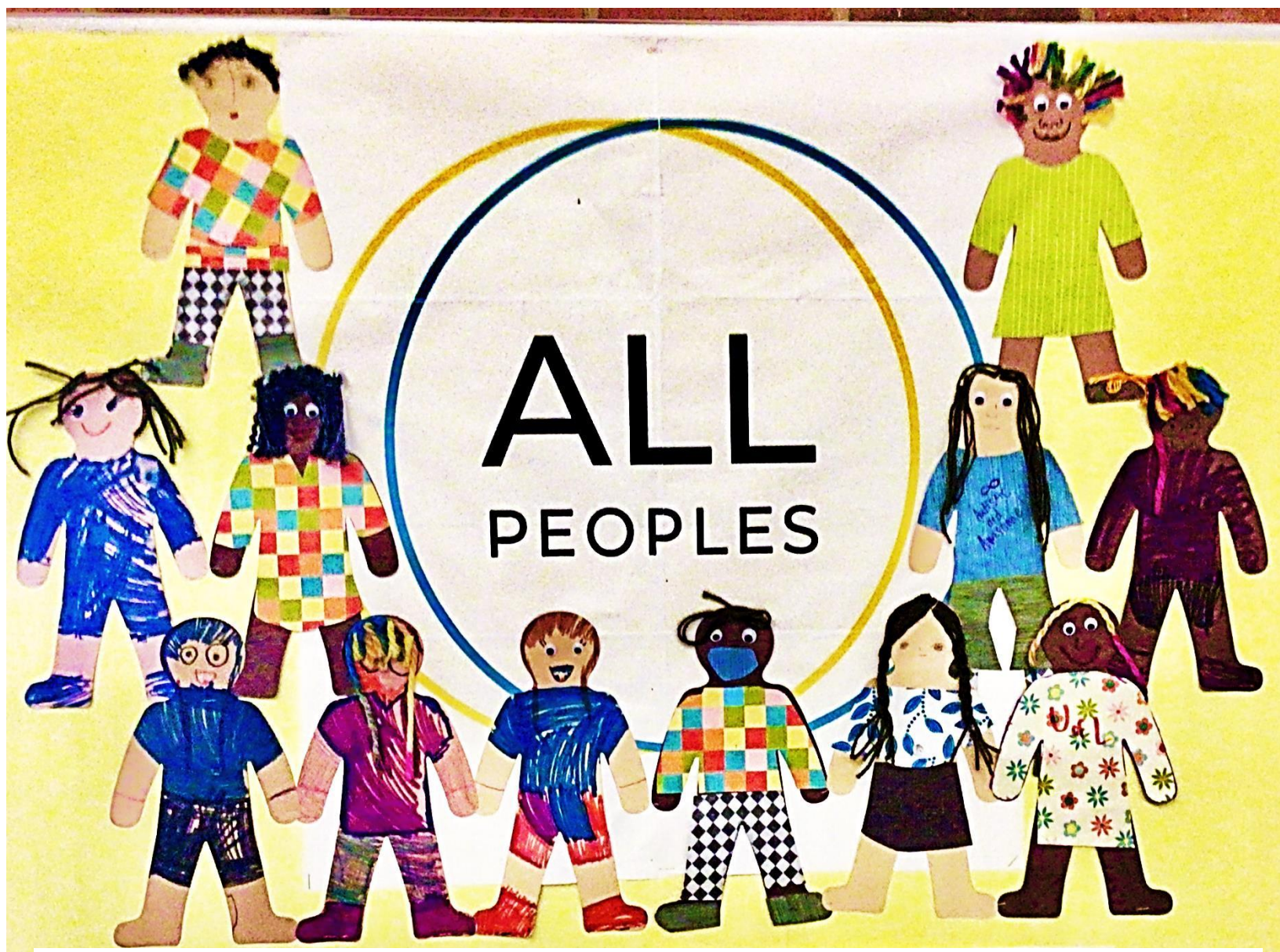


TAPESTRY

A Magazine for All Peoples UU

March 2022



Collage of paper dolls created by the children of All Peoples UU

Contributed by Barbara Friedland, Director of Lifetime Faith Development

Editor's Note

As we rejoin society after a period of pandemic isolation, it seems a good time to reflect on a goal from the third UU principle-- "acceptance of one another." Acceptance is an ambiguous word. It can imply passive toleration of those who are

different from ourselves, or it can mean embracing others with an open heart. Diversity advocate Verna Myers has said "Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance." To take the metaphor a bit further, consultant Michael Seitchik points out that fully accepted newcomers would be empowered to add their own favorite dance tunes to the playlist and to teach the old guard some new steps. How could that degree of acceptance fail to enliven the party?

In this issue of *Tapestry* magazine, we examine our church community's perspectives on acceptance, from diversity to inclusion to belonging. Rev. Bruce's message reminds us not to make assumptions until we get to know people. In verse, Joan Miller explores the sources of empathy and Ed Foote describes how a sports team can inspire a sense of belonging. Jill Baker offers a short story about the burden of isolation, and David Cooper shares an autobiographical poem about the pain of exclusion. Debbie Lawther writes of the power of technology to bring people together. We include an update from Justice Center Coordinator Rus Funk. In text from his recent talk on Critical Race Theory, emeritus minister Elwood Sturtevant explains why a full understanding of our nation's inhumane and discriminatory past is prerequisite to any real progress toward a "beloved community" of equal rights and mutual respect. Shared perspectives open the door to acceptance, so we thank all of this quarter's contributors who cued up their own additions to our congregational music and showed us new ways to dance together.

