

# The Threshold

Towson Unitarian
Universalist Church
A Welcoming Congregation

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

# August 16, 2020 - 10:30 AM

Andrew Hager, Lay Worship Associates: Send Up a Signal, I'll Throw You a Line All of us have been in situations or we felt alone. Sometimes, all you need is for someone to reach out to you in the smallest way. In our annual storytelling service, a group of TUUC members and friends recall times when they needed a lifeline...and got one.

# **OUTDOOR FAMILY RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION**

As summer heat continues, I hope you are finding ways to cool off. If you are splashing in a pool, stream, sprinkler, or ocean, remember to save a little water to share, virtually or in person, during TUUC's Water Communion service coming up on September 6. You could also gather water at another outdoor hike/stream walk on September 30, more details on that to come.

Meanwhile, if you are looking for meaningful watching, while staying cool at home, consider checking out suggestions for diverse family friendly movie nights from the New York Times. These "eight movies, suitable for children 7 and older, are written by, directed by and star people of color. They depict stories of struggle, perseverance and joy. Most don't end tied up nicely in a bow, which is more realistic and great for opening up a dialogue — even just to say, "What do you think happens next?" The beauty of that contemplation is that it gets families thinking and talking about the future, viewed through the lens of the past."

https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/18/at-home/coronavirus-diverse-family-friendly-movie-night.html

One selection for younger kids, the short film Hair Love, shows a Black dad struggling, but learning to help his young daughter style her generous curly locks.

# Hair Love—https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNw8V Fkw28

The author of this article also selects ages 7 and up The Little Girl Who Sold the Sun. This movie is longer, subtitled, and moves at a slow pace so would work for those who have a longer attention span.

The Little Girl Who Sold the Sun—https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNcfJU6grrU

Many of the others are available on Netflix, for example, See You Yesterday, The Hunt for the Wilderpeople, and The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind. I particularly recommend the latter, in which an inventive African teen converts the wind into water (to sustain crops and feed his village), which reminds us of the importance of this natural resource as we approach Water Communion Sunday. Those with younger children can hear a shared version of this true story here:

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind—https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-HtoNS8hn0 or could order the picture book of the same name by William Kamkwamba and Brian Mealer from the library or an on-line bookseller.

# **CONTINUING IN VIRTUAL SPACE**

The A-Team has decided that our church building will remain closed through December, unless there is significant improvement in reports from the Maryland Department of Health or a widely available safe vaccine. We are permitting small gatherings outside on the church grounds; reservations are required. Our outdoor use procedure is <a href="here">here</a>. Some of our virtual programs are taking a break during the summer. We look forward to seeing you for virtual Sunday service each week! Please check the church calendar for program information.

# ONGOING VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Contact facilitator in Breeze for meeting information or see the church calendar.

# **SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

2nd Sunday each month at noon Facilitator: Lorraine Sorbello

# **COFFEE WITH THE MINISTER**

Tuesdays 12:00 - 1:00pm

**Facilitator: Rev. Clare Petersberger** 

# **MEN'S REFLECTION GROUP**

1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30—9:00 PM

**Facilitator: Art Starr** 

# **WOMEN'S GROUP MEETING**

1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30—9:00 PM

Facilitator: Jane D'Ambrogi

#### **SOUL MATTERS**

2nd & 4th Tuesdays 7:30—8:30 PM Facilitator: Rev. Clare Petersberger

# **PROGRAM COUNCIL MEETING**

2nd Wednesday each month at 7:30 PM

**Facilitator: Andrew Hager** 

#### **TUUC BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

3rd Wednesday each month at 7:30 PM

**Facilitator: Sue Royer** 

#### **MEN'S GROUP**

2nd & 4th Thursdays 7:30—8:30 PM Facilitator: Michael Magrogan

# **VIRTUAL PROGRAMS AT TUUC**

# FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE

The Administrative Team has decided to make it easier for visitors to find their way to our virtual Sunday services, while still maintaining strong security measures to keep out those who might disrupt us.

Our Sunday services still require a password to enter and everyone starts in a waiting room. Everyone enters muted. Participants are not permitted to unmute or rename themselves. Participants may only chat with the host and co-hosts. The password is not embedded in the link to the meeting. The meeting ID changes every week.

In addition to emailing the meeting information to congregants and to repeat visitors, we are starting to include the Zoom meeting ID and password in the Threshold and on the church calendar. Both of these locations require humans to click several times from our church home page, making it less likely that bots will find the link. We will also create a public Facebook event, directing people to contact Zoommtg@towsonuuc.org to obtain the login information.

Please invite friends, family, and neighbors to join us for virtual worship!

