



# The Threshold

Towson Unitarian  
Universalist Church

*A Welcoming Congregation*

## What does it mean to be a people of wisdom?

### TUUC COVID-19 PLAN

Dear TUUC Community,

I write with regard to how we will be with one another as a spiritual community now that COVID-19 has been confirmed in our state and in Baltimore County. Local universities (Towson, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Maryland) have cancelled face-to-face classes until at least mid-April and are preparing to hold on-line classes.

#### MOVING OUR COMMUNITY TO VIRTUAL

That our congregation might also protect the most vulnerable among us and flatten the curve of the spread of this virus; we, too, are moving our spiritual community away from face-to-face interactions and to safer modes of communication on-line and/or by telephone.

With so few cases in Baltimore County, this decision may come as a surprise. But New Rochelle, NY now has a one-mile containment zone only a week after the

second case of COVID-19 in NYC was confirmed.

Unitarian Universalist colleagues in hot spots in the United States are urging other colleagues to go to social distancing measures sooner rather than later in order to slow the spread of the virus. Our Central East Region has canceled meetings in March and April. The Unitarian Universalist Association has closed its offices and asked staff to work from home through early April. Dr. Leana Wen, who is an emergency physician, visiting professor of public health, and the former Baltimore City Health Commissioner, stated in an opinion piece in yesterday's Baltimore Sun, "It's time for all sectors to implement social distancing measures that are in their control." We are heeding this advice as well as following the example of local universities.

**Don't Church Sick**

## CLOSING OUR BUILDING

As of March 13, we will not be meeting for worship or any programs at 1710 Dulaney Valley Road. The building will be closed. We will **reassess after April 5 and follow the** guidance of local health officials, schools, and universities. The building may well be **closed longer**. At this time, there may be staff in the building. If you have a strong reason to come to TUUC to pick up something, for your safety and the safety of the staff, please call ahead to the church office to schedule a time to do so. We are making every effort to minimize face-to-face contact. The staff will begin telecommuting in the near future.

## ZOOM

**Beginning this Sunday, March 15, 2020 at 10:30 a.m., we will meet for worship on a video conferencing platform called Zoom.**

Zoom does not require that you share your personal information. You will have a choice of clicking on a link on your computer, tablet, or smart phone or dialing from your phone (like a conference call). Directions on how to use Zoom are further down in this letter.

Lora Powell-Haney plans to post a video on how to use Zoom on our Towson Unitarian Universalist Facebook page and in our Facebook Group.

Please mute your device at the beginning of any Zoom meeting or the feedback will be painful.

Turning on your own video camera is optional. If you use the video, you will be seen. If you are still in your pajamas, and you use the video, everyone will see you in your pajamas. The advantage of using video is that you will see everyone's smiling faces. They will also see you. This is a great way to

experience community from a safe distance! You may also choose to turn off the video option and move around.

## THIS SUNDAY, MARCH 15, AND WORSHIP

Our Youth Religious Exploration ministry is offering a family program on the Towson UU YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/8DaeAsP3Eel>.

**Our one worship service will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday.**

While our beloved Choir will not be able to sing together on this platform, Tracy will be organizing music and we can all sing hymns!

We will not be recording this Sunday's service. We may record future worship services and post them on the Towson Unitarian Universalist You Tube channel which may be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpiGQDUq7VC0n1fTI6nNtxA>

For March 15, we ask that you try to connect a few minutes before 10:30 am. Remember to mute your device.

## UPCOMING VIRTUAL SERVICES

**March 15 , 2020**

**9:30 and 11:15 AM**

***Holy Wisdom***

**Rev. Clare L. Petersberger**

When you hear the word "wisdom," what images come to mind? Do you see a particular book? A family member? A mentor? A favorite character in a play or movie? Do you remember a lesson learned from a past mistake? In Greek philosophy and Christian history, holy wisdom has been personified as Sophia. Who was Sophia and how might she deepen our understanding of wisdom?