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*by Rev. Bruce Beisner
Minister, All Peoples UU Congregation*

One of the most brilliant and inspiring people I have had the privilege of meeting during my years in Unitarian Universalist ministry is a man named Mark Morrison-Reed. Mark is now retired, but he served for two decades as the minister of a large UU church in Toronto. I first met Mark at Meadville Lombard Theological School where he was teaching a course on the history of African Americans in Unitarian Universalism. At the time, Mark wore his hair in long dreadlocks and his choice of attire might have been called “casual.” I remember one afternoon, Mark shared with me that since moving back to Chicago he routinely experienced people assuming that he must be homeless because of his appearance. Once a young woman tried to give him some change and he had to explain to her that he was a minister and a professor at a nearby seminary.

Together on the Journey

It’s interesting the assumptions we make about people without even knowing them. Quite frequently my husband will get the strangest looks from people in our neighborhood when he introduces me to them by saying, “This is Bruce, my husband who is a minister.” I’m not always sure whether it’s the “husband” part that throws them or the “minister” part. Maybe it’s the combination of the two in the same sentence.

I’ve been thinking a lot about what assumptions I make about people and what my religion has to say about them. We all compose imaginary stories about others when we meet them. It’s something our brains just do, often without any conscious effort. And our personal life experiences inform what those stories are. For me, when I meet a young Black teenager, I don’t think about the crime shows on TV. I think about the child I was planning to adopt and imagine that, all these years later, this young Black man could have been my son. When I see a young man with a sign asking for money at the intersection of 3rd Street and Woodlawn, I think about

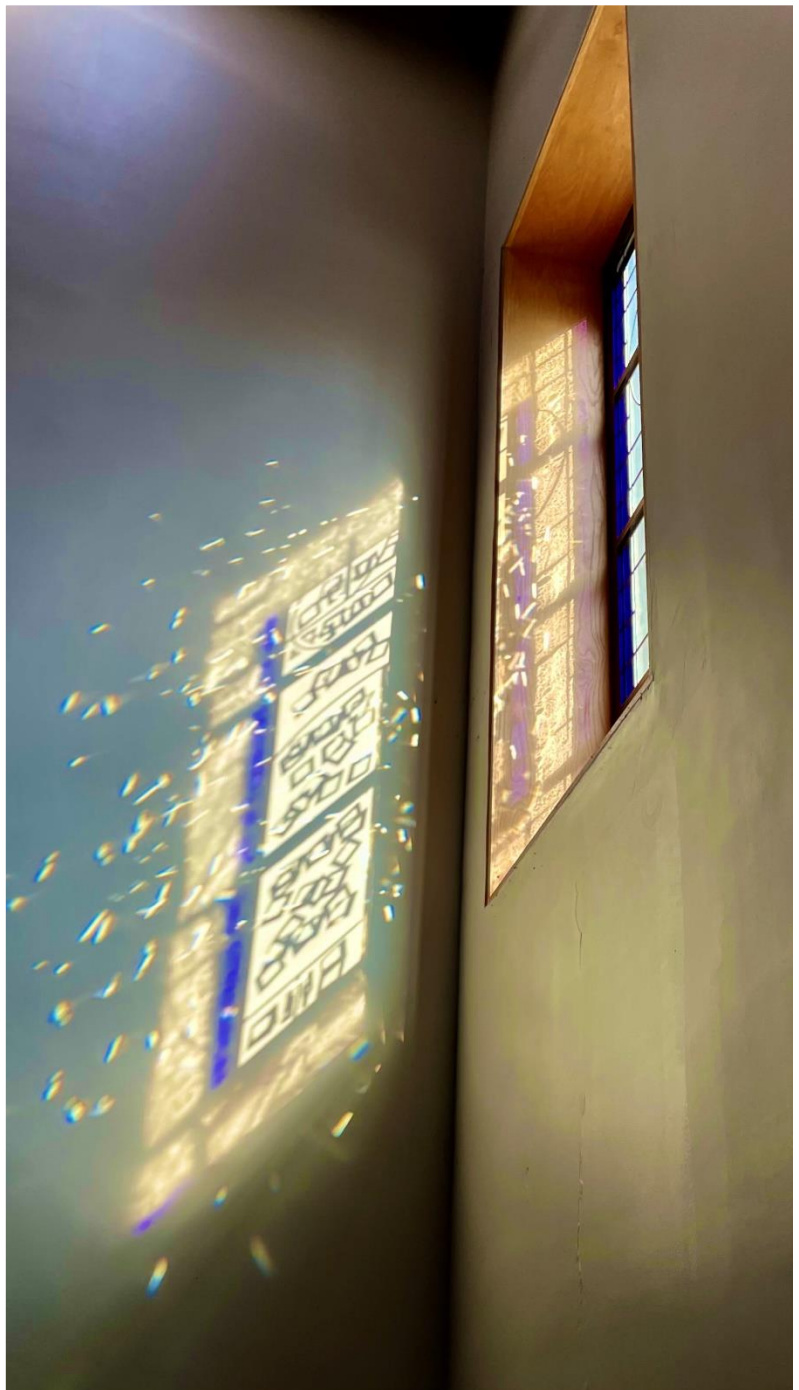
my grandfather who during the 1950s took odd jobs to feed his family and often couldn't make ends meet without the help of his neighbors. My grandfather was a strong and good-hearted person who spent a major part of his life struggling, much like those living in tents below the interstate near my home.

Unitarian Universalism invites us to step back from our assumptions and to acknowledge that the stories we create about strangers we meet are OUR own stories and are reflections of our own experiences and prejudices. We are called to resist the temptation to believe those stories are real, because they are not. Instead, we are compelled to do the work of actually getting to know others, asking them about their lives, and listening to THEIR story, even when it is very different from our own. That is what embracing multi-culturalism, challenging racial conditioning, and respecting the worth and dignity of every person actually looks like in practice.

I don't know about you, but I need a lot more practice at that. Fortunately I have this wonderful religion and its inspirational principles to guide me. And I have this lively church community that is always creating opportunities for me to explore, learn and challenge myself and those around me. It is good to be on this journey together.

