

The Threshold

Towson Unitarian
Universalist Church

A Welcoming Congregation

What does it mean to be a people of thresholds?

May 3, 2020 - 10:30 AM

Rev. Clare L. Petersberger, Audrey Azzam, Beth Moseng, YRUU advisors: *Call Down A Blessing - High School Senior Recognition*

Our spiritual question for May is, “What does it mean to be a people of thresholds?” This question was chosen before COVID and physical distancing. It has particular resonance in these times. As John O’Donohue wrote, “Suddenly you stand on completely strange ground and a new course of life has to be embraced. Especially at such times we desperately need blessing and protection.”

Graduation is traditionally a threshold time of leaving behind beloved teachers and cherished classmates and beginning on a new adventure of college or work. At TUUC, our practice has been for seniors to symbolically leave our TUUC Youth Group and cross a bridge to the welcoming arms of young adults in our congregation.

While we can’t physically be present with one another for this rite of passage, this morning we honor our graduating seniors. We shall call down blessings of joy, help, love, and peace for our graduates. Please send words or images of blessing and good wishes for Audrey and Beth (as well as for family members missing kindergarten, fourth grade, and eighth grade graduations) to Rev. Clare by April 29.

NEED HELP WITH ZOOM?

Contact zoommtgs@towsonuuc.org

YRE—FAMILY GATHERING

Family gatherings this month examine the theme of thresholds through the lenses of shelter, growing up, courage, and imagination.

YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/xC-9fKw80zQ>

This week we start with a Danish story of a farmer and how he balances his need for shelter with the needs of one who was on the land before him. I hope you can join us

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS AT TUUC

for this **RECORDED** video, which offers a way for families to enjoy a story, songs, yoga, and ritual and short discussion of the theme together. This is **NOT** a Zoom meeting. Your family can share this anytime that is convenient for you.

VESPER SERVICES

TUUC is holding vesper services online via Zoom. A vesper service is a short service that includes music, meditation/prayer, and readings, but no sermon. They are meant to provide time for reflection in an otherwise busy week. All are welcome.

The vesper service will be at 7:00 pm on Mondays. Drop in by clicking on this link: <https://uuma.zoom.us/j/696348175>.

TECHNICAL USHERS

We are recruiting additional technical ushers. We want to rotate in one or two new ushers to give others a break. You should be comfortable with Zoom and technology and be willing to attend a rehearsal on Thursday at 6 pm as well as join the Zoom meeting 20 minutes early on Sunday morning. To volunteer, please contact our Church Administrator, Kai Aiyetoro, at churchoffice@towsonuuc.org.

BREEZE

Now is an excellent time to familiarize yourself with Breeze (TUUC church database). If you are not connected with a login or password, please contact churchoffice@towsonuuc.org to get connected.

Watch TUUC website
for updated information!
www.towsonuuc.org

CABIN FEVER

Join the discussion! Our new TUUC Movies email group is the place to discuss Cabin Fever movies.

Email churchoffice@towsonuuc.org to be added to the list!

Week of April 27—DRAGON LIVES AGAIN

It's our first so-bad-it's-good guilty pleasure choice! In this 1977 Bruce-sploitation film, Bruce Lee dies and goes to Hell, where he opens a gym. But evil is afoot, and Bruce must fight James Bond, The Godfather, Clint Eastwood, and Emmanuelle. Fortunately, he teams up with Popeye the Sailor Man to restore peace to Hell. (Yes, this is the real plot.) Will this movie teach you something? Will it move you deeply? Of course not. Will it blow your mind? Yes. (Available on Amazon Prime. Unrated.)



ZOOM FOR BEGINNERS

If you haven't yet set up Zoom and would like assistance, please call the church office at 410-825-6045 and leave a message. Messages are being checked. We have volunteers who will speak with you on the phone and provide assistance.

It is necessary to download software on your computer to run Zoom. Go to zoom.us and follow the instructions. If you want to access Zoom on a smart phone or a tablet, you will need to download the app.

For any Zoom meeting, you have the option of calling in instead of joining on a computer. [There are multiple numbers and any of the](#)

numbers can be used. The Meeting ID and password are the key.