**March 22, 2020 9:30 and 11:15 AM**

*A Parable of Lost Sheep*

**Lora Powell-Haney**



How do we uphold our third source: wisdom from the world's religions, in a world increasingly wrenched apart by

religious and ethical difference? Join ministerial intern Lora Powell-Haney in a service that explores interreligious resiliency and the wisdom of open heart and faithful curiosity.



Please be patient as we work through the inevitable glitches. What our first efforts lack in polish, they will make up for in effort and enthusiasm! Let us offer one another the gift of forbearance as we learn to worship, learn, connect, and continue to work for justice in this new reality.

### **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Please look for a parent email that will include more information about Family Gatherings.

### **TUUC PROGRAMMING WILL CONTINUE IN VIRTUAL SPACE**

Our goal is to **STAY CONNECTED** as a spiritual community. **Some programs sadly are cancelled or postponed indefinitely, including potlucks and movies, the talent show, and chili cookoff, and the Seder.**

Programs including the Men's and Women's groups, the Ostara ritual, Soul Matters Sharing Circle, ADORE discussions, and

meetings of committees and the Board will continue in some form on-line. And Youth Religious Exploration is planning to use Zoom for programming beyond Sunday morning.

If you would like practice with Zoom, or simply a few minutes of virtual meditation, you may join Lora at 8:45 am Monday through Friday this coming week.

We ask that if you would like to schedule a Zoom virtual meeting for your program or activity, you e-mail our Church Administrator at [Churchoffice@towsonuuc.org](mailto:Churchoffice@towsonuuc.org). Kai plans to put Zoom meetings on the TUUC calendar which may be accessed here: <https://www.towsonuuc.org/church>

We currently have the capacity to schedule one virtual meeting at a time (i.e., we cannot use our one church license to schedule two meetings at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday.)

However, Zoom allows people to meet for 40 minutes free of charge if you set up a Zoom account.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

Much as we hope it will be otherwise, we know that some of us will get sick. We may be scared. To borrow the words from Rev. Megan Foley, "Religious community, whether in person or virtual, is tailor-made to help people survive and thrive during times like these." Connection, meaning-making, and the support of community are things we already know how to do; now is the time to figure out how to do them in new ways. We look forward to connecting with you in these new ways as we go forward. Rest assured, we'll still be one interconnected web of faithful people, even in these difficult times.

If you have a pastoral concern and need a listening ear, please let me know and I, or a Lay Pastoral Associates, will schedule a time to talk by phone or Zoom.

If you become ill, test positive, and/or are hospitalized, please let me know. The hospital will not let me know.



Several of my colleagues have begun to schedule “Coffee With The Minister” virtually. I plan to do that on Zoom. Please check the church calendar.

### **WIDER COMMUNITY**

While those 60 and older are being advised by the CDC to avoid large gatherings in the wider community, the Maryland General Assembly is still meeting and several bills still need our support which can be done from the phone and the computer.

Please check here: <https://www.uulmmd.org/>

### **STEWARDSHIP AND PLEDGING**

March 15 is the date to conclude our Stewardship campaign for 2020-2021. Thanks to all who have made your pledge. Financial support is more important than ever at this time. If you have not made your pledge, you may do so, here: <https://www.towsonuuc.org/member-area>. Making a pledge is a great way to care for our Stewardship Team so that they don't have to make additional phone calls!



### **COMMUNICATIONS**

In addition to using Zoom, we will communicate through Breeze (so if you are not already signed up, now would be a good time – make request to [churchoffice@towsonuuc.org](mailto:churchoffice@towsonuuc.org)), Facebook, on the TUUC Bulletin Board, and through e-mails and phone calls. Expect our communications to change as we adapt to connecting virtually. Should it be necessary to communicate quickly, Breeze allows us to send out a mass text. But for this to be effective, we would need your cell phone number. If you are comfortable sharing it, please let Kai know.

### **CREATIVE COMMUNITY**

In February, we celebrated being a people of resilience. In March, we are celebrating being a people of wisdom. Part of our resiliency and wisdom is to find new and creative ways to do familiar and essential things, like being a spiritual community, deepening our spiritual and ethical lives, marking joys and sorrows, comforting, learning, and celebrating together, and working for racial, social, and environmental justice. And so we shall.