Blessings,

Bruce



Bookmarks

Kiss the Ground: How the Food You Eat Can Reverse Climate Change, Heal Your Body and Ultimately Save Our World

Author: Josh Tickell

Nonfiction, Enliven Books/Atria 2017

Book Review by John A. Busch, Ph.D.

Can the ground really save us? According to the author, saving us from global warming requires drawdown (taking carbon back out of the atmosphere) as well as a rapid conversion to green energy so that we generate less carbon dioxide pollution.

Plants sequestering carbon not only enrich the soil, but could potentially pull down enough carbon to actually begin returning the earth's atmosphere to the lower carbon dioxide levels it had many decades ago. The reason this is not happening now is the U.S. and the world as a whole practice a form of agriculture that actually increases carbon in the atmosphere. For example, traditional plowing speeds up the degradation of organic soil components, releasing their carbon as CO₂ into the atmosphere.

Ammonia, a common component of chemical fertilizer, requires lots of fossil

fuel energy to make, and elevates emissions of nitrous oxide, which is a powerful greenhouse gas. What we need is no-till cultivation rather than plowing, and animals with hooves such as cows freely roaming over fields adding manure as a natural fertilizer.

Because there is no plowing with no-till cultivation, the roots of plants can penetrate deep into the soil taking carbon with them—a method of farming known as regenerative agriculture. This information is important to UUs not only because some are farmers or gardeners, but also because we all could help spread the word to farmers and policymakers. This is important, as the book claims that in general farmers are highly dependent on dangerous chemicals to grow their crops.

An alternative approach focused on understanding plant growth and soil ecology would find many advantages in regenerative farming. For farmers of the world, this change in approach is not just an opportunity to protect the environment. Regenerative agriculture also presents an opportunity for farmers to make several times more income vs. the chemically based methods they presently pursue. Surely, the ground properly cared for is well deserving of a kiss.

The book is well written and an easy read. There is also a Netflix documentary of the same name. It closely follows the book, although leaving out enough that reading is well worth the effort.



Poet's Corner

Richmond, Virginia 1958

My father, mother, and I traveled six hundred miles
And twenty years back
In a brand new Plymouth sedan.

We traveled from Brown v. Board of Education
Back to Plessy v. Ferguson
In sixteen hours of straight driving
except for stops in smalltown filling stations
Mount Sterling, Olive Hill, Ashland
Charleston, White Sulfur Springs
On old U.S. 60
Two lanes and round and round
The tops of the Appalachians
Through fog and moonlight and sunshine
And snowfall.
On route 60
there were no motels
For colored people.

We traveled back to Jim Crow schools and
Jim Crow rules
Back to the Confederacy
Back to Dixie
Back to backdoors
And balconies
Called "the crows' nest"
Back to hurt and harm
And shame.

--David Cooper



Reprinted with the author's permission from
New Southerner, Literary Edition, Dec. 2012.
Background map is from a 1959 Conoco Road
Atlas.



6:00 a.m.

On a dark, rainy morning

I watch you drive away,

I see

Reflections in the road,

Me in the window,

And taillights red,

Turning the farthest corner.

I hear only

The high slicking of your tires

Growing faint.

Trees dripping,

While only

Silence behind

Me in the window,

Laughter and clipped words

Echo in my recent mind,

Gray emptiness

Before me,

Darkness behind

Me in the window.

Now only rain,

Empty rooms,

Long hours

To fill until

The turbulence of your presence

Disappears.

--Jill Withrow Baker

Lucky

Just think of my luck
Of where my family lives
A place to call 'home.'

Think of how different
Had I been born someplace
else
To different parents.

With no house nor food,
A school where I lived in fear
Couldn't learn, hungry...

...and no one to care.
Stop now and think about it-
Just think of my luck....

Can I use my luck?
I must plan to use my luck.
Now, to use my luck....

--Joan Miller



Scores

We still love the game
The regular season was a hoot
Won more than we expected
Some in overtime!

Still big fans
Cheering the team on
Even
When unable to make it
To the games.

Watching on screen
On mute
Unable to understand
The play by play call

We made it to the final four!
Perhaps the finals?
What a journey!
...so far

--Edwin S. Foote

The Unutterable Sadness

A short story by Jill Withrow Baker

She had just eaten lunch, taking time out from tending to her father and her garden to tending to her hunger. It was soup and salad, left over from last night's supper, so the lettuce was wilted and the soup was flat, though hot. Maureen also had made and poured herself a cup of coffee. She lived on coffee these days. It kept her upright and aware.

But, as usual, after a meal, a feeling of tiredness swept over her. She gazed out the window at the green and orange mitten-leaves of the Sassafras tree and soaked in the soft, rust-colored light. The sight was, mixed with her tiredness, unutterably sad. She had lost touch with everyone, it seemed, having to stay home, not being able to visit with friends, or even relatives, during the pandemic.

Her sister, living in Georgia, seemed to be unaffected by the pandemic raging about her. Living in a house with her aging husband; her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren living nearby. They all went out to dinner, had parties and went to church in person. They had not caught the coronavirus. But the numbers of cases were doubling and tripling in Georgia, and, Maureen thought jealously, it was only a matter of time. She caught herself and recognized a feeling of a bit of panic and fear for her sister, edged with guilt for envying something that she didn't have. And couldn't have. She was deathly afraid of the Virus, whereas her sister didn't believe a pandemic was happening. To her sister, it was all media hype.

Maureen pushed the dishes aside on the table-cloth, put her head down on her arms and found her eyes closing uncontrollably. Beneath her eyelids, rosy skies drifted through her mind; she heard a hawk cry, saw the earth beneath her with blue shadows and roots of trees spreading out beneath the waters of the earth.

Her hand hurt and she moved her head, so that it lay mostly on her arm rather than her fists, and spread out one hand so that her rheumatic fingers were flat, and not hurting so much from the weight. She had often as a child and later, as a secretary, lain her head down on her desk and fallen asleep immediately. Now it wasn't so easy. Her age might have something to do with it – aching joints and fingers. And now the anxiety. She had had a COVID-19 test two days ago and was waiting for the results.