For Sunday, August 16, please join us at 10:15 am to be admitted prior to the service starting at 10:30. We will have break-out rooms for coffee and conversation following the service.

Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/ j/84033113899

Meeting ID: 840 3311 3899

Passcode: 466455 One tap mobile

+13017158592,,84033113899#,,,,,,0#,,466455# US (Germantown)

+19292056099,,84033113899#,,,,,0#,,466455# US (New York)

created by P. Evans

# Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 840 3311 3899

Passcode: 466455

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kjWwohlT5

### **AUGUST IS A MONTH OF SUNDAYS**

When there is a fifth Sunday in a TUUC month the entire collection plate goes to a designated community partner. The Social Action Committee's featured community partner for August is *Out For Justice, Inc.* 



On fifth Sundays in the month, all non-pledge donations go to one of our congregation's Community or UU Partners. The August 30, 2020 fifth Sunday collection will be given to *Out for Justice*. **IF YOU ARE WRITING A (non pledge)**CHECK, PLEASE MAKE SURE TO WRITE "Fifth Sunday" or "SAC" ON THE MEMO LINE. Thank you for your generosity.

Out For Justice is an organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for exoffenders in Maryland. Since COVID Our For Justice has:

- Collaborated with partners to create and implement a reentry housing plan to be used in conjunction with our DMV Black Mama's Bail Out initiative.
- Collected monetary donations that have funded mutual aid items, rent support, bail, and home detention fees.
- Collected and distributed mutual aid items every Wednesdays to the larger community from 9-12 pm.
- Facilitated the bailout/ home detention release/ housing placement of at least 50 people thus far.
- Issued a statement to Gov. Larry Hogan concerning the expedited release of
  incarcerated citizens, with a special emphasis on releasing those individuals on
  detention who are already in work release/pre-release status, in spite of their
  crime.
- Created a space for incarcerated individuals and their community to voice their opinions and concerns regarding incarceration during this pandemic on the Stories Behind the Walls Livestream.
- Completed one radio ad educating the formerly and currently incarcerated on their right to vote which ran on 92Q.
- Partnered with JOTF and BALT for a Father's Day Bailout effort. All groups were located outside of central bookings to receive the fathers when they were released. The fathers received mutual aid bags, transportation, housing support, and access to enroll in Project Jump Start etc.
- Created three TV commercials informing Baltimore residents of their voting rights (to be aired on Fox 45 station) that include OFJ members and partners. Expenses for our voting work will be reimbursed by OSI.

Upcoming events and needs include:

- Census Resource Fair on August 29th from 12-3pm at 1400 E. Federal St. They'll have community resources, food, prizes, and people to assist with completing voter registration and the 2020 census.
- Laptop drive for bailed out citizens. They have promised each of the beneficiaries
  of their bailout a laptop. Laptops may be sent or delivered to Out For Justice, 1400
  E. Federal St., Baltimore, MD 21213. Please make sure they have a clean install of
  Windows 10, No windows password should be set if it does have a password,
  please include the administrative BIOS and or windows passwords.

# **CABIN FEVER**

Join our online movie group for weekly discussions.

Email <u>churchoffice@towsonuuc.org</u> to be added to our mailing list and receive Zoom meeting information.

This Week—INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS (1978)

In this tense science-fiction classic, an alien life form is taking over the bodies of unsuspecting Americans. What a timeless metaphor! Donald Sutherland stars. (Available on Amazon Prime. Rated PG.)

Trailer: <a href="https://youtu.be/E0W7hiO2yqo">https://youtu.be/E0W7hiO2yqo</a> Discussion: Saturday, August 15, 4 PM.

# Next Week—REDS

Warren Beatty and Diane Keaton star in this sweeping, epic romance set against the backdrop of the Russian Revolution. Jack Nicholson and Gene Hackman co-star. (available on Amazon. Rated PG.)

Trailer: <a href="https://youtu.be/2cf-8-x-lfy">https://youtu.be/2cf-8-x-lfy</a>
Discussion: Saturday, August 22, 4 PM.





**GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE** is meeting at noon on Sunday, August 16 for our annual planning session. The session lasts between 1 to 1-1/2 hours. If you would like to join us, please contact Carel Hedlund In Breeze for Zoom link/info or check the website calendar <a href="here">here</a>. Environmental/legislative ideas the group can do are welcome.

# SINGLES FELLOWSHIP GROUP HAPPY HOUR

Saturday, August 22, 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.