To this end, I close with words of resilience and wisdom Lora Powell Haney shared with the Program Council on March 11 by the poet Dori Midnight.

With love,  
Rev. Clare

*“Wash your hands...*

*like you are washing the only teacup left that your great grandmother carried across the ocean, like you are washing the hair of a beloved who is dying, like you are washing*

*the feet of Grace Lee Boggs, Beyoncé, Jesus, your auntie, Audre Lorde, Mary Oliver- you get the picture.*

*Like this water is poured from a jug your best friend just carried for three miles from the spring they had to climb a mountain to reach. Like water is a precious resource made from time and miracle... My friends, it is always true, these things. It has already been time. It is always true that we should move with care and intention..."*

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR ZOOM FOR MARCH 15**

Click this link <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/2595416929>

OR One tap access from your mobile phone:

+16699006833,,2595416929#

+16468769923,,2595416929#

Or you may Dial in from a landline:

+1 669-900-6833 or +1 646-876-9923

Meeting ID: 2595416929

You can join through a smartphone, tablet or computer and use the audio on your device. You can optionally turn on your device camera, or you can leave it off. Please mute your line.

You can dial in using any kind of phone and join the audio portion by phone.

More information is available:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting->



## **RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION**

We are all relearning from many sources about how to stay healthy and avoid spreading of infection. The next step is learning how to incorporate this knowledge into our actions.

Where does wisdom come into this picture? We need wisdom to think proactively and inclusively, to challenge to our day to day habits. This causes stress, but also reminds us that there are different ways to accomplish goals. Here at TUUC we are finding new ways to “do church,” whether we can physically attend or not.

As you now know, we will not be meeting in person here at TUUC this Sunday. The YRE Committee and I have come up with a way

for us to meet virtually and we hope that many of you will choose to join us in our first digital "family gathering" that you can access at this link <https://youtu.be/8DaeAsP3EeI>

Melissa Reuland and I had fun preparing this for you, and look forward to feedback. We will be tweaking this format as we move forward and learn more about what families most appreciate. Learning new ways to communicate will help us in the long run by encouraging us to reach out through all the avenues available in this digital age.

Please make sure to look for the parent email and print out the resources that will enhance your experience.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

After consulting with partners and officials, the organizers of the March for Jobs and Justice scheduled for March 19 in Annapolis have postponed the event.

Several bills identified as priorities by the UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland are in the post-hearing phase. UULM asks that advocates whose representatives and senators are on the committees identified below make their views known now. You can look up your delegates and senator at this link: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Members/District>. Track the status of all UULM priority legislation at <https://www.uulmmd.org/current-status-of-priority-legislat>:

### Economic Justice

- HB 839/SB 539 - Labor and Employment - Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program - Establishment - Committees: House Economic Matters and Senate Finance

### Medical Aid in Dying

- SB 701 - End-of-Life Option Act (Richard E. Israel and Roger 'Pip' Moyer Act) - Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings

### Immigration

- HB 677/SB 850 - Correctional Services - Immigration Detention - Prohibition (Dignity Not Detention Act)
- HB 388 - Criminal Procedure - Civil Immigration Enforcement - Restrictions
- HB 892/SB 649 - Public Information Act – Motor Vehicle Administration – Warrant for Personal Information and Reporting
- HB 1612/SB 901 - State and Local Government - Participation in Federal Immigration Enforcement
- HB 403/SB 903 - Immigration Enforcement - Public Schools, Hospitals, and Courthouses - Policies

Committees: Senate Judicial Proceedings and House Judiciary

### Education

- HB 1300/SB 1000 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation of Kirwan Commission Recommendations - Committees: House Appropriations, House Ways and Means, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs, and Senate Budget and Taxation

## USHER ATTENDANCE REPORT FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2020

Date	Time	Adults/Children	Choir	Lounge	Total	Visitors Total	Nursery
3/8/2020	9:30 AM	20/0	2	2	24	↓	0
3/8/2020	11:15 AM	80/0	2	5	87	10	5