Sometimes it took a week. She wasn't too worried about the result. She had not had a fever or sore throat or any of the other symptoms of coronavirus. But the waiting to be sure added one more thing to wait for these days.

Added to the worry about the virus, everyone was waiting to find out who would be president of the United States. Waiting to find out what the repercussions would be. Would there be an element of society that would not be able to tolerate the results? In many elections before, Maureen recalled, there had been this panic, thinking that the next president would bring the country to the edge of ruin, but so far it had not happened, and once the president had settled into office, things had rocked along as normal. People became complacent again.

Now was different. Now Maureen felt something might really go wrong. The instability of the past four years had gotten to her and to many people around her. They had become tense. And this year, most of her friends were at home, hunkering down to avoid the virus, most having lost their jobs, but some working from home; some home-schooling their children, since schools were closed. Most were feeling strapped for money, since they had had no income for six months. Maureen and her father were existing off her father's pension money, which came in every month. It wasn't quite enough, but fortunately their expenses had been reduced by their self-enforced quarantine.

Some very fearful friends, and people she admired, were even threatening to flee the country if president Trump was reelected. Others she knew, like her sister and her sister's husband, were so up-tight about the results that they felt they should resist any other person becoming president with armed conflict.

Twelve years earlier, the turbulent election of president Obama had brought her marriage to an end. Her husband had begun listening to a radio personage so religiously that if she complained about anything about him, or expressed her beliefs about religion, or about what women should be able to do, he threatened to divorce her. He did it so often, that eventually she left him. She didn't like thinking that her marriage depended upon the beliefs of the person who became president of the country.

Circling and circling, a hawk cried out again in the rosy sky. It spotted the little black dot below it and circled closer to see what it was. A sparrow. Yes! A little brown sparrow, with white dots on its brown feathers and a yellow bill. The sparrow's black eyes glittered as it glimpsed the hawk above and, giving a chirp, it dove into the green trees below, but below that was the blue water and in the water was a large fish, visible only as a dark shadow, circling and circling a person lying face down on a white surfboard, unaware of it. She knew the person was herself, Maureen, blissfully unaware of the dangers below or above, floating on the surface of the glittering blue ocean. But she didn't care.



"Sleeping" by Jill Withrow Baker

What would happen would happen. Whether being grabbed by the hawk above or eaten by the shark below. She was slowly, slowly slipping into the blue-green sea. Was she drowning? Her whole body began slipping off the surfboard, suddenly jerking her awake.

She knew she had to get up and get some work done. She had to wash her dishes, and, seeing cobwebs near the ceiling, realized she hadn't dusted for three months. Why should she? No one came to the house; the groceries were delivered to the front doorstep. It was only she and her father who were here, and he was napping. It had been that way for over 200 days. What if his pension ran out? Who knows how much longer it would be before they could even go to visit her sister? To drive over to the grocery store on a whim? To buy mulch at the garden store? To hypothetically be able to put gas in the unused car without wearing a mask and gloves? They said maybe another year. The prospect seemed unending. Maureen found her eyes closing as she slowly slipped back into the cool, blue-green water.



Walking the Walk

Ky. UU Justice Action Network



All Peoples members standing with State Representative Attica Scott (Front row on right) at a racial justice rally organized by the Louisville Chapter of Standing Up for Racial Justice, Nov. 20, 2021. --Photo by Rus Funk



Justice Center Coordinator Rus Funk speaking at the Standing Up for Racial Justice Rally in Louisville, Nov. 20, 2021. --Photo by Ellen Wade

wonderful opportunity to let my actions come out of my faith, rather than keeping my beliefs in my back pocket. Serving within my spiritual community lends an amazing, liberating, and powerful foundation to this work."

On the other hand, coordinating both organizations at the same time has posed challenges. "At times," he said, "I feel that I have one foot in the boat and one on the dock." Looking ahead, Rus speaks of a need for new sources of revenue and enhanced staffing as KUUJAN continues growing into a self-sustaining and independent state organization.

In spite of those challenges, Rus related several significant accomplishments during the eight months since he took on these roles. Given more consistent administrative assistance from the Justice Center, members of our justice committees (Green Sanctuary, Social Justice, and International Justice) have been able to concentrate their efforts on the work they love. Rus said the degree of appreciation and engagement from congregants working on these projects has been a happy discovery for him this year. He also spoke of our congregation's efforts to interface more effectively with Metro government. Through training sessions and relationship-building he hopes our outreach to local officials will be even more effective in the future. Collaboration with other faith communities has been a goal as well; Rus foresees something like an "Eastern Area Justice Ministry" parallel to Eastern Area Community Ministry's service collaboration that has proven successful for many years.

Rus expressed hope that pandemic restrictions will ease in the coming year, allowing more person-to-person interaction so critical to social cohesion. In closing, Rus offered thanks to the congregation, along with an invitation to find new ways to become involved in All Peoples' mission to promote peace, inclusion, justice, and kindness.



*Rev. Bruce Beisner (left) and All Peoples members
at the Kentuckiana Pride Festival Parade, October 8, 2021.--photo by Rus Funk*

Why Critical Race Theory

Matters to Us as UUs

Address to KUUJAN, presented by

Rev. Elwood Sturtevant,

November 4, 2021

I'll begin with Shelly Jackson Denham's effort at describing what we UUs are up to in her song, "We Laugh, We Cry," where she concludes:

We seek elusive answers to the questions of this life.
We seek to put an end to all the waste of human strife.
We search for truth, equality, and blessed peace of mind.
And then, we come together here, to make sense of what we find.
And we believe in life, and in the strength of love
And we have found a joy being together. . . .
And in our search for peace, maybe we'll finally see,
Even to question, truly is an answer.