Here are some of the Zoom numbers (try any of these):

301-715-8592 or 312-626-6799 or 646-558-8656 or 346-248-7799 or 669-900-9128 or 253-215-8782

After you install Zoom on your computer, this video created by a UUA staff member has useful information on how to use it:

<https://vimeo.com/397678793>

Remember that you don't need to turn on your own video/camera. If you are more comfortable without your camera on, that's okay. [We do ask that you identify yourself by your first and last name when joining worship or a program on Zoom. We suggest creating a free account with Zoom; then your name will be filled in automatically when you join a meeting.](#)

BLOOD DRIVE

Working with the American Red Cross, we've scheduled Saturday, May 2nd, 2020 for the next TUUC Blood Drive. There is a critical need for blood right now but we are also in a different time with social distancing and COVID-19 disease prevention. We at TUUC strongly encourage anyone that has ANY reservation about giving blood at this time for ANY reason to please sit this one out. We will get past this and will have more blood drives in the future for you to participate in. Please only join us on May 2nd, if you are healthy and have no concerns about donating. To sign up for an appointment time between 8:00am-2:00pm please use this [link](#) OR email Clare Flynn-Avallone (see Breeze database) with your preferred times.

Give the Gift of Life - Give Blood!"



American Red Cross

NEWCOMER WELCOME HOUR

MAY 19, 7:30 PM

Are you spiritually curious and want to know more about Unitarian Universalism or TUUC? Have you been seeking a space to explore your spirituality while being in community? During this virtual session, we welcome newcomers as well as long-time members to drop in for a free-form exploration of spirituality and community in a UU context. No registration is required, but if you have questions either about this session or TUUC, please email: membership@towsonuuc.org.

Topic: Newcomer Welcome Hour

Time: May 19, 2020 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/96823223784>

Meeting ID: 968 2322 3784

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 968 2322 3784

UPDATE FROM THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

[We have made good progress in coming up with an exemplary slate of candidates for election at the upcoming Annual Meeting. But we would like to ask the congregation's help in suggesting candidates for Finance Head, which is an appointed volunteer position and a member of the Administrative Team. Although our Committee deals primarily with elected positions, we can try to assist the Board with suggestions for](#)

appointed positions as well. Please contact either George Harrison or Sue Royer with your ideas. Thank you.

ZOOM TIPS FOR MEETING HOSTS

After you start the meeting, assign one or more co-hosts to help you manage the meeting. For larger meetings, keep participants muted to reduce background noise and distractions. Reading in unison or singing in unison doesn't work due to lag time. The leader reads or sings and participants keep themselves muted while joining in. There is a 40-minute time limit on meetings on free Zoom accounts. When the meeting ends, everyone can rejoin to continue the meeting, using the same Zoom Meeting ID.

Using a computer and in your account settings, these are the recommended settings:

1. New meetings should have passwords.
2. Disable join before host.
3. Enable waiting room.
4. Disable screen share for anyone but host.
5. Disable file transfer.
6. Disable annotation on the screen.

GREAT IDEAS DISCUSSION FRIDAY, 11:00 AM - NOON COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE



The late Unitarian

Universalist minister, The Rev. Barbara Rhode reminded us that "The origin of the word 'comfort' means to make strong." This morning we shall discuss the idea of what makes us strong from the idea of a higher power in Psalm 121, to the origins of Paul McCartney's song, "Let It Be", to our own experience of bringing comfort to others. Our format is to discuss brief readings. For this particular discussion, if you have an

extra piece of string which you would feel comfortable tying into knots (i.e., not the one used in worship a few weeks ago) please bring it to your device.

All are welcome to attend any of these stand-alone discussions. Here is the link:

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/666875374> --- Rev. Clare

SOCIAL ACTION

The Social Action Committee will meet, virtually, on Zoom after the May 10 Service (I don't figure Mother's Day will be a problem nowadays!). Leaving some time for Breakout meetings afterwards, we will meet at **12 noon**. All are welcome. The Zoom meeting address is:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/852724691?pwd=TnFiUS9NZXVTbkNXbFk3MDVudTBtQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 724 691

Important: An email will be sent out in the near future with the password. You will need it to enter the meeting. The password should remain the same for every future meeting.