## YRE ATTENDANCE REPORT FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2020

K/1st	2nd/3rd	4th - 6th	7th - 9th	YRUU	TOTAL
2	4	7	9	3	25

## DENOMINATIONAL MINUTE

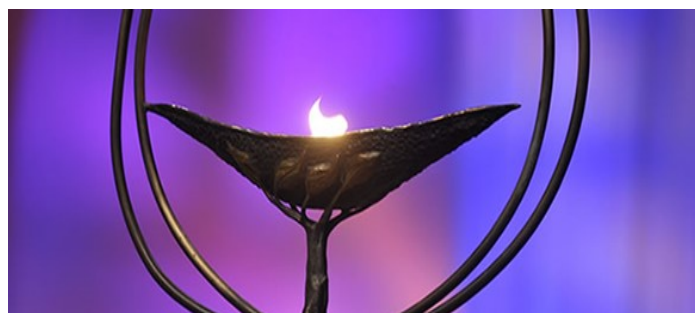
**Baltimore Cluster hold first face-to-face meeting.** On the road to being re-established, the Baltimore Cluster of UU Congregations met Saturday, February 29, at First Unitarian Church in Baltimore. This meeting was scheduled after three Zoom virtual conference meetings were held last fall.

Twenty-eight UU's were in attendance. Present were representatives from First Unitarian, Towson, Cedarhurst, Fallston and Channing Memorial in Ellicot City. Representing our church were Steve Finner, Karyn Marsh, Sue Royer, and Tom Zeller.

The primary focus of the group was a workshop "Building An Inclusive Community", led by Paula Cole Jones, our regional staff contact from the Central East Region of the UUA. Much of the day was spent in small group sessions discussing such questions as how do our congregations fit together, why have a cluster, what do we need, and what do we have to offer each other. Also discussed was "Multiculturalism and UU Evolution". How can our congregations be more diverse? What challenges do we face, and what would progress look like.

As befitting Unitarian Universalists at the start of a journey, there was much discussion of all of these questions with few answers. However, that was the intent of this initial meeting. More information will be forthcoming as we plan for our next meeting. To that end, a Zoom virtual conference will be held later this month.

**UU Faithify:** Many individual Unitarian Universalists, and many congregations and groups of congregations often have needs and ideas for both broadening and deepening our faith, but don't have the resources to transform these ideas into action.



**Don't Work Sick**  
**Don't School Sick**  
**Don't Church Sick**

We care for our  
community in caring for  
ourselves in this way.

Rev. Jordinn Nelson Long

### DONATE BY TEXT

Send an amount to  
**(410)834-0700**

**Fund Names:**

- 2019-20
- 2020-21
- Plate
- ODB
- Charitable
- Hospitality
- General Fund



**Don't Work Sick**  
**Don't School Sick**  
**Don't Church Sick**

We care for our  
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Rev. Jordinn Nelson Long

Dear TUUC Community,

With the news surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak around the world and cases in the U.S., it's natural for fears and questions to arise. With that in mind, I am writing to you about how to care for yourselves, and, as people of both resilience and wisdom (our Soul Matters words for February and March), how we will care for one another as a spiritual community.

### ***Maintaining Health Phase***

Right now, we are in a "maintaining health" phase. This includes the following advice, drawn from guidelines from the CDC:

Practice hygiene precautions:

- ⇒ **Wash your hands often and for 20 seconds.** Ideally with non-anti-bacterial soap and running water. If that is not available, then alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ⇒ **Use ONLY your knuckle to touch light switches, elevator buttons, etc.** Lift the gasoline dispenser with a paper towel or use a disposable glove. Open public doors the same way.
- ⇒ **Notice how often you touch your face** – we all touch our faces way more than you would ever think. Your awareness may help reduce this behavior, which is one of the ways any virus is spread. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.**
- ⇒ **Avoid sharing utensils, cups, towels, and other items. Wash these items thoroughly.**
- ⇒ **Stock canned, dry, frozen foods for two weeks if you can---as well as regular medication.** This is the wisdom of *Scientific American* <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/preparing-for-coronavirus-to-strike-the-u-s/> The idea of “flattening the curve” has great appeal.
- ⇒ **Explain COVID-19 and good hygiene to children:** <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/02/28/809580453/just-for-kids-a-comic-exploring-the-new-coronavirus>
- ⇒ **Develop a preparedness plan for your household.** Talk about this plan with other family members (such as at dinnertime) to build consensus and “buy in.” Rev. Julia Hamilton wrote the ditty we sang on Sunday (and will sing again.) Lora Powell Haney posted the tune on the TUUC Facebook page. The song could be adapted to “Family, wanderer, lover of cleaning, Rinsing the germs off is vital to do, wash, rinse, and repeat.” Post the family plan on the refrigerator.