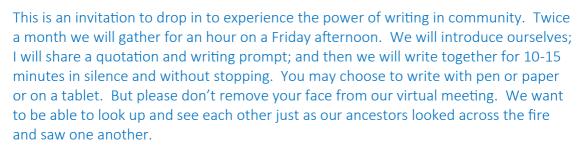
Please call Ronald Rowley to RSVP and to get more information. He is listed in the Breeze church directory.

"WRITING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE"
A VIRTUAL DROP-IN GROUP
FRIDAYS 1:00 - 2:00 PM
SEPT. 4 AND 18, OCT. 2 AND 16,
NOV. 6 AND 20, AND DEC. 4

"If we contemplate the origins of storytelling, our images take us back to the earliest gatherings of humans around the sacred fire. Just as our first ancestors learned to harness the power of fire to warm, transform, and provide, so they learned the power of story to ignite courage, transform despair, and provide spiritual sustenance."

From Awakening the Creative Spirit

Christine Valters Paintner and Betsey Beckman



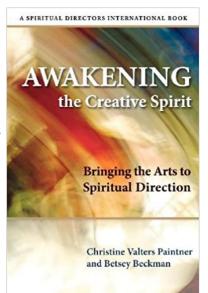
At the end, I will ring a chime, inviting everyone to stop writing. Those who wish to do so will share what they have written---without comment, feedback, or judgement. This is sacred sharing and listening. The goal is not to improve one's writing (or to improve someone else's writing!). The goal is to know another and be known.

At the end of the session, the remaining time will be given to conversation on what it felt to write, what someone else's writing brought to mind, what else the prompt prompted in us, etc.

The Reverend Barbara Childs observed, "In a sense, writing as a spiritual practice is meditating on paper to become mindful of who we are. It is a process of paying attention to what matters."

I hope you will join in at least one if not all seven sessions to become mindful of who we are and to pay attention to what matters!

Rev. Clare



# FROM YOUR MINISTER

August is traditionally a time to begin planning programming for the coming year. We anticipate being in virtual space, as a community, through much of the fall. So the focus of the Program Council meeting on August 12 was to plan virtual programming. We received feedback in July that people are yearning for opportunities for connection on Sunday morning and during the week.

My heartfelt thanks to the TUUC Worship Associates for providing meaningful worship on the theme of life-lines this summer and to our Technical Ushers for supporting them. You have, each and all, been life-lines! In terms of programming during the week, Coffee With The Minister will return at noon on Tuesday beginning on August 18. This is an opportunity to gather and talk about what is on your mind and heart.

In addition, we will try a TUUC virtual "Happy Hour" at 5 p.m. on Friday, August 21. This is clearly BYOB! The real purpose is to gather at the beginning of the weekend to socialize.

Now is also a time to think about whether you would like to be part of a Soul Matters Sharing Circle that will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. You may expect a packet that invites you to choose one of four spiritual exercises to engage and provides readings; videos; and suggested music to help probe the theme of the spiritual theme of the month in more depth. And you may expect a community of thoughtful, caring, and committed participants. Our question for September is, "What does it mean to be a people of renewal?" Please enroll by e-mailing me at revclare@towsonuuc.org.

And speaking of spiritual practices, if you would be interested in a weekly, one hour virtual session on writing as a spiritual practice, please e-mail me at <a href="mailto:revclare@towsonuuc.org">revclare@towsonuuc.org</a> so we can find the time that works for the greatest number of people.

We will be celebrating Water Communion in virtual space on September 6. Those who would like the visceral experience of pouring water are invited to a drive-by at 3:30 p.m. in the TUUC parking lot on August 30<sup>th</sup>. We will film TUUC members and friends pouring water to be included in worship on September 6. If you cannot make that time, you are invited to send me a photo or short video of water that has been important to you this summer: from the faucet to the garden hose to rain storms and how they offered you renewal. These images will be part of our water communion.

It is appropriate that our question for September is "What does it mean to be a people of renewal?" for we are discerning what parts of our collective life will "re" (resume and repeat) and what "new" programs we will try given our need for both social distancing and spiritual communion. So grateful to be on this journey with you!

# **GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT, KARYN MARSH**

I have been attending the General Assembly (GA) of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) since 2014. My first GA was in Providence, RI. I took an early flight and arrived in the convention center as they were finishing up the morning worship. Ethereal music and harmonies from a choir greeted me and I felt a rush. At last I had found my people!

Because of its proximity to Boston, which has the greatest concentration of UU congregations in the United States, that GA had 5,000 attendees. Being surrounded by so many fellow UUs, I felt a profound sense of belonging and connection. In the numerous workshops and lectures, I learned that other UU congregations were experiencing the same challenges that TUUC was experiencing. I realized that TUUC is not alone and wealth of wisdom in our UU association of congregations.