"To question" has always been a major part of our UU faith, because we understand, as American philosopher Sussane Langer put it, "In order to have new knowledge, we must get a whole world of new questions." And so of course, we expect our public schools to be open to exploring questions of all kinds. This evening, I want to argue that Critical Race Theory, which I'll call "CRT" from now on, can perhaps be best understood for us as UUs as a tool for helping pose better questions and for helping us see what is happening in the world around us. There are people, including some UUs, who have problems with CRT or who would even forbid its use. I suspect for the most part, those people's problems come from taking CRT as a dogma, an end in itself, and not as a tool, not as a means towards a better society.

We all know that UUs have never been very good at going along with anything presented as a dogma. I'm convinced that's the case for a lot of other Americans, too. So, if you encounter someone with concerns about CRT, I'd suggest that instead of starting by telling them anything, you begin with sincere questions about their experience and perhaps their fears about CRT. Then you can try to share some of your experiences and your fears – fears, for example, that the blunt instruments of law and prohibition can often be used in ways that hurt people and that interfere with getting at the truth.

You might say that you see CRT as something like a pair of glasses; that is, as something you use when you want to see something differently.

And you might say that you see CRT as something like a pair of glasses; that is, as something you use when you want to see something differently than how you'd usually see it. Most people agree with the proposition that what we see of something depends to some degree on how we look at it. Biblical scholars, for example, understand that how people see what's in the Bible depends not just on what is in the Bible, but on what individuals bring to their seeing of the Bible's content. One scholar, Thomas Howe, explains that the reason two people can look at the same Bible passage and come up with different interpretations is because of their different "preunderstandings"; that is, because of their different world views. He says, "Like a pair of glasses, we see everything through our preunderstanding ..."

(Thomas Howe, <http://www.equip.org/PDF/DI501-2.pdf>). This relationship between the experience of the person who is looking and the thing being looked at is a lot of what CRT is about.

In a Bible context this relationship between who is looking and what is seen is dealt with in the field called hermeneutics. You don't need to understand that word to appreciate that, for example, many feminist Biblical scholars encourage reading the Bible with what they call a hermeneutic of suspicion. That is, they suggest it helps understand more about the Bible to keep in mind the suspicion that human Bible authors were influenced by the actual circumstances of their lives, including the severe patriarchy of Biblical times. Similarly I'd suggest that CRT is a way of looking at America with the suspicion that American institutions and for that matter, we Americans, have been created under the influence of the racism that has so long been a part of our culture, such that the tool, the glasses of CRT helps those of us who identify as white see something we might otherwise miss.

Seeing matters, as James Baldwin put it, because "nothing can be changed until it is faced." Ultimately, I think that's what CRT calls us to do: to see how discrimination and oppression have been and are still being created by our culture's perceptions of race. In order to understand America, we must see it. We UUs, of course, are called in the words of our sources to "challenge and confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love." And again, first we must see the powers and structure, and see them in light of our principles, including our commitments to the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and to justice, equity and compassion in human relations.

I think it true that CRT began as a tool when people such as the brilliant Black lawyer Derrick Bell took a second look at what happened after the Brown v. Board of Education decisions and asked whether those changes in the law were accomplishing the results the NAACP and others had expected. The short answer was "No"; even though "separate but equal" was legally abolished, Black school children continued to be educationally disadvantaged in so many ways.

So Bell and others looked over the big picture of American history and found what seemed to be a pattern: even when the law changed to advance racial equity, gains would tend to be undercut by other actions of the society arising from what Bell at one time called "the permanence of racism." These days we might speak of systemic racism, or of white supremacy culture, but the evidence for the pattern Bell saw is still there in all sorts of disparities that the system of our society creates in things like family wealth, health outcomes and criminal justice sentences.

Our fifth principle calls for both the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process. I suspect we're all aware of how these things can conflict.

Now, I don't believe using CRT as a kind of glasses will show me everything there is to be seen; it is not my only tool. And in fact, I believe there are other things that are important to notice as well, such as some things that conservatives point to about the hope and the ideals that America holds out for all of us. If that strikes you as a paradox, then all I can say is that paradox is part of the human condition, as our UU principles show.

For example, our fifth principle calls for both the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process. I suspect we're all aware of how these things can conflict. Dr. King, for example, called people to protest against injustices arguably created by a democratic majority, trusting that as Americans came to see more of the contradiction between our American ideals and the lived reality of so many Americans, our America would change.

Dr. King was a student of Gandhian thought, and I think he valued a teaching that Gandhi shared about how to move our society to a better place: If I hold up my hand like this, you can presumably see the palm, and I the back. Same hand, same reality, but different points of view. And if there were people in a circle around me, there would be as many different points of view as people in the circle. Each view would be partial, so each viewer would have part of the picture, part of the truth, if you will, and it would be wrong for me to insist that my view of my hand had to be the one right one, the true one. That's the mistake people in conflict make, insisted Gandhi – they claim their point of view is the only valid one.

What we need to do to make conflict constructive is to remember our own limitations and to find ways of adding to, or in effect combining our points of view

What we need to do to make conflict constructive is to remember our own limitations and to find ways of adding to, or in effect combining our points of view with our opponents, so that we can all see more of what is really there, more of what is really going on in the world around us.



That, I think, is a part of the song that I began with: the line that says that after we've asked questions and searched for truth and worked to end wasteful strife, we come together to make sense of what we have found by combining our insights and our visions into a bigger, more encompassing view. It's a process a little like the scientific method, where we hold the truths we have discovered tentatively, letting old things go as we learn more and come up with bigger, more useful theories that give better guidance to our understanding and to our living. Our goal isn't so much having our point of view prevail as it is to have a more just and equitable, a more humane society result.