Get lots of sleep, manage stress, drink fluids and eat healthy foods, and maintain the physical and spiritual practices that keep you feeling healthy.

- ⇒ **Facemasks have little evidence of widespread benefit outside of clinical settings.** They must be worn correctly, removed properly, and disposed of safely. **They are important for people who are infected to wear.**
- ⇒ **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when sneezing (disposing of them frequently), or sneeze into your sleeve elbow.**
- ⇒ **If you are sick, STAY HOME** – from work, from school, from TUUC. You care not only for yourself this way, you care for those with whom you would have come into contact. Not everybody you encounter has a strong immune system. Consider the impact of your germs on others. Some



people have jobs that do not currently have a liberal sick leave policy. Hopefully, this will change as we have watched the spread of this virus in real time as leaders in Iran were interviewed on television. **If you are sick, STAY HOME.**

⇒ **Reach out** by phone or email to let someone know you are ill ~ that includes me (Rev. Clare), if you'd like. Just because you are sick, doesn't mean you have to be isolated.

## **PLAN FOR TUUC**

### ***For Worship***

- ⇒ We are planning to bathe the stones we drop in 10% Clorox.
- ⇒ **For the time being, we will exchange hand holding before the closing words for gentle elbow bumps or bowing with a Namaste or putting one's own hands over one's heart. And we encourage greeting one another after worship with a bow and "Namaste" rather than a hug.**
- ⇒ We will encourage hospitality servers to wear food preparation gloves and begin to plan for treats that do not entail many hands touching the same open plate.

### ***Disruption Phase***

- ⇒ If a widespread outbreak occurs in the U.S., particularly in our area, we will follow state and federal recommendations about shutting down programs, following the example of local schools and businesses. During such a time, staff would telecommute, and we would try to provide services and programs electronically as much as possible. We are currently looking at YouTube as one way to broadcast worship services and Zoom (a video conferencing platform) as a means to hold programs and meetings and bring people together safely.
- ⇒ If we experience any deaths, we will attempt to communicate this transition and safe ways to mourn together with all our members through our website, Facebook page, voicemail message, and Bulletin Board. This will continue as long as federal or state guidelines to avoid public places are in place.

### ***Rebuilding Community Phase***

- ⇒ **When all restrictions are lifted, we will resume our regular church activities and work to rebuild our community.**

This is being shared in the spirit of preparing for what may come based on limited knowledge of, and experience with, this new virus.

What we do know is the importance of human caring. On Sunday, I quoted Dr. Timothy Brewer, a public health expert who said, **"Remember to not let fear override your common humanity about how you treat other people...Just remember we're all in this together."** We are all in this together. This is a virus. No individual or ethnicity or culture is "to blame" for this virus.

We are all in this together. Let us take good care of ourselves and others.

---Rev. Clare

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar at [www.towsonuuc.org](http://www.towsonuuc.org) for most current schedule.