Given my experience in 2014, I was looking forward to going to Providence again in 2020. However, COVID-19 had veto power on everyone's plans, and this year the UUA hosted its first all-virtual GA. Although I missed the sense of community that only being there can give, I still gained a great deal from my online participation. In some respects, the virtual GA made the business sessions more efficient, which allowed me more time to participate in the workshops. Another positive aspect of the virtual format is that I am able to access all of the workshops, even the ones I was not able to attend due to schedule conflicts.

As Sue Royer mentioned in her report, this year's theme was "Rooted, Inspired, Ready" and the workshops and speakers all focused upon the work that needs to be done in the present to help bring about the change we seek in the world.

At past GAs, my focus has been on church administration and increasing church membership, but this year I concentrated more upon spiritual practice. Some of the workshops I attended include "Power Analysis as a Theological Tool", "Antiracism as a Spiritual Practice", "Why We Want and Resist Diversity", and "Building Communities to Counter White Nationalism/White Power."

Since Unitarians and Universalists joined together in 1961, I perceive there has been a fair amount of muddling of UU theology. Although we have the 7 principles, which are a covenant between congregations, I think UUs need to educate themselves on UU history and the unique UU contributions to theological and spiritual discourse in the United States over the last 300 years. This is the "rooted" part of the equation, but it can also be the "inspired" part of the equation.

Reading various books on UU history and the many great Unitarians and Universalists, I am inspired to take up the batons that they carried. From the inception of both Unitarianism and Universalism, these denominations have served as a conscience for the greater society by questioning patriarchal and racist societal structures. Thus, taking action on behalf of black lives and indigenous rights and working to dismantle

this system of white, patriarchal privilege today is very much in line with UU tradition and theology. My hope for TUUC in the coming church year is more education on our tradition and more conversations on what it means to be a UU. I also encourage everyone to consider attending GA (whether virtually or in person) next year, when it will be in beautiful Milwaukee, WI.

# **OTHER NEWS**

#### DRAWDOWN ZOOM MEETING

Have you ever thought of becoming more "environmental" by subscribing to clean energy, but you do not want to put solar panels on your property? Does it seem daunting to try to do the research to learn about the different companies which are happy to sell you power? Which is the best alternative for you?

If any of these apply to you, or if you are just plain curious, please join us for our next Drawdown Zoom meeting at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, August 18. We will have a guest speaker who will educate us on the process of switching to solar or wind energy. This would be a great opportunity to learn about resources available to you and to have your questions answered. If you know of others who would be interested, have them email Bobbie Miyasaki (email address in Breeze) so that they can be sent the Zoom link.

# **TUUC AUCTION**

Yes, of course we're having an Auction this year. This is TUUC's 60<sup>th</sup> year and we're celebrating with our "Diamond Jubilation!" Auction in November. The 19 members of the Auction Committee have already met twice on Zoom with productive and lively discussions on how to make this year's Auction more exciting, entertaining and inclusive, even though we are having it in virtual space.

Auction evening festivities will be via Zoom, but a great deal will be very familiar including many wonderful donations of items and events, spirited bidding and an evening of entertainment, fellowship, and maybe even special food and prizes. This is TUUC's largest fundraising event so please plan to participate and start thinking about donations.

We'll provide more details soon. There will be a link on TUUC's homepage (towsonuuc.org), which you can click on to get Auction information and support. There will be ample help from a cadre of Auction Committee coaches who will help you navigate participation in the virtual auction and address any other auction questions or concerns.

# Missed an issue of the Threshold?

You can always find past issues at

https://www.towsonuuc.org/our-news

# **TUUC BOOK GROUP**

September 2—7:30 PM Olive, Again by Elizabeth Strout, 2019 304 pages

A sequel to the Pulitzer Prize Winning Olive Kitteridge finds Olive struggling to understand herself while bonding with a teen suffering from loss, a woman gives birth unexpectedly, a nurse harboring a longtime crush and a lawyer who resists an unwanted inheritance.

All are welcome. Contact Jane Selewach (info in the Breeze) if you have any questions.

Zoom Info for TUUC Book Group

Time: Sep 2, 2020 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://uuma.zoom.us/j/91998308473

Meeting ID: 919 9830 8473

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,91998308473# US (Germantown)

+16468769923,,91998308473# US (New York)

# Dial by your location

- +1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
- +1 646 876 9923 US (New York)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 919 9830 8473

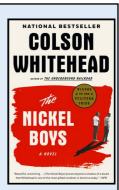
Elizabeth
Strout

Olive,

Again

A NOVEL

Upcoming book for October 7, 2020 The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead



# THIRD SATURDAY WORK PARTY at the TUUC campus on Saturday, August 15, 2020 at 9:00am – 12:00pm





- · Parking lot pickup
- · Storage clean up
- · Asphalt patch (weather permitting)

# **PLEASE NOTE:**

- · Masks required for any close work with others
- · Bathrooms will NOT be available
- · Tools will be provided as needed.