WOMEN'S REFLECTION GROUP

The Women's Reflection group meets virtually on the first and third Tuesday's of the month at 7:30pm. New members are welcome. Contact Jane D'Ambrogi for the Zoom meeting information.

SINGLES FELLOWSHIP GROUP HAPPY HOUR, SATURDAY, MAY 9, AT 4 PM.

The group will have a happy hour chat in virtual space. We offer an atmosphere for fellowship and friendship among TUUC single adults. We range in age from the 60's to 80's, but gladly welcome anyone to join us.

Please call Ronald Rowley to RSVP and to get more information. He is listed in the church directory.

LET'S CELEBRATE 20 YEARS!

Thank you to all who made possible the beautiful service on April 26, honoring Rev. Clare's twenty years of serving as TUUC's Minister! We are still accepting donations for

gifts for Rev. Clare. You may donate online through Breeze (indicate Rev Clare 20th in the comments), or by mailing a check to TUUC, with Rev Clare 20th in the memo area of the check. Stay tuned for the reveal.

FROM THE BOARD – BY SUE ROYER, PRESIDENT-ELECT

We hope that all of you are well during this very different and challenging time. I'm grateful for the community of this church, now through virtual space. Our 2020 - 2021 Stewardship campaign was well underway when the physical distancing measures and closures were implemented. We had made the decision to pause for a few weeks following up with those who had not yet pledged for the next fiscal year. Now the Board is asking for your attention to pledging, as we work on our church budget for the next fiscal year. We have an online form in the member area of our web site:

<https://www.towsonuuc.org/2021-pledge-form>

You can fill that in and the information will go directly to the church. Please complete your pledge form as soon as possible. We will be making phone calls to those who have not yet pledged.

For the current fiscal year, if you don't need the entire government stimulus payment, please consider donating some of it to TUUC. We continue to pay our staff, who are working from home. We continue to pay our ongoing bills, even though we are not in our building. You can pay your pledge in several ways. Direct debit is our preference because there are no fees and it's automatic. You can log into Breeze and set up a recurring or one-time payment, by providing your checking account information or a credit card. We incur fees for credit card payments. In

Breeze, go to Give Now. The mail at church is going into a locked mailbox and being picked up weekly. This means you can still mail a check. Thank you for your care of our church community!

The Board received good feedback at the Bylaws listening session on April 19 and we will be making some updates to the proposed Bylaws changes for the articles that were covered. The Bylaws Committee still has some articles to review – stay tuned.

It was upsetting and disruptive that our Sunday service was Zoom bombed on April 19. Our new measures, including emailing a password on Friday, helped to keep our virtual worship on April 26 safe and secure. We will continue emailing a password for future services. If you have a friend or visitor you want to invite, please email the church office with their first and last name and email address, so that we can provide them with the password.

ZOOM SUNDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE REPORT

(Does not reflect actual number of people watching)

Date	Time	Adults/Children
4/26/2020	10:30 AM	148

CLARE'S COLLOQUY



Our spiritual question for May will be, "What does it mean to be a people of Thresholds?" The image that immediately comes to mind, especially under stay at home orders, is of a front door.

In Judaism, the question of what to keep out and what to allow in at the front door is symbolized by a *mezuzah* on the doorpost. It is often a beautifully crafted case containing a piece of parchment on which is handwritten the prayer "Hear, O Israel, the LORD (is) our God, the LORD is One". It is a symbol of protection reminding the family that they are never alone.

In Christianity, the Catholic priest John O'Donohue wrote about his father and how, before going to work in the fields or on an errand to town, his father would turn in the doorway to look at his family and take a deep breath. John O'Donohue wrote "It seems that what he was doing as he left was inhaling the spirit of his loved ones to nourish and protect his journey, coming back to take for himself a blessing-breath."