13-Mar	Friday	Green Sanctuary/ADORE film	CANCELLED	6:00 PM
13-Mar	Friday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	7:00 PM
14-Mar	Saturday	Auction Event	CANCELLED	3:00 PM
15-Mar	Sunday	Sunday Services	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	10:30 AM
15-Mar	Sunday	Youth Religious Exploration	YOU TUBE	10:00 AM
15-Mar	Sunday	FAME Youth Orchestra	CANCELLED	3:00 PM
16-Mar	Monday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	8:30 AM
16-Mar	Monday	Handel Choir	CANCELLED	6:00 PM
16-Mar	Monday	Mindful Meditation	CANCELLED	7:00 PM
16-Mar	Monday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	7:00 PM
17-Mar	Tuesday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	8:30 AM
17-Mar	Tuesday	Sierra Club Meeting	CANCELLED	6:30 PM
17-Mar	Tuesday	Men's Reflection Group	CANCELLED	7:30 PM
17-Mar	Tuesday	Nominating Committee	CANCELLED	7:30 PM
17-Mar	Tuesday	Women's Reflection Group	CANCELLED	7:30 PM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	8:30 AM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Wednesday Writers	CANCELLED	10:30 AM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Voice Lessons	CANCELLED	10:30 AM; 5:30 PM
18-Mar	Wednesday	IMPROV	CANCELLED	7:00 PM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Al-Anon	CANCELLED	7:00 PM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	7:00 PM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Board Meeting	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	7:30 PM
18-Mar	Wednesday	Music Committee Meeting	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	7:30 PM
19-Mar	Thursday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	8:30 AM
20-Mar	Friday	Soul Matters Moments	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	8:30 AM
20-Mar	Friday	OWL Overnight	CANCELLED	6:00 PM
21-Mar	Saturday	Singles Fellowship Potluck	CANCELLED	6:00 PM
22-Mar	Sunday	Sunday Services	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	10:30 AM
22-Mar	Sunday	Listening Session	CANCELLED	10:35 AM
22-Mar	Sunday	Listening Session	CANCELLED	12:45 PM
22-Mar	Sunday	Roots & Wings	ONLINE VIA ZOOM	4:00 PM
23-Mar	Monday	Seder Committee	CANCELLED	1:00 PM
23-Mar	Monday	Handel Choir	CANCELLED	6:00 PM
23-Mar	Monday	Mindful Meditation	CANCELLED	7:00 PM





1710 Dulaney Valley Road  
Lutherville MD 21093-9705  
Phone: 410-825-6045  
Email: [churchoffice@towsonuuc.org](mailto:churchoffice@towsonuuc.org)  
Website: [www.towsonuuc.org](http://www.towsonuuc.org)  
Office Hours: Mon-Fri. 10AM—3PM

### **Minister**

Reverend Clare L. Petersberger  
[revclare@towsonuuc.org](mailto:revclare@towsonuuc.org)

### **Leadership**

#### *Board of Trustees:*

President: Neil Porter (2019-2020)  
President-Elect: Sue Royer (2019-2020)  
Treasurer: Monica Sweidel (2019-2021)  
Secretary: Angela Castillo-Epps (2018-2020)

#### *Trustees-at-Large:*

Karyn Marsh (2018-2020)  
Art Starr (2018-2020)  
John Mattingly (2019-2021)  
Samantha Saalfield (2019-2021)

### **Administrative Team**

Head of Staff: Rev. Clare Petersberger  
Finance: Joseph Tumbler  
House and Grounds: Todd Robertson  
Church Administrator: Kai Aiyetoro

### **Program Committee**

Convener: Sue Royer  
Communications: Patty Barry

### **Ministerial Intern**

Lora Powell-Haney  
[lpowellhaney@meadville.edu](mailto:lpowellhaney@meadville.edu)

### **Staff**

#### Youth Religious Exploration Director:

Joyce Duncan, Credentialed Religious Educator  
[tuucdre@towsonuuc.org](mailto:tuucdre@towsonuuc.org)

#### Music Director:

Tracy Hall  
[music@towsonuuc.org](mailto:music@towsonuuc.org)

#### Church Administrator:

Kai Aiyetoro  
[churchoffice@towsonuuc.org](mailto:churchoffice@towsonuuc.org)

#### Administrative Assistant:

Nancy Hannah  
[assistant@towsonuuc.org](mailto:assistant@towsonuuc.org)

#### Bookkeeper:

Raly Baltchev  
[bookkeeper@towsonuuc.org](mailto:bookkeeper@towsonuuc.org)