

May Minister's Report: What I'm Working On for the Summer

Phone Pals

I've been thinking about how we can reach out to and support members outside of the digital world, and I came up with a (possibly) simple idea: Phone Pals. To participate you commit to two things weekly:

1. Calling another congregant (assigned)
2. Receiving a call from another congregant (from another Phone Pal to whom they were assigned.)

So participants get two calls a week with a Northwoods person, one they initiate, and one that they receive. What do you think? Do you think it would be popular? Useful?

I need to iron out details (like how often folks get assigned a new contact, for example- maybe assign them a different person for each week, but assign them all at once? Not sure...) but nothing insurmountable. I was planning this as a solo project, but then I realized I should ask if anyone wanted to help maintain the program with me.

If we want to do this, I can invite folks to start signing up next week, with the first assignments coming out the first Friday of June for calls to be made during the second week of June. We might also be thinking of folks who would appreciate a personal invitation to join this program.

Pastoral Care Associates

Right now, we don't really have a team, though there are certainly folks I can count on to do the visiting and give the love and listening, and who do so of their own volition, and I do what calls and visits I can, but there's not an intentional program or way for folks to check in with each other or share information.

I think that in the next year, having trained pastoral caregivers might become more important than ever for a variety of reasons, increased isolation of the already isolated and possible (likely?) losses from the pandemic among them.

I'd love to have a Pastoral Care Team that works in concert with me to provide better care and support. This requires training and possibly recruitment... so here's the idea:

Recognizing the increasing need for pastoral care and trained pastoral care leaders, the UUA is offering a course from the UUA Leadership Institute, [Spiritual Care Training for Congregational Leaders](#). It is a six-module online course with an asynchronous format, so folks work at their own pace, but if there were more than one person interested in taking it, we could also do some Zoom sessions for discussion.

I'd like to encourage folks (in general and with some specific asks) to take this course and hopefully form a cohort large enough for regular pastoral care team meetings. I think folks might like to serve in this way right now that might not otherwise consider it; providing this kind of accompaniment for other members also fill our own need for connection.

CHANGES TO WEEKLY CONNECTIONS:

- I may cancel Tuesday lunch with the minister. My Tuesdays are pretty full, and attendance is fairly low.
- Wednesday at the Well- becomes more targeted; each week's session draws on or deepens the message from the previous Sunday
- Thursday Happy Hour: This is a lot of fun, though I am considering changing the time.

SCHEDULED TIME OFF

- May 25-June 1: Personal Leave
- June 24-28: Attending Digital GA (Professional Leave)
- June 29-July 6: Combination of personal and study leave
- July 27- August 10: Combination of personal and study leave

Summer Worship Planning

First Half of Summer Theme: IDENTITY

(May 31: Sarah Off)

June 7: *I Contain Multitudes* (might be a better title for June 14...)
(Themes: identity and society, identity and perception)

- We all have multiple identities, so let's talk about them-- how they intersect, how we manifest them, how much of which identity we claim
- Privilege, marginalization, intersectionality and complexification, which is part of why liberation for others means liberation for the self regardless of identity

Weekday Deepening: Talk About our different identities. Which could we give up and still feel like "us"? Which would be the last one's we'd give up?

June 14: *Something to Do With Wholeness*

(Theme: Recognizing/Honoring/Nurturing the Whole Self)

- Main idea: [SOSPICE](#): Tool for Finding Your Life Balance (Rev. Tandi Rogers)
- ADD-ON for all ages: (package individual sets of trivial pursuit pies and wedges to go with?)

Weekday Deepening: Follow-up: more in-depth examination of life balance (seminary exercise)

June 21: *Where We Come From*

(Theme: identity as claimed heritage)

- What does it mean to be "from" a geographic region, from a family tradition, from a trade or class, from a specific community/school/family/neighborhood?
- What do we claim of the things we can't change?
- Worship activity- write a poem/guided meditation using [Where I'm From](#) as a template for our own poems

Weekday Deepening: Share Our Poems (families could also write a poem collectively as a group, same for couples)

(June 28: Join GA Worship from Home/Sarah Off)

(July 4: Sarah Off)

Second Half of Summer Theme: PURPOSE

July 12 or July 26: *Living Your Core Values*

(Theme: Live the Life You Mean To)

- First you have to define them; planning on using [this guy's](#) approach. I kind of want to do a modified version of the exercise and then maybe have folks add to a word cloud?

Weekday Deepening: [Your Personal 2020 Spiritual Focus Candle](#)

July 19: *If You Can Do Anything*

(Theme: Be Kind, Be Kind, Be Kind)

- This is the Sunday before Hogwarts Camp; I beg your indulgence, bc this is going to be My Love Letter to Albus Dumbledore, a Magnificent and Deeply Flawed Leader Who Was, Above All, Kind
 - also maybe empathy, compassion's cousin, and self-compassion, its twin

Weekday Deepening: No clue yet

July 12 or July 26: *Purpose Now/ Moving Toward Sustainability*

(Theme: Everything has Been Different For a While; Now What?)

- Am I going back to my old life or moving toward a new one? Or both and in what ways?
- If I am finding my purpose has changed, what does that mean about the life I am moving toward? (What are you doing to move toward the life you envision for yourself?)

Weekly Deepening: Pastoral Care, bc that is Some Heavy Stuff for a lot of folks

(August 2: Sarah Off)

(August 9: Sarah Off)

August 16- *You Can Have Anything You Are Willing to Build* (Ingathering/Water Communion) SMILE, IT'S FALL!

Chalice Lighters (NEW!)

Each week, I hope to have a different household as chalice lighters, sending in a video of themselves lighting either the Northwoods chalice or a household chalice. These videos will be used in worship as we say our chalice lighting words together at home. (If folks choose to light the Northwoods chalice, the video will be recorded by a Northwoods staff member from a safe and responsible distance.)