



OUUF Weekly Update
An Inclusive Community

1033 N. Barr Road
P O Box 576
Carlsborg, WA 98324
360-417-2665

May 17-24, 2020



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SUNDAY SERVICE SPEAKERS

May 17th – MARGO REINHART

Talking about food, the literal food, not metaphorical sustenance. What if we use this time of shelter to really focus on food, the experience of preparing and eating it and connections through food or past memories with family and friends.

MAY 24TH – JOSEPH BEDNARIK

NOTE:

We will send an email with the Zoom dial-in information by the end of the week. ***If you do not receive the Zoom invite, please contact Elinor at admin@olympicuuf.com***

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FELLOWSHIP FISCAL HEALTH:

Please mail your donation/pledge to the address below

OUUF
P O Box 576
Carlsborg, WA 98324

DO NOT MAIL TO STREET ADDRESS

If you have any questions please contact Don Hatler at donaldhatler1936@gmail.com or Serena Mylchreest at serena@mylchreest.com

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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER MAILING:

Please let me know if you or anyone you may know would appreciate receiving a printed copy of the Weekly newsletter in the mail. Elinor Tennyson at admin@olympicuuf.com or (360) 417-2665

OUUF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Chair: Jean Stratton

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Jack Webber

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webmaster@OlympicUUF.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We reserve the right to edit your submission for length and grammar.
Announcements need to be submitted by Tuesday.

Special thanks go to Dani Casey and Rose Prestipino for the lovely pictures that are shown in this publication.

Please feel free to submit pictures, stories, poems or other items that our readers may enjoy.
Submit to: Elinor Tennyson at amin@olympicuuf.com

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OOUF VEGGIE GARDEN:

The first OOUF veggie garden bed has been planted. Another bed is in the works. Thank you everyone who has donated plants, labor, and \$\$ for supplies. The garden is located behind OOUF building, near the playground. It's a pleasant spot protected from wind. Come take a look if you are in the neighborhood.

This project is being put together by volunteers Rose Presitipino, Lou Foldo, Seri Mylchreest, and very special thanks go to Master Organic Gardener, Cyndi Ross.

If you would like to donate, please write "garden project" on the memo line of your check made out to OOUF



Rose, Seri and Lou hard at work

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FREE JIGSAW PUZZLES:

Dave Large and Susan Haris have eleven 1000-piece jigsaw puzzles that they are happy to give to anyone who is interested.
Give Dave a call at 408-710-8041.



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CHILDREN'S RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

Children's RE will be meeting Sundays at 1030 AM for a half hour via Zoom (with or without their grown-ups). During this time of connection we will light our chalice, sing songs, hold a sharing circle and game/ activity. Please email Julia Buggy by email for the Zoom link if you are interested, juliafbuggy@gmail.com. We hope this allows all people who would like to participate in the 11 am service to do so.

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GRATITUDE:

From: George Will

Thank you dear friends for your cards, thoughts and/or expressions of best wishes and healing energy sent to me as I underwent a few months of physical challenges and hospital sojourns. I am well now and more physically fit each day. The kidney cancer was apparently confined to the interior of the organ and had not metastasized. The surgeon at Virginia Mason Hospital assured me that I would be "good" for another twenty years of mischief. (Isn't that an oxymoron?)

Special thanks go to Jean and Cynthia of the Care Team. Your actions exemplify just what a caring team is all about.

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CARE CARDS:

As a member of the OUUF Care Team Cynthia Green has mailed out handmade cards to many in our congregation. If you can think of someone you think would enjoy getting a card please email Cynthia at cynthiagreen@outlook.com. If she has not already sent one to that person she will make one for them and mail it. Cynthia has been using the OUUF roster for addresses.



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DAN WHITAKER:



With great sadness we inform you that Dan Whitaker has passed. Our condolences, prayers and love go to Dianne, family and loved ones. Below is a short message from Dianne.

4/30/2020

Dan passed away peacefully in his sleep this morning at the Sequim Health and Rehab Center. They let me in to see him yesterday in spite of the quarantine and we had a wonderful talk about how we were going to arrange the house and get him a wheelchair so he could come home. Dianne



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SUNDAY SERVICE CHILDREN'S STORY:

Please contact Cynthia Green at cynthiagreen@outlook.com if you are interested in reading a children's book for our Sunday Zoom services. It should be a book that you can read in five or six minutes or less. When you practice reading it be sure and add the time it will take for you to show the pictures. At this time we are not putting the illustrations on PowerPoint slides



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OOUF Care Team



Just an update to let you know we do care about our members and friends during this time of distance. If you are home and have a need or a medical condition, please remember we can call you or send you cards or drop off groceries if need be. We care about all of you during this difficult time of no church live services and gatherings.

