



The Threshold

Towson Unitarian
Universalist Church
A Welcoming Congregation

What does it mean to be a people of deep stillness?

DECEMBER 20, 2020 - 10:30 AM

REV. CLARE L PETERSBERGER; JOYCE DUNCAN, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION: *STUNNED TO STILLNESS BY BEAUTY*

The Reverend Dr. Rebecca Parker writes of how solstice is a time when “the splendor of living is revealed. Stunned to stillness by beauty we remember who we are and why we are here.” Please send me photos of beauty that is stunning you to stillness---from a sunrise to holiday lights in the darkness.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2020 - 5:00 PM (FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE)

REV. CLARE L PETERSBERGER; JOYCE DUNCAN, DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION: *JOY TO THE WORLD!*

This is not a “traditional” family service! This afternoon, you are invited to meet in the virtual space called Zoom to share your favorite holiday ornament or decoration that brings you joy! This invitation is for people of all ages! However, if you have a child who would like to share a musical piece, please let Tracy know. We may not be able to pass a literal flame, but we will share other sounds and symbols of love and joy! If you have a taper, please bring a taper to your device. We will light it as we sing Silent Night from our homes.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 24, 2020 - 7:30 PM (CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE)

REV. CLARE L PETERSBERGER: *LIFE IS SAVED BY THE SINGING OF ANGELS*

So proclaimed The Reverend Dr. Howard Thurman. On this silent night we listen for their messages and songs and give thanks for the angels among us. If you have a taper, please bring a taper to your device. We will light it as we sing Silent Night from our homes.

SERVICE INFORMATION FOR DECEMBER 20 AND DECEMBER 24 IS ON PAGE 4

YOUTH RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

UPDATE ON CHILDREN AND TEENS AT TUUC—FROM JOYCE DUNCAN, DRE

Many TUUC congregants are missing seeing our children and teens during the pandemic. The youth ministry program continues to reach out to families and support them. Children and teens still meet to share community, share moments of joy and sorrow, and further their faith development. Obviously, many things are different, especially for children, when we can't meet in person. We have dedicated adults and young adults who show up most Sunday mornings to meet virtually, using materials that thematically echo the theme of the month. These sessions have been prepared by the Soul Matters staff to work in virtual space and tweaked by me to work for the particular children here at TUUC. Sessions use videos, on-line picture books, songs, meditation and movement activities, and guided discussions.



Children from Kindergarten through 7th grade meet at 9 am on Sunday mornings for an introduction to the theme followed by a short story or demonstration, sometime provided by a guest expert. This larger group breaks into two smaller groups for the second 30-40 minutes. The younger group enjoys discussing the story, a song related to the theme, meditation, and lighting and extinguishing a chalice. They also share the art or other activity that they did at home from the packet sent out each month to support the theme. These have included making a Future Voter button, a Thanksgiving turkey with feathers sharing what they are grateful for, and a Pride banner. They have also reached out to TUUC elders by making and sending cards (see photos).



The 5th through 7th have also been a part of the 9 am meeting on Sundays. Lou Gieszl and Ellie Hughes share a bit on what their class does when they go into break out rooms:

Our group has been using classic episodes of The Simpsons as a starting point for discussing social justice, human values, spirituality, and religious principles. The "Platinum Rule" — treat people as they want to be treated — has



been a common theme in our conversations. Examples of characters who follow this rule are tough to find in the town of Springfield though. D'oh.

Those in 8th/9th grade finished up the Our Whole Lives sexuality education for middle schoolers in the early part of the fall. They celebrated with a bonfire and final celebration. They decided to meet every other week after that, outside at Cromwell Valley Park when the weather was good; virtually for discussion of Twilight zone episodes if not.

In December, this group joined with YRUU to safely stuff stockings outside for the 30 men at Earl's Place and Prospect Place, our community partners in supporting men experiencing homelessness.

YRE also sponsored walks in nature at different local parks starting in the summer and continuing into the fall.



VESPERS SERVICE

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21 FROM 7-7:30 PM

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 – 1:00 PM

Facilitator: Rev. Clare Petersberger

AGING TOGETHER

2nd Tuesday each month at 1:00 PM

Facilitator: Michael Magrogan

WOMEN'S GROUP MEETING

1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30—9:00 PM

Facilitator: Jane D'Ambrogio

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

MEN'S REFLECTION GROUP

1st & 3rd Tuesdays 7:30—9:00 PM

Facilitator: Fred Sypher

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

GREEN SANCTUARY COMMITTEE

1st Sunday each month at 12:00 PM

Facilitators: Carel Hedlund and Charlene Rossi

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.