It's always easy to assume that people with an opposing view are all acting in bad faith or out of some other character flaw. Gandhi's and Dr. King's techniques for social change operated out of the assumption that at least some opponents could learn more than what they previously knew and could then modify their views. People of course tend to see and to speak out of their own experience, but I believe humans have the gift of being able to learn from new experience, even vicarious experience. I believe part of what CRT offers is a chance to appreciate the lived experience of those whose experiences our society has tended to ignore or dismiss. CRT also offers those of us with white privilege like many UUs the opportunity to use that privilege to help persuade others that we can change our society for the better.

I believe part of what CRT offers is a chance to appreciate the lived experience of those whose experiences our society has tended to ignore or dismiss.

I believe, as I think Gandhi and Dr. King did, in the idea that we human beings share much in common. Thomas Howe, whom I mentioned earlier in connection with hermeneutics, argues that though we each see through our own individual presuppositions, some of our presuppositions are universal because they are made of the things we all hold in common as human beings. Our engagement with our opponents must see to touch these universals.

One of the universals in which I believe is the capacity most of us have, when we try, to see ourselves in others - our basic capacity to truly feel with others,

to feel compassion. And it is because of our faith in some shared humanity that we UUs are called, as I said earlier, to confront powers and structures. To do that, we need to show up in public spaces to make sure our vision is part of the picture that is being put together, and to make our voices heard in the faith that there are those who will be moved by reason and compassion and exemplified love.

Sometimes art can make a point more quickly than anything else, so I'd offer Langston Hughes' poem, "Let America Be America Again" as a way to get at all of this. He said, as some of the current proponents of CRT might say, "America never was America to me." But Hughes went on to swear that, as I understand the proponents of CRT do, "America will be." That is, a shared, equitable and inclusive American that honors the experiences of all Americans will be. My assignment was to try to inspire you this evening, and the best way I can do that, I think, is to suggest that you reread Hughes' poem and imagine the America he had faith will be.

This evening brings all of us the call, the challenge, to speak out on behalf of ourselves and our neighbors against fear mongering and dangerous tactics designed not to address real problems but instead to further the divisive so-called culture wars. But we can also speak for the wider vision that CRT offers for a better America, and in particular speak to our legislators not just to oppose bad bills but to promote a more inclusive and equitable society. I hope you have been inspired by the speakers who have preceded me, and that you will take the opportunity about to be presented, in the words of the song, to come together to make sense of what we have found, and then to share that good sense and your good questions with each other and the world.



Being Together

--essay by Debbie Lawther

Faversham, Kent, United Kingdom



One global impact of COVID is acute awareness of our need for human society, at least in the UK and US. But I feel sure it is true wherever people have had to lockdown. Everyone everywhere has missed being together, in person and face to face and capable of touching!

The yearning is expressed in sad notices about meetings - groups 'had hoped to be back in person, but a new variant means we have to carry on Zooming for a while'. Some folks are getting fed up, cooperation is ending: the convener of the Oxford Northumbrian Piping group asserts that last Sunday was the final Zoomed gathering.

'Normal' used to mean taking our socializing for granted. Quarantine happened on Ellis Island, or for smallpox or TB, not in our twenty-first century times and places. I feel we've held a tension, like an elastic band, between needing that normal socializing and keeping apart to protect each other. That tension will be released, or transmuted somehow. Will there be parties!

But about all the Zooming: We've learned, more or less, how to make do with

interacting over the internet. We've used Zoom at All Peoples, and for my Northumbrian piping groups and a psychology course, even therapy. Phone calls, with video, can be made for free, around the world, with Messenger, What's App, Signal, Google....

This new connectivity is wide-reaching. We can stay in visual touch with friends and family with whom physical co-location is expensive and difficult and seldom. What would this have meant to families during the days of emigration a hundred and fifty years ago! We can actually maintain and grow relationship, learning, community without being in physical company. It's not the old way, but it is very real and valuable none the less.

It's been huge for me. I've played my pipes more than any time in twenty years! I'm studying to become a Psycho-synthesis counsellor. I'm able to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees at All Peoples. 'Normal' scares me! It holds threat of loss of connection. At the level of heart, I want to be included in a place where I feel I am recognized, known. I want to contribute to the richness of life in my All Peoples place. I can, via Zoom.

I'm writing this from my own point of view, but I'm not alone. I have some 50 - 60 fellow Zoomers even at in-person church services. I may lose the Oxford piping group, but the one in Northumberland is adding a regular Zoom session as well as resuming in-person gathering. Lots of us don't want a return to the 'old normal'!

There are so many wonderful things happening in, by, with All Peoples! I hope consideration of how each event can be shared with the full congregation, virtual as well as physical, will become automatic - just 'normal'. I hope learning how to conduct excellent 'hybrid' events can sharpen, become intentional. There are issues, mainly about everyone, seeing and hearing everyone else. It will mean building a new way of doing things. It can be done - we can do it - and the world will be normal again.



All Peoples People

Daniel Sturtevant

Dan Sturtevant, Vice-President of the All Peoples Board of Trustees, grew up in the congregation. For Dan, it didn't seem strange that UUs don't require a set of beliefs, but strange that some other religions do. He benefited from a vibrant youth program, attending Youth Cons where he met Unitarian Universalists from many places. "It always seemed like a healthier group to be part of than anything else society had to offer." Though he was not frequently involved with a church in undergrad and grad school (studying Psychology at Rhodes College in Memphis and Behavioral Economics at University of Warwick in Coventry, England), "I had never given up the UU identity, the people most authentically living the values of the beloved community - the idea that people are better off supporting each other, and exploring the wonder of existence together."

Dan began Board service when All Peoples formed the Ministerial Search Team that recruited settled



minister Rev. Bruce Beisner. Since the search required diligent and concerted efforts from church leaders, including some who left the Board in order to serve, Dan anticipated the need for more volunteers. For that reason, he agreed to serve on the Board, though he began at a challenging time. "We were coming off a period of perhaps the most intense work in decades by the lay leadership," with interim work that included personnel changes, changing the church's name, and the pandemic that has changed church life. Yet, "With Bruce's arrival and perspective, we are guiding the process toward being easier for everyone." Dan feels our congregation has done well with so much change, remaining a vibrant church and attracting new members, and he anticipates more enjoyable times.