Our team of Ren Garypie,, Cynthia Green, George Stratton, Sandy Goodwick, Dianne Whitaker and myself as chair are here to help you. Please know you can contact me, Jean Stratton at 360 452-6719, or by email: jeanmstratton@gmail.com

You are part of our loving community.

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FACE MASKS

From: Seri Mylchreest

I am still enjoying making cloth face masks. If you or your friends & neighbors want masks contact me: serena@mylchreest.com or 360-775-6606.



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Mother's Day Service via Zoom at Olympic Fellowship

Presented by Joseph Bednarik

May 10, 2020

I bow to all the children of mothers in this zoom room.

Mother's Day is perhaps the most universal of all our holidays, celebrated in many cultures throughout the world. We *all* have mothers, and for the most part this sorority of women is nurturing, loving, fiercely loyal, and to a person want a safe and sane world for us, their children.

And it makes sense that if this mother wants the best for her children, and that mother wants the best for her children, and since we're all children, then there is a rich opportunity for a common understanding that goes something like: "Let's create a world in which all mothers get to nurture and raise their children with the best that this glorious Earth has to offer."

The history surrounding the holiday in North America is an interesting one, rooted in an issue that Unitarians and Universalists are keenly interested in: Peace.

In the mid-1800s, a social activist and Unitarian named Julia Ward Howe was so distraught by the death and carnage caused by the Civil War that she called on Mothers to come together and protest what she saw as the futility of their sons killing the sons of other Mothers. Her declaration in creating Mothers' Peace Day read, in part:

Arise, then, women of this day!
Arise all women who have hearts,
Whether your baptism be that of water or of tears
Say firmly:

We will not have great questions decided by irrelevant agencies,
Our husbands shall not come to us reeking of carnage,

For caresses and applause.
Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn
All that we have been able to teach them of
charity, mercy and patience.
We women of one country
Will be too tender of those of another country
To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs...



I love that this declaration begins with the word “Arise!”

What arises? The sun, bringing a new day.

What arises? Awareness, for those who have yet to fully see what the world is beholding.

What arises? Human beings, from sitting—whether physical or metaphorical—with the implication that they rise to do some necessary work in the world.

I love that the historical tap-root of Mother’s Day in the United States reaches down into to word *Arise*, and tries to change the course of history, tries to bend the long arch of justice away from war.

This Mothers’ Day I encourage everyone to find the full text by Julia Ward Howe and read it, slowly, and deeply consider the implications.

Imagine the battalions of male bodies of sons and husbands marching toward a battlefield. Marching from opposite sides. And behind each battalion, another battalion of mothers, anguished and furious, wanting to change the world.

I love that the historical roots of Mother’s Day is trying to stop war. Again:

Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn

All that we have been able to teach them of
charity, mercy and patience.

Why we arise on Sunday mornings and gather together in sanctuaries—be them physical or virtual—is to exercise, teach, and practice values such as charity, mercy, and patience, and to *fiercely* defend against their Unlearning.

Note the power of that odd word, “unlearn.” Julia Ward Howe does not write the simpler “forget.” To *unlearn* is to actively *do* something to counter the values that a person has already brought into their being.

As Unitarians and Universalist, let us never Unlearn the values that keep war at bay.

Better yet, let us Arise and do what we can to Unlearn war.

One way to unlearn war is to practice giving gifts in Love.

When thinking of this, what comes immediately to mind is the poem “Lanyard,” by Billy Collins.

A poem that has been read and viewed online well over a million times, so clearly it has hit a chord with the culture. Let us give voice to the poem this Mother’s Day morning, though before we do so, a few notes: First, Collins acknowledges that in this poem he is approaching a huge theme through a very ordinary object. This is the stock in trade of good poets everywhere, because we all know what kind of emotional energy can exist within a simple object.

Second, early on in the poem he refers to the “cookie nibbled by a French novelist.” Here he is making reference to Marcel Proust, and the amazing power of a simple pastry called “madeleine,” a pastry Proust ate as a boy, and how when tasting it as an adult, he was *instantly* whisked back to vivid memories of his childhood.