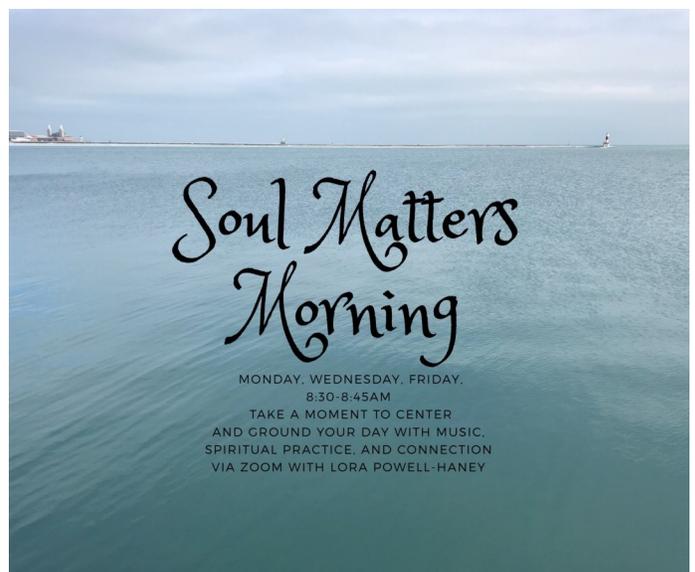
I have been thinking of these traditions of blessing at the threshold of a doorway in terms of our graduating high school seniors. They were anticipating proms and

processions and parties this spring. As a sign of solidarity, some people have been posting on Instagram and Facebook photos of their own senior self. But this does not really take away the grief of those not able to cross this threshold of graduating in traditional ways.

Parents recently reminded me that high school seniors are not the only ones missing milestone "graduations" from one grade to another.

So if you were going to offer Audrey Azzam and Beth Moseng (as well as younger students missing end-of-school celebrations) a Unitarian Universalist *mezuzah*, what would it look like and what words of blessing would it contain for them? What do you hope they will leave behind? What do you hope they will take with them? Please send me your images and words by April 29 (revclare@towsonuuc.org). Like John O'Donohue's father, we will look back in love, take a virtual blessing breath, and remind one another that wherever we are, and wherever we go, we are never alone.

---Rev. Clare



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TUUC CONTINUING IN VIRTUAL SPACE THROUGH MAY AND POSSIBLY INTO JUNE

The Administrative Team has voted to keep TUUC in virtual space through at least May 31, 2020.

We will be following the guidance of the CDC and Maryland Health Department.

Given the uncertainty of the course of COVID, the TUUC Board of Trustees has begun talking about having our annual Congregational Meeting on-line on June 14. If you need support getting connected to ZOOM, please call the church office to let us know. You may also reach out for support on how to Zoom by sending an e-mail request

to zoommtgs@towsonuuc.org ---Rev. Clare

FOLLOW UP ON ZOOM BOMBING OF TUUC

Although misery does not love company, we have learned that we were not the only congregation in Baltimore County to be visited by Zoom Bombers on Sunday. We are taking appropriate action to enhance our security to prevent any further disruption of worship.

However, the hackers appear to know how to capture screen information. Now UU colleagues are sharing that some of their members are receiving requests for money

from what appears to be the minister's Zoom account. Please know that if you receive any request for money that appears to be coming

from my Zoom account (or any other TUUC leader's Zoom account) it is **NOT** a valid request. ---Rev. Clare

NEW SECURITY MEASURES FOR ZOOM WORSHIP

You may expect, moving forward, that on Fridays, we will e-mail you the Zoom Meeting ID for Sunday as well as a new password.

This will be a new meeting ID and password from last Sunday.

You will need to enter both to join worship.

The password will not be available via any other TUUC communication channel.

Please look for this e-mail on Friday and save it to a safe place.

Please log-on to worship by 10:15 a.m. on Sunday.

We regret the delays getting out of the waiting room last Sunday.

We hope to minimize the time in the waiting room.

One way you can help is to set up a FREE Zoom account with your first and last names. Otherwise, Zoom will assign a name like "John's iPad" which doesn't help us to confirm who is seeking to enter our worship service.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to ensure that our virtual worship space is as safe as possible.

