

The Threshold

Towson Unitarian
Universalist Church
A Welcoming Congregation

What does it mean to be a people of Renewal?

SEPTEMBER 27, 2020 - 10:30 AM

REV. CLARE L. PETERSBERGER:

WHAT COMES BEFORE RENEWAL?

A colleague recently asked, “What comes before renewal?” She went on to observe, “You don’t just walk into renewal.” This is true. Today we honor how Judaism answers the question “What comes before renewal?” What do the most sacred days in the Jewish liturgical year teach about what comes before renewal? How do these rituals speak to us this particular autumn?

HOPE IN JUSTICE—MONDAY SEPTEMBER 21 AT 7 PM

A Vespers service honoring the life and work of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg will be held on Monday, Sept 21. Beginning at 7, the meditative ceremony will reflect on Ginsburg's influence and the strength of those who fight for justice.

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

Families with kids in grades Kindergarten through 7 are invited to join us on Sunday mornings for a Family meeting followed by breakout rooms for classes. As a covenantal religion, our faith places relationships and our promises to each other at the center of our faith. As we’re human, we sometimes break those promises and hurt those relationships. So renewal and repair is necessary and sacred work. So what’s one of the ways our faith guides us into becoming a people of renewal? It tells us to “Get comfortable with the work of renewal and repair!” This Sunday we learn about the Jewish holy day, Yom Kippur, forgiveness, and saying “I’m sorry.”

Please see the parent emails or contact Joyce Duncan at tuucdre@towsonuuc.org for more information on how to join that meeting or the meetings planned for other age groups.

FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

GOVERNANCE UPDATE AND CALL TO SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

By Sue Royer, President

We've conducted three listening sessions so far this month, to review the key elements of the proposed Bylaws revision. You'll find a link to the slides [here](#).



It became clear during discussion at one of the listening sessions, that the age required to be a Member was not clear, nor was it clear how members of the Nominating Committee were selected. Also, we received an amendment about Board meetings, which the Board accepted with modification. The Bylaws version that was sent on September 18 includes those three updates.

We are working with a law firm with expertise in Maryland church law. They are helping us not only with the Bylaws, but with an amendment and restatement of our Articles of Incorporation. (Yes, TUUC is incorporated!).

Here are some questions that came up during the listening sessions, along with the answers:

Q: What is the number for a quorum changing to?

A: We are increasing the number of members which constitute a quorum from the lesser of 50 Members or **15%** to the lesser of 50 Members or **20%** of the total membership last certified to the Unitarian Universalist Association.



Q: What is the percentage of Members required to approve a Called Minister?

A: Ninety (90) percent of the Members must vote in favor to call a Minister. The quorum for a Special Congregational Meeting to call a minister is 50 percent of the Members. In our current Bylaws, we require eighty (80) percent of the Members to vote in favor to call a Minister.

Q: What is a contract minister?

A: Examples of contract ministers are an interim minister and a ministerial intern. Contract ministers are hired without a congregational vote.

Q: Why the change to the Endowment Committee from being elected to being appointed by the Board?

A: Under Maryland law, the Board of Trustees is the fiduciary for TUUC's Endowment. Rev. David Pyle, in his assessment of TUUC's governance in 2016, recommended that the members of the Endowment Committee be appointed by the Board.

Q: Why is the portion of the Endowment Fund that goes to the annual operating budget being changed from 4% to "up to 5%"?

A: The Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA), which is a national standard and also part of Maryland law, allows for up to 7% of the value to be spent in any year. It also requires that the amount be based on the average market value of the endowment investments over the 12 quarters (or more) immediately preceding the calculation. This aspect of UPMIFA applies only to permanent restricted endowments, which are restricted by the donor or law. By allowing up to 5% of TUUC's Endowment to be directed to the operating

budget, this provides greater flexibility in budgeting and planning at TUUC.

Q: I see we have a provision for Youth Members, age 16 to 18. How will this affect the financial contribution that we owe the UUA each year?

A: We want to encourage youth who have gone through the Coming of Age program and/or who are active in the YRUU program to become members of the church. Under Maryland law, those under 18 are not permitted to vote on certain matters, which is laid out in the proposed Bylaws. The UUA changed the dues formula several years ago; now it is based on our annual budget rather than the number of Members.

Q: How are the members of the Nominating Committee selected?

A: The Chair is appointed by the Board. The remaining members are elected by the Congregation at the annual meeting.

Also at the listening sessions, several former members of the Board expressed their appreciation for this work. They are happy that we've been able to follow-through to complete the revision of the Bylaws in support of an improved form of governance.