We all have specific smells or tastes, sounds or objects, that bring us *right* back.

As Proust writes in *Remembrance of Things Past*,

“The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm, beyond the reach of intellect, in some material object (in the sensation which that material object will give us) which we do not suspect. And as for that object, it depends on chance whether we come upon it or not before we ourselves must die.”
And so in this poem, Billy Collins is moved into a rich realm of memory and feeling by something as small and insignificant as a lanyard.

The Lanyard By Billy Collins

The other day I was ricocheting slowly
off the blue walls of this room,
moving as if underwater from typewriter to piano,
from bookshelf to an envelope lying on the floor,
when I found myself in the L section of the dictionary
where my eyes fell upon the word lanyard.

No cookie nibbled by a French novelist
could send one into the past more suddenly—
a past where I sat at a workbench at a camp
by a deep Adirondack lake
learning how to braid long thin plastic strips
into a lanyard, a gift for my mother.

I had never seen anyone use a lanyard
or wear one, if that’s what you did with them,
but that did not keep me from crossing
strand over strand again and again
until I had made a boxy
red and white lanyard for my mother.

She gave me life and milk from her breasts,
and I gave her a lanyard.
She nursed me in many a sick room,
lifted spoons of medicine to my lips,
laid cold face-cloths on my forehead,
and then led me out into the airy light



and taught me to walk and swim,
and I, in turn, presented her with a lanyard.
Here are thousands of meals, she said,
and here is clothing and a good education.
And here is your lanyard, I replied,
which I made with a little help from a counselor.

Here is a breathing body and a beating heart,
strong legs, bones and teeth,
and two clear eyes to read the world, she whispered,
and here, I said, is the lanyard I made at camp.
And here, I wish to say to her now,
is a smaller gift—not the worn truth

that you can never repay your mother,
but the rueful admission that when she took
the two-tone lanyard from my hand,
I was as sure as a boy could be
that this useless, worthless thing I wove
out of boredom would be enough to make us even.

Like all brilliant poems, there can be multiple readings of the text.

For years, I thought this poem was deep and deeply hilarious, and filed it away in my heart as such. Then, in preparation for this homily, I re-read the poem and saw—for the first time—shafts of darkness in the last stanza that I hadn't seen before. It bothered me:

I was as sure as a boy could be
that this useless, worthless thing I wove
out of boredom would be enough to make us even.

I became very glum at the possibility that the poet was equating precious existence with some useless, worthless thing—that somehow there was an equal sign between pointless lanyard and human life, and thus a darkness clouding the mother who gave him life.

This reading of the poem bummed me out, frankly.

Then, just a few days ago, on a sunny evening, while watching a pair of nuthatches fly in and out of a birdhouse, instinctively creating a safe nesting place for their young, I shared my concern with my wife, the mother of our twin daughters. We found the poem online and listened to Collins read it aloud to an adoring and laughing audience.

I heard the darkness while watching the nuthatches fly in and out of the bird-house hole, and when the silence came to the kitchen, Liesl said: "No, no, no, no, no, no, honey, no. There is no darkness here."

We talked in the evening light—and as the mother of my children spoke to her understanding of the poem—I came to see the true heart of the poem is the mother. She accepts the lanyard as a great gift. Just like she gave milk from her breast. Just like she lifted spoons of medicine. This is what a mother *does*. The mother accepts the lanyard and sees what it is: The gift of a child's love.

The concept of "repayment" belongs to the grown man—not the mother. Repayment is the farthest thing from a mother's mind and heart.



Rather, we can imagine that she attaches the lanyard to her keyring, and for years, every time she opens a door or starts her car she feels the lanyard in her hand and, consciously or unconsciously, thinks of the gift, and thus of her son, and wonders where he is, and how he is doing, now that he is a grown man with his own children.

And... true to the nature of raising children, there is a lanyard on *his* keyring as well. May we never unlearn the lessons of our lanyards.

Amen

SOURCES

“The Original Mother’s Day Proclamation”:

<https://www.plough.com/en/topics/culture/holidays/mothers-day/the-original-mother-s-day-proclamation>

“The Lanyard,” by Billy Collins, from *Aimless Love: New and Selected Poems* (Random House, 2013).



The OUUF apple orchard