This Sunday, please join us to celebrate our graduating high school seniors and all who are crossing a threshold between familiar ground and an unknown territory.

With love,

Rev. Clare



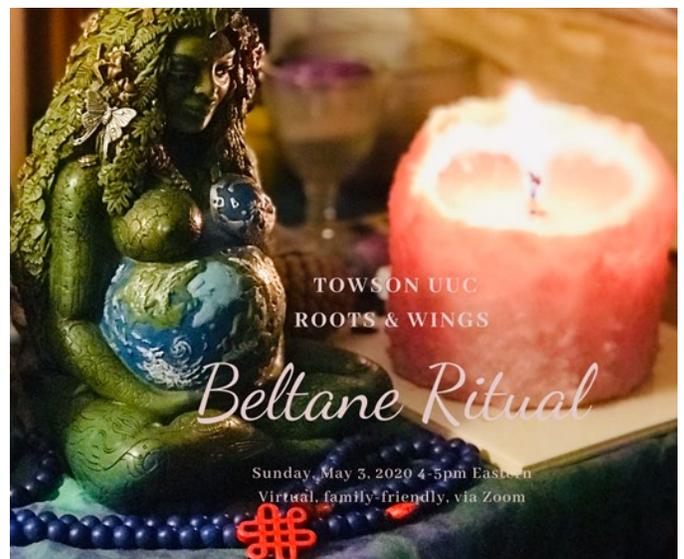
ROOTS AND WINGS COVENANT OF UU PAGANS

Roots and Wings Covenant of UU Pagans, at Towson Unitarian Universalist Church, will gather via Zoom, Sunday, May 3 from 4-5pm Eastern. You are invited to collect ribbon (strips of old tee shirts! Streamers of paper!) and permanent markers to create some Ribbon Love; two candles representing "bonfires" to walk between for cleansing yourself and ritual items as we dance the spring in; have ready a special beverage and snack for our virtual cakes & ale following ritual. We'll set intentions for this light half of the year and focus on healing ourselves and our planet Earth.

Here is the link to the Zoom meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2267305075?pwd=clAxMTlCWllGMFBBeMvYVWdIXt0dDZz09>



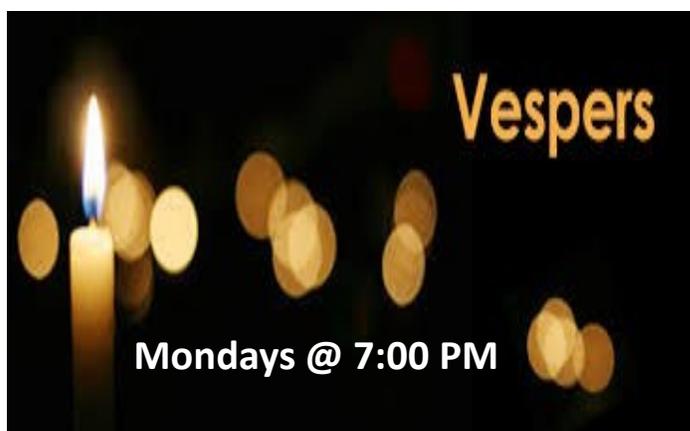
WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar at www.towsonuuc.org for most current schedule.