Please contact Todd Robertson at <a href="mailto:houseandgrounds@towsonuuc.org">houseandgrounds@towsonuuc.org</a> with questions or concerns.



# **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

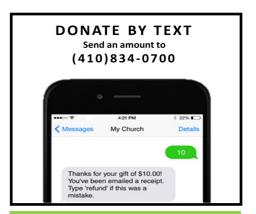
# **HOW TO CONTRIBUTE THOUGH BREEZE**

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

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

#### **PAYPAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

You may use PayPal to pay your pledge to treasurer@towsonuuc.org. <u>To avoid additional</u> <u>fees, send your contribution to the setting "family and friends" and please note the purpose of your donation in the message area.</u>



Thank you for your support!

# **MAIL CONTRIBUTIONS**

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

# 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 NEW examples below:

amount + 2020-21	2020-2021 Stewardship Campaign			
ex: text "\$50 2020-21" to give to 2020-2021 Stewardship Campaign				
amount + ODB	ODB Casseroles			
ex: text "\$50 ODB" to give to ODB Casseroles				
amount + GreenProducts	Green Products			
ex: text "\$50 GreenProducts" to give to Green Products				
amount + SAC	Social Action Collection			
ex: text "\$50 SAC" to give to Social Action Collection				
amount + Plate	Plate Collection			
ex: text "\$50 Plate" to give to Plate Collection				

Watch TUUC website for updated information!

www.towsonuuc.org

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar here for most current schedule.

16 Aug	Sunday	Sunday Service	Zoom info email	10:30 AM
16 Aug	Sunday	Green Sanctuary	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87635933476? pwd=aWw1TktVSFRQb0VyRkR5ZCtnNGhIUT09	12:00 PM
16 Aug	Sunday	Family Outdoor RE	TUUC Picnic Grove	4:00 PM
16 Aug	Sunday	OWL Middle School	Memorial Garden	4:30 PM
18 Aug	Tuesday	Coffee with the Minister	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/94314283327	12:00 PM
18 Aug	Tuesday	Drawdown Zoom Mtg	Contact Bobbie Miyasaki	5:30 PM
18 Aug	Tuesday	Men's Reflection Group	Contact Art Starr	7:30 PM
18 Aug	Tuesday	Women's Group Mtg	Contact Jane D'Ambrogi	7:30 PM
19 Aug	Wednesday	TUUC Board Meeting	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/96450829649	7:30 PM
20 Aug	Thursday	Rehearsal for Sunday	Zoom info to come	6:00 PM
21 Aug	Friday	Happy Hour	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/94356857174	5:00 PM
22 Aug	Saturday	Singles Fellowship Group	Contact Ron Rowley for Info	4:00 PM
23 Aug	Sunday	Sunday Service	Zoom info email	10:30 AM
23 Aug	Sunday	OWL Middle School	Memorial Garden	4:30 PM
25 Aug	Tuesday	Coffee w/Minister	https://uuma.zoom.us/j/94314283327	12:00 PM
25 Aug	Tuesday	Men's Group	TUUC Parking Lot	1:00 PM

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

# ZOOM SUNDAY SERVICE ATTENDANCE REPORT

(Does not reflect actual number of people watching)

Date	Time	Adults/ Children
8/9/2020	10:30 AM	67



1710 Dulaney Valley Road
Lutherville MD 21093-9705
Phone: 410-825-6045
Email: churchoffice@towsonuuc.org

Website: www.towsonuuc.org



#### **Minister**

Reverend Clare L. Petersberger revclare@towsonuuc.org

# Leadership

**Board of Trustees:** 

President: Sue Royer (2020-2021)

President-Elect: Andrew Hager (2020-2021) Treasurer: Wendell Finner (2019-2021) Secretary: Susan Riggs (2020-2022)

Trustees-at-Large:

John Mattingly (2019-2021) Samantha Saalfield (2019-2021) Angela Castillo-Epps (2020-2022)

Patty Barry (2020-2022)

# **Administrative Team**

Head of Staff: Rev. Clare Petersberger

Finance: Vacant

House and Grounds: Todd Robertson Church Administrator: Kai Aiyetoro

#### **Program Committee**

Convener: Andrew Hager Communications: Patty Barry

# 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

#### **TECHNICAL USHERS NEEDED**

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.

