



MAY 2026

THE COMPANION

ISSUE NO. 5

CUU'S MONTHLY
NEWSLETTER

Minister's Message Grace Notes

Written by Reverend Kimberley Debus

On April 27th, the nearby Hindu Center held an interfaith event, inviting people from various local religious organizations to speak on a topic – this year it was about what happens when we die.

Because of a prior commitment, I was unable to be there in person; however, I sent along a video, and Rich Dean attended in my stead to answer any questions that came up from a Unitarian Universalist point of view. I'm told it went well – and thank you, Rich – and I thought it might be helpful to share with you what I said to the gathered. Often I talk about this around All Souls Day in early November or drop a bit of it into a memorial service, but we know our questions about the Big Questions happen all the time, so there's never a bad time to consider this one.



minister@cedarhurstuu.org

See end of article for Office Hours.

Here's what I said:

As Unitarian Universalists, we count among our core values the idea of Pluralism – that wisdom comes from many sources throughout the world, and that Love is what holds us together, however that Love is expressed. What this means is that we don't have just one idea about the afterlife.

Now our forebears, the Unitarians, and the Universalists, did have some ideas:

The Unitarians as William Ellery Channing noted in his 1809 sermon Unitarian Christianity, conceived "of heaven as a state where the love of God will be exalted into an unbounded fervor and joy; and we desire, in our pilgrimage here, to drink into the spirit of that better world."

On the Universalist side, heaven is seen similarly – a place of Glory, as Hosea Ballou would describe it. The biggest difference between early 19th century Unitarians and Universalists was the mechanisms for salvation itself, and the state of one's soul. For many on the Unitarian side, and even some Universalists, there was punishment, or at least purgatory, after death, where a soul could work out their sin issues before going to that state of everlasting purity and happiness. But for the Death and Glory crowd, heaven was instantaneous – we work out our stuff here on earth, then all souls go to heaven. No punishment, no holding pattern – just... heaven.

Modern UUs may – or may not believe these ideas. Because of our pluralism of thought and belief, I think that if you talk to a dozen UUs, you'll probably hear 15 ideas about the afterlife.

Maybe the afterlife is earth, made more real. Maybe it's where everything exists in all possible states, all at once. Maybe it's incredibly soft. Maybe it's nothing at all. Or maybe it's an incredible, indescribable love that awaits us – a love so overwhelming, even the worst person would find themselves embraced in that utter awe and wonder.

We believe there are probably as many ideas of the afterlife as there are and have been human beings – that we all have our own ideas, which we won't know are true until we are dead, if we even know.

Here is what I know most Unitarian Universalists hold in common: We see evidence of the afterlife, every single day, amongst each of us. We carry the DNA of our parents, and their parents before them, generation after generation, going back as far as time. WE are their afterlife. And all of our children and nibblings, our friends and colleagues, our lovers and companions, our helpers and healers – we are their afterlife too. And when we tell their stories, when we look at their photos, or say that thing they always used to say, or listen to their favorite song, or fill out their name on a form, or see someone who reminds us of them – they are alive. In us.

This is why we do the rituals – wash the body, hold a wake, play the bagpipes, scatter the ashes, cry at the gravesites, gaze at the picture. This is why we build memorials and monuments. This is why we honor the dead.

To give them – and us – a sense of the afterlife.

To complete the story.

Now you may not agree entirely with me, and that's okay – my personal perspective includes references to the Jodie Foster film **Contact**. At the end of the day, we do all have our own perspectives and ideas about the Big Questions. That's not only expected but welcome here. We want to wrestle with big questions, to seek out what works for us, to share with each other and help each other grow and strengthen our faith. As Quaker author Parker Palmer notes, the journey toward growth is too daunting to be made alone; it is in community where we can hear the voice of our inner teacher.

May we enjoy the journey and the questions together.

Blessings,
Rev. Kimberley

Rev. Kimberley's Hours

Rev. Kimberley is available [by appointment via Calendly link](#), and is usually available after worship when she is in the pulpit. Unless otherwise noted, she is always available by phone for emergencies, and will respond in a reasonable time frame to texts and emails for non-urgent matters.

Spirit Circles

Spirit Circles: Connecting to Our Spirits and to One Another

Spirit Circles groups will continue through June and then pick up again in September. We'll open up fall signups in August, and we hope you'll make time to fit in this time of companionship and spiritual deepening.



May - Growth

Our theme for May looks at the concept of growth: There are many kinds of growth; what springs to mind today for you? How might a congregation contribute to personal growth? What does it mean to you to grow your faith?

To accompany our exploration is our Spirit Circles packet ([download here](#)). Each packet is organized in a typical covenant group format: a chalice lighting/opening words, a check-in question, some questions to help you think about the theme, quotations, and poetry. Following that are more questions to ponder, and suggestions of other resources for further exploration. Finally, there is a chalice extinguishing to send you on your way.