2 May	Saturday	Blood Drive	Meeting Room and Lobby	8:00 AM
2 May	Saturday	Committee on Ministry	Contact COM Chair for login info	10:00 AM
2 May	Saturday	Sing Along with Spice	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89064201355?pwd=SzZlQVBJczBxaGtBdnRGRFEdEYlhmdz09	7:30 PM
3 May	Sunday	Sunday Service	Security email sent to congregants	10:30 AM
3 May	Sunday	TUUC Beltane Ritual	https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2267305075?pwd=cIAxMTICWlIGMFBBemYvWDIXT0d2Zz09	4:00 PM
4 May	Monday	Soul Matters Mornings	https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2267305075?pwd=cIAxMTICWlIGMFBBemYvWDIXT0d2Zz09	8:30 AM
4 May	Monday	Vesper Services	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/696348175	7:00 PM
5 May	Tuesday	Virtual Coffee & Tea w/Rev.	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/467202356	12:00 PM
5 May	Tuesday	Women's Group Meeting	Contact Jane D'Ambrogi for info	7:30 PM
5 May	Tuesday	Storytelling	https://zoom.us/j/894494219	7:30 PM
6 May	Wednesday	Soul Matters Mornings	https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2267305075?pwd=cIAxMTICWlIGMFBBemYvWDIXT0d2Zz09	8:30 AM
6 May	Wednesday	Al-Anon Meeting	Contact Stan A for info	7:00 PM
6 May	Wednesday	Evening Book Group	https://zoom.us/j/966143833?pwd=dUluQnEvNkZuUXBTaWIHSUd3NTY3dz09	7:30 PM
7 May	Thursday	Virtual Coffee & Tea w/Rev.	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/629474885	4:00 PM
7 May	Thursday	Zoom Rehearsals	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/859624039	6:00 PM
7 May	Thursday	Virtual Choir Rehearsal	Email music@towsonuuc.org for info	7:30 PM
8 May	Friday	Soul Matters Mornings	https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2267305075?pwd=cIAxMTICWlIGMFBBemYvWDIXT0d2Zz09	8:30 AM
8 May	Friday	Great Ideas Discussion Group	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/666875374	11:00 AM

Watch TUUC website
for updated information!

www.towsonuuc.org



PASSING THE PLATE

We are committed to being a spiritual community in virtual space during this crisis and we need your financial support. This includes paying our ongoing financial commitments to our vendors and staff who are continuing to work remotely.

Renewing your pledge is more important than ever and now may be done online here: <https://www.towsonuuc.org/2021-pledge-form>

How to contribute through Breeze

Paying your pledge or making contributions can be easily sent through Breeze through this link:

<https://tuucdatabase.breezechms.com/give/online>

How to text your contribution or pledge

Send a text to: 410-834-0700 and indicate where you want your contribution to go by entering one of the commands to get your contribution to the right fund.

See examples in the grid.

PayPal Contributions

You may use PayPal to pay your pledge to treasurer@towsonuuc.org.

Mail Contributions

You may still mail checks to the church. Mail is checked weekly.



Command	Description
\$50	Donates \$50 to TUUC. Users can type any amount; the dollar sign is optional (e.g. \$50 and 50 both work).
give \$50	Same as above.
give	Your text giving number will respond asking "how much you'd like to give".
Here are our customized fund keywords:	
\$50 plate	Donates \$50 to the plate fund.
\$50 2019-20	Donates \$50 to 2019-20 pledge
\$50 2020-21	Donates \$50 to 2020-21 pledge
\$10 ODB	Donates \$10 to Our Daily Bread
\$50 Charitable	Donates \$50 to Charitable Contributions
\$50 Hospitality	Donates \$50 to Hospitality Fund
\$50 General Fund	Donates \$50 to General Operations
Note: Donors can only give to one fund at a time, but can donate several times separately.	
\$50 weekly	Sets up a recurring gift of \$50 each week. Frequency options are 'weekly', 'biweekly', 'monthly', and 'yearly'.
\$50 plate weekly	Sets up a recurring gift of \$50 each week to the plate fund. Frequency options are 'weekly', 'biweekly', 'monthly', and 'yearly'.
update	Allows you to update your payment method or recurring gift. Your text giving number will respond with a link where users can make these changes. To change from credit card to a bank account, click on the current option and change.

DONATE BY TEXT

Send an amount to
(410)834-0700

Fund Names:

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



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

Minister

Reverend Clare L. Petersberger
revclare@towsonuuc.org

Leadership

Board of Trustees:

President: Neil Porter (2019-2020)
President-Elect: Sue Royer (2019-2020)
Treasurer: TBD (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: Vacant
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

Staff

Youth Religious Exploration Director:

Joyce Duncan, Credentialed Religious Educator
tuucdre@towsonuuc.org

Music Director:

Tracy Hall
music@towsonuuc.org

Church Administrator:

Kai Aiyetoro
churchoffice@towsonuuc.org

Bookkeeper:

Raly Baltchev
bookkeeper@towsonuuc.org