Our focus now? “We need to get to know each other and our minister. The people joining by Zoom are our future leaders, whether they know it or not.” Dan notes another change facing all churches, the demographic trend of young people not churching any more. “We have made progress with the Justice Center, to attract people who share our values, seeing *maybe there is a church for me*. That could make a lovely feedback loop of creating more justice, which creates more UUs, which creates more justice, until we have all this justice and all these UUs! The other side of attracting younger people is supporting families with children, which the pandemic has also made more difficult. And it has interrupted the cycle of Youth Con leaders mentoring new youth leadership, so figuring out what to do about that will be a great challenge and opportunity.” He notes that how we meet these challenges will be part of our legacy. Though UUs are a relatively small denomination, many people share our values, yet don’t connect them with the idea of church. “Finding a way to get past that would be the ticket to a robust future for UUs and the liberal religious perspective.”

What keeps Dan interested in congregational service? “No shortage of stubbornness! But it’s always been part of what I value intrinsically as worth sustaining. The church is very different from what it was in 1990, when I was first forming the concept of what a church could be, but it’s still got the same essence at its core, and I like it!”

-- Interview by Paula Kingsolver



"In our most broken moments, we're reminded of the truest life-sustaining resource we possess--love. The love we give, the love we receive, and the love we invest in our community is our redemption. It is love that gives our lives meaning."

--Neisja Yenawine

Nature in Our Neighborhood

Hardworking Allies

by Rob Kingsolver

Here's a trick question: If you had to guess which domesticated animal is most valuable to the world's farmers, which animal would you choose? Cheese lovers may pick dairy cows, wool fanciers could choose sheep, and folks who like eggs for breakfast might name the chicken as our most indispensable farm animal.

However, a good case can be made for the honeybee. Yes, insects are animals, and the Italian breed of honeybees most commonly maintained by beekeepers has been tamed by centuries of domestication to become less feisty and more productive than their wild ancestors.

According to the US Department of Agriculture, pollination by honeybees is essential for fruit and seed maturation in 35% of all global food plants, including 87 of the 115 most important agricultural crops. Financial benefits of honeybees to US farmers alone total \$15 billion per year. That is a big contribution from such a small creature!

In my graduate school days at University of Kansas, I shared lab space with a group of honeybee biologists. My major professor taught courses in beekeeping. He maintained hives for teaching and research on University property, and in vacant lots all over town. We even had a demonstration hive inside our lab, with glass walls for observing bee behavior.

A long plastic tube leading from the hive box through a hole in the window gave our bees access to the outside world, so they kept busy going in and out all day long.

Every morning, my lab mates would check the observation hive to see what the bees were doing. By the color of the pollen the worker bees brought back, the experts could tell what kind of flowers they were visiting--was it orange pollen from local dandelions again that day, or had the bees begun to retrieve white pollen from the flowering crabapples that had begun to bloom on our campus?

My friends showed me how to interpret the waggle dance, with which bees communicate locations of the best sources of nectar and pollen. Bees navigate by the position of the sun, so their tiny brains keep track of the direction to a food source, as well as the approximate distance from home. Any worker bee who finds a good flower patch will "dance" as soon as she returns to the hive. The tiny dancer runs up and down the surface of the honeycomb, using repeated loops and symbolic abdomen-wagging movements to convey strategic information to other workers.

Empowered by her scouting report, foraging bees spend less time searching for flowers, and more time hauling food back to supply the colony.

Honeybees are truly social insects, which accounts for much of their success and agricultural value. Worker bees in the hive (all female siblings) don't produce offspring of their own. Instead, they devote all their efforts to help their mother (the queen) produce more sisters. The extent of their devotion is truly remarkable. For instance, when a

honeybee stings you, the stinger pulls out of her body, and the little defender soon dies in service to the hive. Biologists from Charles Darwin's day marveled at this apparent altruism in bees. It was not until biologists began to examine honeybee genetics that an evolutionary explanation emerged. Because of a quirk in honeybee inheritance, sister bees share more genetic information with each other than mother bees do with their own offspring. A worker bee can therefore bequeath more of her genes to the next generation by defending the hive and helping to produce younger sisters than she could by leaving the colony to bear offspring of her own.



Honeybee hard at work in the All Peoples woods. Photo by Rob Kingsolver

My research advisor studied honeybee mating behavior, which is pretty bizarre by human standards. The young queen bee leaves the hive only once to mate, and that single encounter is sufficient to fertilize all the eggs she will lay throughout her life. Mating happens high above the ground in specific locations called congregation areas. Male bees, called drones, buzz around these mating sites, flying in circles day after day until a receptive queen appears. When she does, all the drones zoom in, bumping and shoving in competition for her attention. The suitor who succeeds in mating loses his abdomen in the process, and dies immediately afterward. Unsuccessful drones don't fare much better. Their brutally practical sisters kick them out of the colony to starve as soon as mating season is over. I've always viewed the male honeybee's enthusiasm for his tragically brief role in the life of the hive as a marvel of the natural world.

Although we praise the honeybee work ethic, the workers' most important environmental contribution is their unwitting contribution to plant reproductive success. Bees collect pollen to feed their larvae, but do not pollinate plants on purpose. The pollen that sticks to a worker bee's furry body while she is gathering nectar gets a free ride to the next flower, allowing the plant to send its genetic code to other plants of the same species rooted some distance away. That unintentional transportation assistance gives many flowering plants their only chance at sexual reproduction, and provides us an irreplaceable part of our food supply. Three cheers for happy accidents! I suspect all of us produce some good as an accidental byproduct of our daily actions, and hope these positive side effects make up for the unintentional damage that we do from time to time.