The Board of Trustees is calling a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, October 25, 2020 on Zoom with check-in starting at 11:45 am. The purpose of this meeting is to vote on the proposed Bylaws and to vote on amended Articles of Incorporation. If you would like an Absentee Ballot, please contact secretary@towsonuuc.org. Note that Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be submitted in writing to secretary@towsonuuc.org by 5 pm on Monday, September 28. Amendments will not be accepted on the floor of the meeting.

FINAL LISTENING SESSION

We invite you to join the final listening session with members of the Board and of the Bylaws Committee, on Sunday, September 27 at 12:00 noon on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87486305690?pwd=YWFWMU55WFNBU2JrRVFnUzZFS3MzQT09>



Meeting ID: 874 8630 5690

Passcode: 553086

One tap mobile: +12133388477,,87486305690#,,,,,0#,,553086#

Or join by phone by dialing 301-715-8592 or 646-558-8656 and enter the meeting ID and passcode.

Meeting ID: 874 8630 5690

Passcode: 553086

TUUC Auction 2020

UPCOMING AUCTION COACHING SESSIONS:

Saturday, 9/26, 10-11am & Monday, 9/28, 7:30-8:30pm

How to donate and introduction to “Bid Beacon” our Auction software



TUUC AUCTION 2020—DIAMOND JUBILEE

October 11 – November 21

It's time to plan your donations for the TUUC 2020 Auction. Online bidding opens on October 11th. It would be great to have your donations entered by that date so they have maximum exposure to interested buyers. Here are links to the instructions and the online donation form:

Instructions: [Auction 2020 Donation Form Instructions](#)

Donation Form: [Auction 2020 Donation Form](#)

Auction 2020 will be an online celebration, so a few changes have been made regarding donations. As before, we ask that donations of physical articles be limited to new or previously-owned items in excellent condition. Because of the added challenges of getting items picked-up and delivered to the buyer, we are limiting donations to items with a value of at least \$25.

Donations that worked well in prior years are still viable this year. Donations of events planned while the pandemic is still with us should be COVID-safe, which probably means an outdoor setting with social-distancing and other precautions. You may also donate a non-socially distanced event for after the danger has passed. In that case you should not specify a date but contact the winners once it's safe, and set a date that works for everyone.

We are happy to have all kinds of donations; items large and small, services you are able to offer, outdoor activities which you can host, gift boxes and baskets, online classes and group events either socially-distanced or post-pandemic. Those who think up interesting offerings are often surprised by the appreciative response of the congregation. Hosting an event like a bike ride, hike or picnic gets a great response and allows the donor and buyers to have a good time together. Here is a more extensive list of donation ideas: [WHAT CAN I DONATE?](#)

Donations of gift cards and gift certificates are very welcome. There will be a virtual Raffle this year and gift cards continue to be a great raffle prize! If you're still stumped, a cash donation is always appreciated and will help offset the expenses of putting on the Auction. You can enter your cash donation using the Auction 2020 Donation Form (link above) or Donate by Text as described on the TUUC website: [DONATE TO TUUC](#)

The Auction Committee is working hard to make this year's Diamond Jubilation Auction a big success and lots of fun. Whether or not you donate, please participate by downloading the auction software and purchasing a few raffle tickets or bidding for the growing number of items being offered. Invitations with instructions for downloading the Bid Beacon® auction software have been emailed to the entire congregation. Check out the Auction Link on the TUUC website to request help, view Auction news and look at donations being offered for sale. Be sure to take part in the Auction Night festivities planned via Zoom on November 21st.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT TUUC

CABIN FEVER

Join our online movie group for weekly discussions.

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



THIS WEEK—MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

A father (Michael Shannon) must protect his supernaturally gifted son from federal agents and a religious cult.

Trailer: https://youtu.be/8UU_CC81aGM

Discussion: Saturday, September 26, 4 PM.



NEXT WEEK—JOHNNY GUITAR

In this classic 1954 Western, Joan Crawford is a strong-willed saloon owner wrongly suspected of murder and bank robbery. (Available on Amazon. Not rated.)

Trailer: <https://youtu.be/dme6UM5TA4>

Discussion: Saturday, October 3, 4 PM.



SINGLES FELLOWSHIP GROUP HAPPY HOUR—SEPTEMBER 26 AT 4PM

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.

TUUC BLOOD DRIVE—OCTOBER 7, 2020

Working with the American Red Cross, we've scheduled **Wednesday, October 7th, 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 October 7th, if you are healthy and have no concerns about donating.



**American
Red Cross**

NEW INFO: The Red Cross is testing all donations for COVID-19 antibodies. The antibody test is authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and will indicate if the donor's immune system has produced antibodies to the coronavirus, regardless of whether they developed symptoms. **This test is not to diagnose current COVID-19 symptoms**, referred to as a diagnostic test. [Click here](#) to learn more about the COVID-19

Antibody testing.

