

The Bridge

*10:00 a.m. each Sunday: Intergenerational Devotional

*10:10 a.m. Religious Education for all ages

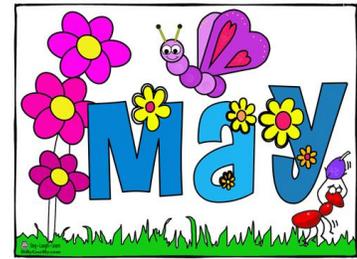
* The adults are studying the Old Testament.

May 7: "Mindfulness Matters"-Led by Lisa Stolar-According to *Psychology Today*, mindfulness is "a state of active, open attention on the present. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience." We will discuss suggested ways of being mindful and share our individual ways to keep ourselves in the present.

May 14: "Lessons from Mom"-Reverend Claudia M. Frost-*Fabulous Moms, good enough Moms, and even reluctant Moms*...all have wisdom for our lives. On this Mother's Day and Homecoming Sunday, join us for a celebration of motherhood and family as we learn, laugh, and worship together.

May 21: "Music with Jimmy"-Jimmy Merritt

May 28: "A Time to Remember"-Reverend Claudia M. Frost-Memorial Day is a time to remember those who have died during war. It is a time to express our appreciation to those who have served our country. It is right that we pause to remember the sacrifices made for our nation, our families, and our freedoms. Come...remember...be renewed in spirit.



Dates to Remember

May 11: 10:00 a.m.: Quilting at church followed by Dutch-treat lunch at Johnny's Seafood and by AUW meeting at 1:00. (Please don't forget your old holiday cards for St. Jude's)

May 14: Homecoming!: Services beginning at 11:00 a.m. followed by covered-dish lunch at noon.

May 19-21: Universalist Convocation 2017, Liberty Universalist Church, Louisville, MS

May 31: Musical Concert at 7:30 p.m. following covered-dish supper at 6:30 p.m. Music will be provided by Brandon Banks on Piano.



Claudia's Comments

Recently, our Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) has been experiencing a time of disruption and change. In response to a decision to hire a white male minister for a lead position in the Southern Region, a woman of color who was also qualified for the job was passed over for the position. This led to a protest to the UUA Board of Trustees via letters and social media (mostly by ministers and religious educators). The uproar led to the resignations of UUA President Peter Morales, Chief Operating Officer Harlan Limpert and Director of Congregation Services Scott Taylor. These leaders voluntarily resigned their positions. Soon after, Andy Burnette, whose hiring as regional lead was the source of the controversy, chose to decline the position. The regional lead position will remain open for now, but our regional staff person, Kathy McGowan, assures me that the Southern Regional team is continuing to function well and Reverend Ken Hurto is still scheduled to retire at the end of June as planned.

It has been a difficult few weeks for many people in our Unitarian Universalist denomination. However, the UUA Board of Trustees has appointed a three-person team to fulfill the UUA Presidency until the election of our new president in June. The Presidential Team includes the Reverend William Sinkford, Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Church of Portland, Oregon and former UUA President (2001-2009) who will serve as *Interim Co-President for the role of President as described in the UUA bylaws*. The Reverend Dr. Sofia Bentancourt, Assistant Professor of Theology and Ethics at Starr King School for the Ministry will serve as *Interim Co-President for the Commission for Institutional Change*. Dr. Leon Spencer, Professor Emeritus in Leadership, Technology and Human Development at the University of Southern Georgia will serve as *Interim Co-President for Constituent Outreach*. Reverend Sarah Lammert, Director of Ministry and Professional Life, has been named Acting Chief Operational Officer.

It's interesting to notice, even with so much change, there seems to be an energy and a willingness for people across our faith communities to engage and grapple with our often less visible problem of institutional racism. It's disheartening though to witness the criticism and reactivity concerning those recent events still swirling on social media. As Religious Educator Lyn Ungar says, "*racism is deeply interwoven into the fabric of our society so it's inevitable that it will rear its ugly head.*" Such work will not be easy and mistakes will be made. Creating change in systems with lengthy history where most of the time people within the system can't see the issues because behavior is so engrained can be tricky, messy, and difficult work.

With regard to the work needed for change, a call went out for ministers to change their congregational plans for the last part of April or early May. This has been designated as a time for an *Anti-Racism Teach-In*. Our church plans for May 14 (Homecoming and Mother's Day) will remain the same, but we will be engaging in our own version of Anti-Racism work during the summer. I am studying the resources provided for the "Teach-In" experience and re-reading the book *Learning to Be White* by Reverend Dr. Thandeka. I look forward to learning and growing in faith with you as we strengthen our covenantal relationships, working together for change in ourselves and our world.

With Love, Hope and Joy, Rev. Claudia