

Newsletter

July 2025

Sunday Service at
10:30am, in person and
online

Zoom Sunday Service Link:
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/891
22019151](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89122019151)

Meeting ID: 891 2201 9151

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield



June Sunday Services

July 6 Rachel Schwartz: The Patriotism of Community Building

July 13 Peggy Taylor: You Gotta Put Down the Duckie: Thoughts on
leaving our comfort zones

July 20 Ben Foley: Classical Guitar

July 27 Alyson Arnold: Inner Peace

We are always looking for new members for our various committees. Please check out our [website](#) and let us know what resonates with you!

Find us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

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[Website](#)

If you'd like to write for the newsletter, please email the Social Media Director at uucpsocialmedia@gmail.com!

Beating the Heat

Well, I guess it's really summer now. The weather took a while to get the memo, but now it's caught up with the plan and we're all gasping like a Magikarp. I don't do well with extreme temperatures, so I'm pretty glad that this old building tends to stay cool, at least on the first floor.

But despite the heat, the church has had a lot of cool activity lately. In addition to our Sunday services, we had our Open House / Community Dinner, with a cookout; our Annual Picnic, also featuring a cookout; and Drag Story Hour, with Poppy DaBubbly and Sativo Green reading stories to all the kids and adults who attended. And those are just the events that were open to all; our church is fairly hopping with activity lately.

My current project is creating some new church groups: a (new) Men's group (we have one but it is a closed group; this would be an open one); a Women's group; and a book club group. Please [drop me a line](#) if any of those sound interesting to you. We also of course have our Youth group and our Crafting group; if you are interested in either of those, please let me know as well, and I'll put you in touch with the leaders (well, one of them is me). I'm actually looking for leaders (or at least point people) for the Men's and Women's groups, so if you're interested in that, please let me know.

As usual, we'll be having our Open House / Community Dinner on the third Tuesday of the month; there's a flyer elsewhere in the newsletter. I hope to see you all there! These are a little fun and sometimes we have some unexpected entertainment! You'll have to come to see what it is. 😊

At any rate, I hope to see you soon at a church function or out and about in Berkshire County! Have a happy and safe Fourth, and month, of July!

*Peace and Joy,
Alexander Herrmann, Editor*

Update on our Social Justice Award Recipient (Danielle Munn)

We were very excited and proud to give our 2025 Social Justice Award to Danielle Munn of Witch Slapped...but since then, Danielle has had some very sad news to report, which is that she may have to close her shop and community center due to harassment from the City of Pittsfield. The full details, and an opportunity to help, are [here](#). Please help if you can! Danielle helps so many people.

“We can just let July
be July, let the sun
hang in the sky, clear
your mind of all the
things you're waiting
on” — Lily Williams

“Everything good,
everything magical
happens between the
months of June and
August.” — Jenny Han

Adulting in a New Age

Not many people outside of my innermost circle know this, but I am currently a student in two different degree programs. I am simultaneously working towards becoming a Registered Nurse through Berkshire Community College, and finishing a Masters in Education through the University of the People. I am no stranger to pursuing academic feats like this, as I also started college at age 16 and now have a Bachelors in Biology and Environmental Medicine from Bard College at Simon's Rock, which just closed its campus in Great Barrington. I know I am so fortunate to have had access to all of this formal education, though some of it came easier than others. My nursing education and career is sponsored through Berkshire Health Systems, and my courses at University of the People are affordably priced and self paced so I could register and pay for classes as I was able, which sometimes was only the minimum of one class per year when I was in the midst of economic abuse from intimate partner violence.

A strong foundation in education was instilled in me from a young age, and even now I like to jokingly say that being good at school is my most marketable skill. This idea of having a marketable skill largely came into play at the height of the covid pandemic, when job losses and having a partner gambling my money away in trading cryptocurrency forced me to reevaluate my skill sets to dream up how I could make enough money to not feel like I was drowning. I soon discovered that I was not too shabby of an entrepreneur, networking to get a variety of contracted gig work in child care, pet care, and education, adapting as I went to include requiring new clients to sign a form and prepayment to secure my time in order to protect my livelihood. After moving around several times and finally landing back in the Berkshires, I have taken those lessons of resiliency and self sufficiency with me into new roles.

While the details of my story may be unique, the transformations and themes are the same as what I have heard others share with me. The skills and mindsets developed through hardships and achieving accomplishments help us to discover who we are and guide our actions towards the impact we want to have. Moving forward from the ongoing and increasing demonstrations that stand up for an equitable future, we can all stand to take a moment to reflect on ourselves. Take stock of what you have endured and goals you have reached. Consider what your marketable skills are, or other ways that you have value to provide to others. Find strength in growing your community and not accepting what you know is wrong. Until next time, be safe and be happy.

Bruna L. Shabazz

“July is a blind date
with Summer.” – Hal
Borland

“The summer looks out
from her brazen tower,
through the flashing
bars of July.” – Francis
Thompson

Weekly Happenings at the UU

Sundays	10:30am	Sunday Services
	7pm	1st and 3rd Sunday: Men's Group (closed for new members)
Mondays	7-9pm	Berkshire Lyric Rehearsal
Tuesdays	5:30pm	Crafting Group (bring your own materials, any craft)
	6pm	1st Tuesday: Berkshire Coalition for Suicide Prevention; Healing After Suicide Support Group
	7pm	2nd Tuesday: WordxWord: Poets Creating Conversation
	5:30pm	3rd Tuesday: Open House/Community Dinner
Wednesdays	5pm	Vickie Bandoski Yoga
Thursdays	10am	Vickie Bandoski Yoga
	5:30pm	Pittsfield Sangha Meditation Group
Saturdays	10am	Berkshire Lyric Childrens Chorus Rehearsal
	1pm	Teen Youth Group (Crafting / Games / Social Justice)

The Grumpy Groundskeeper

It's been hot out lately, so instead of weeding the garden or doing much other "bent over and cussin'" type of work, I decided to haul out the pressure washer and commence to removing a few decades of dirt and grime from the building and the walkways. You and I both know that this was more "It's hot outside and I want to play in the water" than a genuine desire to clean things, but I won't tell if you don't.