To sign up for an appointment time between 10:00am-4:00pm please use [this link](#) OR email Clare Flynn-Avallone with your preferred times. Give the Gift of Life - Give Blood!

WRITING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

You are invited to drop in to "Writing As A Spiritual Practice from 1:00-2:00 on Friday, Oct. 2nd. We will introduce ourselves; I will share a quotation and writing prompt; and then we will write together for 10-15 minutes without stopping.



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. The goal is to know another and be known.

MUSIC AT TUUC—CHOIR REHEARSALS ON THURSDAYS AT 7:30 PM

The TUUC Choir continues to meet weekly on Thursday evenings. While they won't be singing as a group in the Zoom services (due to latency issues), they will be working on a variety of musical activities. The rehearsals include social time to "check in" with one another, announcements and information about upcoming projects, and some singing time as well. Vocal exercises keep our voices in shape, and we'll be working on music and making plans for virtual choir recordings (some audio only and hopefully some with video). Many choir members are called upon to lead music live on Sunday mornings as well. If you'd like to join in, check the church calendar for the login information. Please also email Music Director Tracy Hall at music@towsonuuc.org if you plan to come for the first time.



MUSICIANS WANTED

If you play an instrument or feel comfortable singing as a soloist, we need you! Each Sunday, we try to keep a balanced variety of soloists and song leaders. Please contact Music Director Tracy Hall at music@towsonuuc.org if you have an interest in sharing music with the congregation in our Zoom services.



ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS FOR THE THRESHOLD

TUUC committees are encouraged to submit an article or announcement to the weekly published Threshold newsletter. Please remember the deadline is **Wednesday at 12:00 PM** and should be sent to news@towsonuuc.org.



TUUC SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS PARTNER WE SUPPORT?

This month, we highlight the TUUC Social Action Community Partner Our Daily Bread (ODB). Since June 1, 1981, they have never missed a day of lunch service to those experiencing hunger in Baltimore, in spite of blizzards, hurricanes or any other occurrence. Our Daily Bread is Maryland's largest hot meal program, serving more than a quarter of a million meals to those experiencing hunger in Baltimore City each year.



TUUC has pledged to provide at least 60 casseroles to ODB in each month which has 5 Saturdays (usually 4 times per year). *October is one of these months.* Contributions by individuals and churches serve 600-800 lunch guests each day!

During Covid, we are contributing funds only (\$10 per casserole), not actual cooked casseroles.

To learn more about the program, see <https://www.catholiccharities-md.org/services/our-daily-bread-hot-meal-program/>

So, please contribute to Our Daily Bread (ODB) by one of these methods:

1. Text - Send a text to: 410-834-0700:
amount + ODB, for example: text "50 ODB" to give \$50
OR...

2. Send a check to TUUC (1710 Dulaney Valley Rd. Lutherville MD 21093) and specify "ODB" on the memo line.

Thank you for your generosity!

HOWEVER YOU VOTE, BE PREPARED!

When you receive your mail-in ballot in late September or early October, be sure to sign and date the ballot envelope. Get your ballot in as soon as possible so that counting can be done in a timely fashion. In order to be counted, ballots must be placed in a secure drop box or postmarked by 8:00 pm on November 3. Drop boxes will be available from late September through Election Day. Most local Boards have their locations already posted on their websites.



If you do want to vote in person, you may use any vote center in your county (or Baltimore City). Efforts will be made to keep the centers safe, with social distancing, masks, barrier shields, frequently cleaning, etc. Early Voting will be available from October 26 through November 2, 7:00 am – 8:00 pm daily, including weekends. Statewide lists of vote centers are to be posted on [this site](#).

ASSISTANCE CENTER OF TOWSON CHURCHES

The Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) continues to be very busy during the pandemic. It has distributed 160 tons of food to 16,000 people. Each client receives canned goods along with fresh produce, dairy, and baked goods. Generous grants from the Maryland Food Bank together with fresh food donations from several stores have made this possible. Area churches have provided storage space for supplies. A list of needed donations and additional information can be found on the [ACTC website](#). In addition, there is a need for toiletries and household supplies.



ACTC is preparing to reinstate financial assistance for those who need help with housing or utility expenses. If you or someone you know is facing eviction, foreclosure, or utility cut-off, contact Linda Lotz, Executive Director, to find out if ACTC can assist you.

