E0Zz09)

[pwd=M0FJMGIgTnJ6M1EvcjhRU0pOQ2E0Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/96745185060?pwd=M0FJMGIgTnJ6M1EvcjhRU0pOQ2E0Zz09)

To join by phone:

dial: 253-215-8782

meeting ID: 967-4518-5060

password: 600256