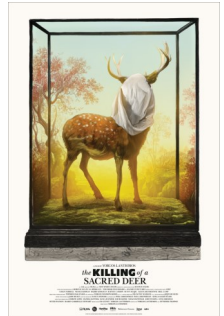


This Week—THE KILLING OF A SACRED DEER (2017)

Colin Farrell and Nicole Kidman find themselves increasingly unsettled and threatened by a young man they've taken under their wing. From the director of THE LOBSTER. (Available on Netflix. Rated R.)

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

Discussion: Sunday, December 20, 4 PM



Next Week—THE LITTLE HOURS (2017)

Life at a convent takes an unruly turn when three unconventional nuns cross paths with a handsome gardener. Based on THE DECAMERON. (Available on Netflix. Rated R.)

Trailer: <https://youtu.be/o-q5iROzPNY>

Discussion: Sunday, December 27, 4 PM



FAIR TRADE SALES - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 FROM 10 AM—NOON

Good news! You have another chance to stock up on fair trade goodies from Equal Exchange and spread some sustainable winter cheer, courtesy of the Green Sanctuary Committee.



Join us on TUUC's porch on Saturday December 19, 10am to noon. Or place an order for local delivery that weekend (see information below).

We have a selection of organic and fair-trade items including the following:

- Coffee (regular including some whole beans, and decaf)
- Tea (black, green, flavored, herbal)
- Chocolate, including bars in a variety of flavors
- Baking cocoa
- Nuts (cashews and almonds)
- Palestinian Olive Oil

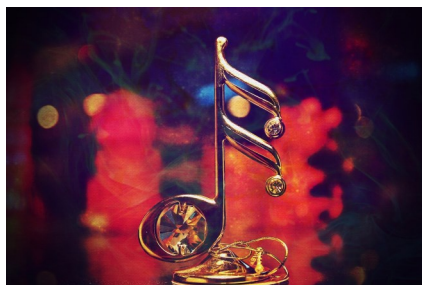
If you are unable to make it to TUUC on the morning of December 19, we are also offering local deliveries that afternoon or on December 20, for a \$5 donation.

Payment will be accepted by check, PayPal, or texting to TUUC.

Contact Samantha Saalfield (information in directory) with any questions, or to request information regarding delivery.

TUUC HOLIDAY SING-ALONG 2020—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 AT 3:00 PM

We'll have a fun time for all ages on the afternoon of Saturday, December 19th at 3:00 on Zoom! Join us to sing along with your favorite Christmas, Hanukkah, Winter and Solstice songs and carols! We'll have a variety of song leaders, some pre-recorded and some live, for you to enjoy! Put on your holiday duds, decorate the area around your device, and join your TUUC friends for some rollicking good holiday cheer! [Zoom link here!](#) Meeting ID: 864 9236 4641. Passcode: 899390



WIDENING THE CIRCLE OF CONCERN—SUNDAY, JANUARY 3 FROM 1-2:30 PM

The Commission on Institutional Change of the Unitarian Universalist Association invites us into dialogue on its comprehensive report on how to build anti-racist and multi-cultural congregations. You are invited to be part of this conversation!

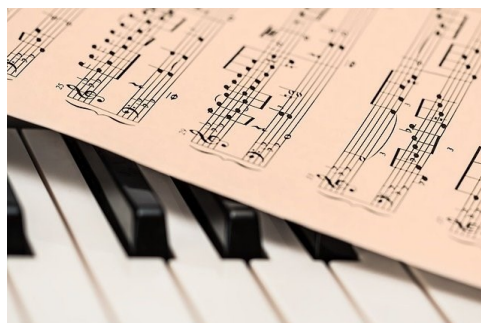
We will meet from 1:00-2:30pm on January 3 to discuss their findings on theological diversity. To prepare for this conversation, please go to <https://www.uua.org/uugovernance/committees/cic/widening>. Then, please click on the heading, "Theology." This is the chapter we will be discussing. Your thoughts are welcome and needed!



---Rev. Clare

CALLING ALL INSTRUMENTALISTS

We need musicians who play all sorts of instruments to help during December! Young or old, experienced or less so, we want to hear you play during this holiday season!! If your child plays an instrument, we'd especially love to hear them at the early Zoom event on Christmas Eve!!! But opportunities abound--for Sunday services, the holiday sing-along, and several special services during the month! Please don't keep your light "hidden under a bushel," we want to hear you!! Contact Tracy Hall at music@towsonuuc.org if you'd like to play this month.



PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE

This congregation has a history of working to support legislation to prevent gun violence in Maryland. We now have the opportunity to work with other Maryland UU congregations to ask our legislators to revisit two bills Governor Hogan vetoed that would prevent gun violence (SB708) and a bill that would require registering rifles and shotguns (SB208). Bill SB708 continued funding of the Safe Streets Initiative. Bill SB208 would have required gun merchants to register the ownership of any rifles or shotguns they sell, including those displayed in demonstrations by white supremacy groups. The Governor admits that he refused to sign both bills because the General Assembly refused to pass a number of law enforcement bills he wanted. <https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Crime-Bills-Veto.pdf>



You can find your legislators and how to contact them by typing in your address at <https://maryland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=177afa87a67746a4ac5496b2d0897fb7> and then telling them, simply: "I urge you to override Gov. Hogan's veto of SB708 and SB208." Thank you for voicing your support for legislation to prevent gun violence in Maryland. --- Rev. Clare

AMAZON SMILE QUARTERLY DONATION: \$98.20



Thank you for choosing Towson UUC as your preferred charity with [Amazon Smile](#)! Every time you use the site with TUUC listed as your preferred charity, Amazon donates a small amount (0.5%) from your purchase to our church. This quarter, TUUC made \$98.20 from Amazon Smile donations.

VIRTUAL HOLIDAY SING-ALONG!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 AT 3:00 PM

Join us to sing along with your favorite Christmas, Hanukkah, Winter and Solstice songs and carols! Put on your holiday duds, decorate the area around your device, and join your TUUC friends for some rollicking good holiday cheer! Zoom link [here](#).

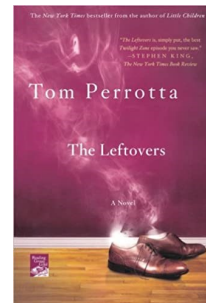


TUUC BOOK CLUB

January 6, 2021—7:30PM:

The Leftovers by Tom Perrotta (2014—384 pages)

What if—whoosh, right now, with no explanation—a number of us simply vanished? Would some of us collapse? That's what the bewildered citizens of Mapleton, who lost many of their neighbors, friends and lovers in the event known as the Sudden Departure, have to figure out. Tom Perrotta has written a startling, thought-provoking novel about love, connection and loss.



ZOOM INFO:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/94362838007>

Meeting ID: 943 6283 8007

Passcode: 662422

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

NEXT BOOK CLUB

MEETING

ON FEBRUARY 3, 2021

AT 7:30PM

The Vanishing Half
by Brit Bennett (2020)



JOIN THE TUUC CHOIR

TUUC Choir has started its first virtual choir recording project! We are beginning gently, using only audio for our first production. You can be involved, even if you are not attending rehearsals regularly. But we still have regular Thursday evening rehearsals, from 7:30 to around 8:45 on Zoom, where we discuss the recording process, rehearse pieces that we anticipate will become audio and/or video recorded projects, and check-in with one another. Please join us!

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.

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 at churchoffice@towsonuuc.org.

TUUC SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

FOOD DONATIONS TO ASSISTANCE CENTER OF TOWSON CHURCHES (ACTC)

Since we cannot make food donations in our lobby now, nonperishable food can be dropped off at these locations:

Mondays, 12 to 2 PM:

Ascension Lutheran Church parking lot (7601 York Rd.)

Thursdays, 12 to 2 PM:

Trinity Episcopal Church parking lot (120 Allegheny Ave.)

Thursdays, 5 to 6 PM:

Valley Baptist Church parking lot (1401 York Rd.)

You also may donate to Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) by sending a check payable to TUUC with ACTC in memo line, or by donating directly to their website: <http://actconline.info/>.

HOMELESS NEED WINTER GEAR

In partnership with the Surprise Shop, ACTC will be collecting blankets (including mylar emergency blankets), sleeping bags, winter coats and jackets to help keep our homeless community and neighbors in need warm this winter. If you have new or gently used items to donate, please drop them off at one of our donation locations:



Ascension Lutheran Church (7601 York Road) Mondays, 12-2 PM

Trinity Episcopal Church (120 Allegheny Avenue) Thursdays, 12-2 PM

Valley Baptist Church (1401 York Road) Thursdays 5-6 PM

Also, if you are someone you know in our service area is facing eviction or cut-off of heat or electricity, please email actc316@gmail.com. Be sure to include name, address, contact information and a summary of financial need.

POST-AUCTION SALES



Thanks to everyone who helped us celebrate TUUC's 60th Anniversary and make our *Diamond Jubilation!* Auction a big success! Some items from the 2020 TUUC Auction are still available for sale. Please check [Post-Auction Sales](#) on the TUUC Website for more information!

Social Action Holiday Giving

You are invited to experience the joy of giving this holiday season by gifting the men of Cornerstone Community Housing (Earl's Place & Prospect Place) healing from homelessness. Your generosity is greatly appreciated!



Earl's Place is a recovery-based housing program providing long-term (*up to two years*) housing and supportive services to men experiencing homelessness; 17 men at a time.

Adopt-a-Resident's Holiday Wish List

Michael C is our 80-year-old resident.