OUR MESSY LIVES

This group is about certain personality traits like patience and kindness and what happens when we try to implement them in our lives. If you are always patient and kind, for example, congratulations! However, this group is not for you. But if you are like me and are not always patient or kind, then please join us as we explore our messy lives. Open to all: women, men, and non-binary; but *pre-registration is required* to receive the Zoom meeting id, password and personality trait that will be featured that week. The group will meet via zoom on the following dates and times, from 3-4 pm, on Oct 8, Oct 22, Nov 12 Nov 19, and Dec 10. To register, contact Art Starr [here](#).

UPCOMING AUCTION COACHING SESSIONS:

Saturday, September 26 at 10 AM & Monday, September 28 at 7:30 PM

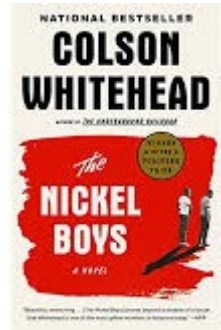


The 2020 TUUC Auction Committee has scheduled several online Auction Coaching Sessions! These Zoom meetings will cover a variety of topics including: how to enter your donation, introducing Bid Beacon—the software hosting our Virtual Auction, as well as various highlights of Auction Night events. All are encouraged to attend these online sessions! More information is available at [this website](#).

TUUC BOOK CLUB

October 7, 2020, 7:30PM: The Nickel Boys by Colson Whitehead (2019—213 pages)

Winner of the 2020 Pulitzer Prize, Colson Whitehead brilliantly dramatizes the story of two boys sentenced to a hellish reform school in Jim Crow-era Florida. Though it's brief—213 pages long—Whitehead has made a conceptually thick, intense, political book ... From its opening lines through the novel's elegant, heartbreaking closing, Whitehead's lucid, sparkling, storytelling incites readers to bear witness for these children real and imagined.



Zoom Info:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/97308154420>

Meeting ID: 973 0815 4420

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,97308154420# US (Germantown)

+13126266799,,97308154420# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 973 0815 4420

**NEXT MEETING ON
NOVEMBER 4, 7:30PM—**

**The Leftovers
by Tom
Perrotta
(2011)**



Virtual Happy Hour

5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Friday, September 25



Sixteen people attended our August Virtual Happy Hour. Drinks people brought included special wine, craft beer, and delicious water. Those who gathered expressed interest in connecting for another virtual Happy Hour to socialize. So if you are looking for a great way to get the weekend off to a fun start join us for a virtual Happy Hour at **5 p.m. on Friday September 25**. It's definitely BYOB! Here's to fun virtual gatherings!

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>

PAYPAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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

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
<i>ex: text "50 2020-21" to give to 2020-2021 Stewardship Campaign</i>	
amount + ODB	ODB Casseroles
<i>ex: text "50 ODB" to give to ODB Casseroles</i>	
amount + GreenProducts	Green Products
<i>ex: text "50 GreenProducts" to give to Green Products</i>	
amount + SAC	Social Action Collection
<i>ex: text "50 SAC" to give to Social Action Collection</i>	
amount + Plate	Plate Collection
<i>ex: text "50 Plate" to give to Plate Collection</i>	
amount + Auction	Auction
<i>ex: text "50 Auction" to give to Auction</i>	

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

Calendar is subject to change. Check the website calendar [here](#) for most current schedule.

25 Sept	Friday	Men's Reflection Group	1:00 PM
25 Sept	Friday	Happy Hour	5:00 PM
26 Sept	Saturday	Auction Coaching Session	10:00 AM
26 Sept	Saturday	Singles Fellowship Group	4:00 PM
27 Sept	Sunday	Family Meetings/Classes	9:00 AM
27 Sept	Sunday	Sunday Service and Coffee Hour	10:30 AM
27 Sept	Sunday	Listening Session with the Board—Bylaws	12:00 PM
27 Sept	Sunday	OWL Middle School Sessions	4:30 PM
28 Sept	Monday	Vespers	7:00 PM
28 Sept	Monday	Auction Coaching Session	7:30 PM
29 Sept	Tuesday	Coffee with the Minister	12:00 PM
29 Sept	Tuesday	Lay Worship Associates Meeting	7:00 PM
1 Oct	Thursday	Rehearsal	6:00 PM
1 Oct	Thursday	Virtual Choir Rehearsal	7:30 PM
2 Oct	Friday	Writing as a Spiritual Practice	1:00 PM
3 Oct	Saturday	Auction Coaching Session	10:00 AM

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
9/20/2020	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 RE
tuudre@towsonuuc.org

Music Director:

Tracy Hall
music@towsonuuc.org

Church Administrator:

Kai Aiyetoro
churchoffice@towsonuuc.org

Communications and Outreach Coordinator:

Philip Browne
news@towsonuuc.org

Bookkeeper:

Raly Baltchev
bookkeeper@towsonuuc.org

Missed an issue of the *Threshold*?

You can always find past issues at

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

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.