There's something primally soothing about pressure washing things. It's a big squirt gun that makes problems go in the general direction of Away. I had just finished blasting some lichen off the sidewalk when an inexorable stone voice rumbled from below: **That tickles, knock it off.** Most old buildings are haunted by

“If I had my way, I’d remove January from the calendar altogether and have an extra July instead.” — Roald Dahl

“July is hollyhocks and hammocks, fireworks and vacations, hot and steamy weather, cool and refreshing swims, beach picnics, and vegetables all out of the garden.” — Jean Hersey

ghosts. Ghosts I would have been fine with, I've met several, and they're fine folks. Why did I have to live in the building haunted by abstract concepts. "No," I replied. "It's like 85 degrees out here, and I should do something useful. Also that wasn't even the pretty kind of lichen."

The ground rumbled slightly, possibly with annoyance, possibly due to a big truck driving by. Maybe both? **Knock it off, I say, or I'll come up there and MAKE you knock it off.** "That's simply not possible, actually. Before you could get to me, you'd have to get halfway to me. Then, you'd have to get halfway from that spot to where I was. Then you'd have to get halfway from THAT spot to where I was - see? You'd need to take an infinite number of trips to get to me, which while I'm not doubting you're capable of this, being that abstract concepts don't generally get tired, it would take you long enough that I'd be able to move - forcing you to start the process all over."

Everything was quiet a moment while the earth ruminated. **Fine then, it grumbled, but since you like using that accursed water gun so much, I sentence you to do it an infinite number of times. Two can play the infinity game.** "Not very well, it seems." I cleaned off four stains. "All done!" **That's four. Four is a lot less than infinity.** "Actually, they're the same for my purposes. See, you can figure out the sum of the interior angles in a polygon by looking at how many sides it has. Take the number of sides, subtract two, multiply that by 180, that'll give you the sum of the angles. So a square, right? It has four sides. Subtract two, that gives you two. Multiply that by 180, you get 360 - and anybody can look at a square, see it has four corners, each of which are 90 degrees, that's 360. This works with any polygon."

Hold on, said the stone. **This isn't-** "You can look at it as $180(x-2)$ where X is the number of sides, if that's easier. Okay so a circle, right? What's a circle but a polygon of infinite sides. **A circle only has one side, and it's a curve.** "Curves don't really exist here, though. If you zoom in enough, you'll see that a circle is really just a bunch of points - whether those are 'points' in the geometry sense, or the atoms of whatever ink you used to draw the circle - they're still just points. A line between any two points must, geometrically speaking, be straight, right?" **Infinity isn't-** "And while I sure don't have a device capable of measuring the angle described by three neighboring atoms, I don't really need one, because I can just look at a circle and see it goes all the way around smoothly, traversing 360 degrees before returning to its origin point." **That has nothing to do with-** "So that lets us start with that same equation, just inside out. We know it's 360 degrees, so we work backwards. Dividing both sides of the equation by 180 gives us $x-2=2$. Adding two to each side gives us $x=4$. X is the number of sides of the polygon, remember?" **Yes but-**

“But here I am in July, and why am I thinking about Christmas pudding? Probably because we always pine for what we do not have. The winter seems cozy and romantic in the hell of summer, but hot beaches and sunlight are what we yearn for all winter.” — Joanna Franklin Bell

“If ant hills are high in July, the coming winter will be hard.” — American Folklore

"Therefore, a circle has four sides. A circle also has an infinite number of sides, therefore, infinity is equal to four."

There was a long, long pause. In that case, I'm going to take four steps and put that pressure washer someplace very uncomfortable. "Nah, infinity doesn't work like that for you. Try it yourself, take 4 steps toward me, and you'll only be 4 steps closer than you started, not even halfway to me."

There was a long, long pause, and then four clunks, and then silence - a silence so thick that not even the birds dared interrupt it. Eventually, I decided that I had made my point, and resumed washing the sidewalk - just in time for a passing car to kick up a pebble from the road, drilling it smack into that one spot on your shin that makes you feel like you have been smashed in half. "THAT'S CHEATING," I shouted to no one in particular, before going inside for some Advil. Sore loser.

Christopher Hicks, Groundskeeper

July Open House and Community Dinner

We hope to see you at our next Open House! It will be on July 15 from 5:30-8, with dinner around 6pm. Our Youth Group will also be there with craft tables. Hope to see you there!



We thank you for your support! Please use this QR code to donate to our church or mail a check to: Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield, 175 Wendell Ave., Pittsfield MA 01201



Café Palestina Screening of *GAZA* at the UU!

Café Palestina presents a FREE screening of the 2019 film *GAZA* on July 16, 2025 6:30pm - 8:30pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield 175 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, MA.

The film offers a view of Gaza before October 7th. There will be light refreshments and informal discussion to follow. Co-Presented by Berkshires in Solidarity with Palestine & the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pittsfield.



Social Hour Needs You!

We are all so appreciative of Ben running the social hour following services. Sign up to help using the sheet in the Social Hall on the table - it makes such a difference!