- He could also use chino pants with an elastic waist size 36 x 30.
- Socks (size medium dress or every day with non-elastic top)
- Gloves (size medium)
- Pull-on knit hat
- Calendars, toiletries, candy and cookies are always appreciated.

This year order online with/without giftwrapping; **ship to arrive prior to December 21st**.

Send directly to Michael C. Earl's Place 1400 E. Lombard Street Baltimore, MD 21231

Prospect Place is in Rosedale and serves 12 chronically homeless men.

Gift cards would be great! All types are appreciated; Amazon and Walmart are most convenient for the men. Our TUUC goal is to gift twelve \$25.00 gift cards.

Mail or email gift cards **prior to December 21st** to Sheila Helgerson Executive Director of CCH.

sheila@cchbaltimore.org Earl's Place 1400 E. Lombard St Baltimore, MD 21231

Please email sac@towsonuuc.org the item you purchased to help keep the list up to date. Thank you.

WRITING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18 AT 1:00PM

A reading and writing prompt give us the opportunity to both write and hear what others write that we might know ourselves and be known.



2021 COMMON READ, BY ANDREW HAGER, PRESIDENT-ELECT

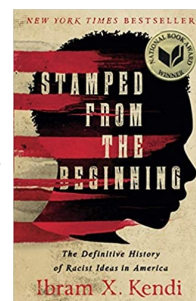


In Iceland, there is a holiday tradition where family members exchange books on Christmas Eve, then spend the night reading and eating chocolate. I find this simultaneously quaint and aspirational.

If, like me, you loved the thought of curling up with a book during the long, dark nights of late autumn and early winter, you'll likely relish the return of TUUC's Common Read. Last year, we read *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*. This year, we'll be reading a series of books about anti-racism and discussing them in the Spring as part of our ongoing education and discussion around the 8th Principle.

For February: *Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendi or *Stamped (Young Adult Adaptation)* by Jason Reynolds

Synopsis: "The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power to create dynamics that separate and silence. Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's National Book Award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel, how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited."



Meeting: Monday, 2/22/2021, 7:30-9:00 PM

For March: *Punching the Air* by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam

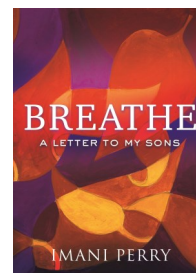
Synopsis: "From award-winning author Ibi Zoboi and prison reform activist Yusef Salaam of the Exonerated Five comes a powerful YA novel in verse about a boy who is wrongfully incarcerated."



Meeting: Monday, 3/22/2021, 7:30-9:00 PM

For April: *Breathe: A Letter to My Sons* by Imani Perry

Synopsis: "Emotionally raw and deeply reflective, Imani Perry issues an unflinching challenge to society to see Black children as deserving of humanity. She admits fear and frustration for her African American sons in a society that is increasingly racist and at times seems irredeemable. However, as a mother, feminist, writer, and intellectual, Perry offers an unfettered expression of love—finding beauty and possibility in life—and she exhorts her children and their peers to find the courage to chart their own paths and find steady footing and inspiration in Black tradition." (This is the UUA's Common Read choice for this year.)



Meeting: Monday, 4/19/2021, 7:30-9:00 PM

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 + Auction	Auction
<i>ex: text "50 Auction" to give to Auction</i>	
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>	

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TUUC

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

18 Dec	Friday	Writing as a Spiritual Practice	1:00 PM
19 Dec	Saturday	Third Saturday Work Party	9:00 AM
19 Dec	Saturday	Equal Exchange Sale	10:00 AM
19 Dec	Saturday	Virtual Holiday Sing-Along	3:00 PM
20 Dec	Sunday	Family Meetings/Classes	9:00 AM
20 Dec	Sunday	Sunday Service and Coffee Hour	10:30 AM
20 Dec	Sunday	Cabin Fever: The Killing of a Sacred Deer	4:00 PM
21 Dec	Monday	Vespers	7:00 PM
22 Dec	Tuesday	Soul Matters	7:30 PM
23 Dec	Wednesday	Sunday Service Rehearsal	6:00 PM
24 Dec	Thursday	Family Christmas Eve Service	5:00 PM
24 Dec	Thursday	Christmas Eve Service	7:30 PM
27 Dec	Sunday	Family Meetings/Classes	9:00 AM
27 Dec	Sunday	Sunday Service and Coffee Hour	10:30 AM
28 Dec	Monday	Vespers	7:00 PM
29 Dec	Tuesday	Coffee with the Minister	12:00 PM

Happy New Year! 2021

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
12/13/2020	10:30 AM	80



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 Council

Convener: Andrew Hager
Communications: Patty Barry

Staff

Youth Religious Exploration Director:
Joyce Duncan, Credentialed RE
tuucdre@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>