PEOPLES PUZZLE

Look for some familiar words and phrases in this crossword challenge.

--by Rob Kingsolver

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13											
14		■	15					■	16		
17		18		■	19			20	■	21	
22				23		■	24		25		
26			■	27		28	■	29			
30			31	■	32		33	■	34		
35				36	■	37		38			
39		■	40		41		■	42			
43		44	■	45			46		■	47	
48			49						50		
51											

Across

1. Our congregation (4 wds.)
13. "Him" at the Vatican (2 wds.)
14. XXX + XXV
15. Windmill part
16. Flavored water brand
17. Atmospheric prefix
19. Southern tea choice
21. ___ Louis
22. Body cavity
24. Composer known for marches
26. British soccer org.
27. Like most salad veggies
29. Hospital Dept.
30. Come up short
32. Fall behind
34. French pal
35. Chamber group
37. Robot vacuum brand
39. "Get your kicks on ___ 66"
40. 1950s giant ant film
42. Potter's oven
43. Classical composer Raymond
45. Feedback
47. Roman 2
48. Like pressed grapes? (2 wds.)
51. United with 12-Down in 1961

Down

1. What All Peoples wants to be (4 wds.)
2. Movers and shakers have it (3 wds.)
3. Vinyl abbr.
4. Grave danger
5. It, in Spanish
6. Ideal
7. China's formal name (abbr.)
8. Legends
9. Typesetting measure
10. Break down
11. G.A. annual meetings
12. United with 51-across in 1961
18. Like the chalice, each Sunday
20. Forest female
23. Pacific state (abbr.)
25. Soy sauce flavor
28. Cozy sleepwear (2 wds.)
31. Tennis do-over
33. Chinese board game
36. "Yours," King James' version
38. "Will you be ___ tomorrow?" (2 wds.)
41. Many a Purdue grad.
44. Weapon of Israeli Defense Force
46. Our national org.
49. Started in hospitals (abbr.)
50. Latin 101

Acrostic PUZZLE

--by Rob Kingsolver

Follow the clues and fill in the blanks to complete each word. Then copy letters into the matching numbered squares to complete a quotation from a well-known UU writer. The first letters of each of the words, read from top to bottom, spell out the author's name and topic.

1 H	2 I		3 I	4 B		5 H	6 T	7 J	8 O	9 I	10 Q		11 K	12 M	13 C		14 C	15 M	16 O	17 P
18 J	19 F	20 K	21 S		22 G	23 L		24 A		25 L	26 H	27 S	28 S	29 O		30 O	31 D	32 Q	33 C	34 G
	35 R	36 K		37 T	38 N	39 A	40 B	41 T		42 F	43 A	44 N		45 K	46 H	47 E	48 C		49 O	50 S
51 R	52 J	53 E		54 C	55 H	56 A		57 L	58 H	59 T		60 L	61 I		62 E	63 H	64 N	65 O		66 J
67 P	68 H		69 T	70 D	71 K	72 H	73 M	74 J	75 E	76 L	77 I		78 S	79 K	80 L	81 L		82 F	83 T	84 J
85 H	86 Q		87 M	88 I		89 Q	90 P	91 I	92 E	93 B		94 D	95 M	96 L		97 R	98 K	99 F	100 T	101 L
102 A	103 Q		104 P	105 H	106 H	107 R	108 D	109 R		110 A	111 R	112 D	113 G	114 Q		115 N	116 P	117 B		118 T
119 D	120 H	121 T	122 G		123 P	124 A	125 B	126 A	127 D		128 H	129 K	130 F		131 T	132 L	133 T	134 C	135 B	

A. Atlantic breeze (2 wds) 124 24 102 43 110 39 126 56

B. A thing unto itself 4 40 93 125 135 117

C. Loquacious 33 134 54 13 48 14

D. Damaging rays (2 wds) 119 70 108 112 127 31 94

E. Night fliers 62 75 53 92 47

F. 49er 82 42 130 19 99

G. Creep 22 122 113 34

H. March contest (2 wds) 85 128 58 105 106 26 68 72

5 63 120 46 55 1

I. Praise for Fido (2 wds) 91 2 61 9 3 88 77

J. Disheveled 18 52 84 7 74 66

K. Diamond play 45 98 36 71 11 129 79 20

L. Corrected copy (2 wds) 101 76 132 60 96 57 23 81 25 80

M. Salad days 73 15 12 87 95

N. Race for fillies 38 115 64 44

O. Not due 16 49 8 30 65 29

P. Champion's award 17 90 104 123 67 116

Q. Devious 86 114 32 89 103 10

R. Proposed UU principle 109 35 51 111 107 97

S. Long hauler 28 50 21 78 27

T. Bleary eyed (2 wds) 131 6 133 41 59 118 83 121 37 69 100

December PUZZLE solution: ROBERT FULGHUM, CHRISTMAS WISH. "I KNOW WHAT I REALLY WANT FOR CHRISTMAS. I WANT MY CHILDHOOD BACK. IT IS ABOUT THE CHILD WAITING BEHIND THE DOOR OF OUR HEARTS FOR SOMETHING WONDERFUL TO HAPPEN."

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

The next issue of *Tapestry* magazine will arrive June 1. Our theme will be *The Interconnected Web of Life*, and we would welcome your input. What is your relationship with the natural world? Do you find solace in natural places? Does the night sky inspire you? What can nature teach us about life? Do you feel an obligation to preserve other species? If you would like to share your story, your art work, a poem, a book review, or a photograph on this or any other topic, drop us a line at Tapestry@allpeoplesUU.com. Our goal for the *Tapestry* is to build community by representing everyone in the congregation.



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Tapestry's mission is to celebrate All Peoples congregational life through personal reflections, stories, poetry, music, visual arts, and a healthy measure of fun.

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Thanks to all *Tapestry* contributors for sharing your talents and insights with our church community.