Whether you dip in, use it as a focused guide, or share your insights at a Spirit Circle group, we hope you will find something that connects you to your spirit – and to others.

Sharing the Plate

On the fourth Sunday of the month we share our plate offering with partners in the larger community. Through our gifts, we can help lift up the work already being done by others.



Please plan your donations for our share the plate offerings coming up:


May 24 and June 28: [PFLAG](#)

Your donations to these worthy community partners are always welcome; while we dedicate the offering on the fourth Sundays of the month, your gifts can come in anytime. Make checks out to CUU and put the organization name and/or 'share the plate' in the memo line.



YouTube

Current Services are Loaded to YouTube Every Tuesday.

Don't forget to  **LIKE** and **SUBSCRIBE**

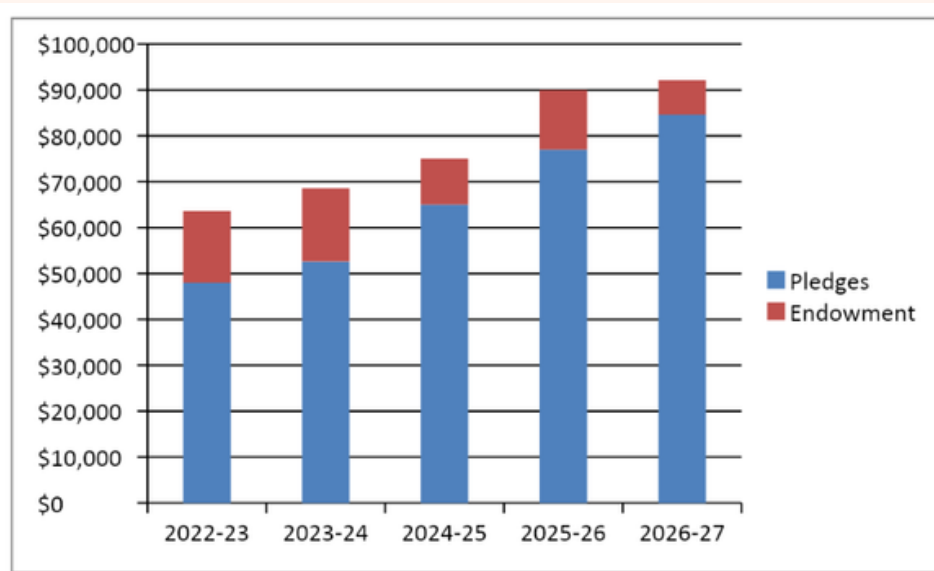
Check out CUU's new YouTube channel by following this [LINK](#)

You can find the currently available recorded sermon on the YouTube link located on CUU's website Home page!

[Home - Cedarhurst Unitarian Universalists](#)

President's Message

Written by Rich Dean



As I write this we are in the midst of our stewardship season. Most of you have been approached to give your promise/pledge to help support the CUU's operations for the upcoming church year. As shown above, we have a proposed operating budget of about \$92,000 for next year. This is a modest bump from last year with a decrease in our use of Endowment funds for operations. If you have not been contacted, please contact me or one of our Board members.



boardpresident@cedarhurstuu.org

Availability:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 4-6pm

An alternate appointment time may be made via email request.

I want to share with you a memory from the earliest days of CUU. It was the winter of 1985. We had just gathered a few people interested in a UU congregation in the area. There was a small group of perhaps 10 people willing to meet and discuss organizing a congregation. These were a mixed group of UU's who had moved here and those few who were interested in something new for their family. We had no resources, no place to meet, no minister – just a mailing list. It was January and we were meeting at the home of Jack and Stella Carton, a beautiful home deep in the woods off a long drive. The meeting went well and we were all heading back to our cars when we realized that a coating of snow had covered the ground and no one could get traction up that driveway. But together we could get one car at a time up that drive and onto the road. So we worked together, struggled for traction and accomplished what seemed an impossible task. We bonded as a group, planned for our first worship service for March, and would look back fondly at the time in Stella's driveway where we came together. We have had many more "Stella's driveway" moments here at CUU when we find impossible tasks blocking our way. You always come through, work together and make our great future possible.

I love you Cedarhurst.

Rich Dean
Board President



Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 14th at Noon



following service

- Reporting on the state of CUU
- Approving the 2026-27 Operating Budget
- Electing 3 at-large members to the CUU Board
- Electing 1 member to the Endowment Committee

We promise, it will be inspiring, informing, and short.
Light refreshments will be served.

MAY'S THEME IS GROWTH

May 3rd

Rev. Anthony Jenkins' sermon is titled "Once in a Lifetime."

Do we only live once? Do we return again to life after death? What (and where) is the afterlife? Chaplain Anthony Jenkins will lead a service exploring the connection between our personal understanding of the "hereafter" and our life experiences in the here-and-now.



May 17th

Rev. Mike Franch's sermon is titled "My Face in the Mob."

Rev. Franch offers reflection on how sometimes we are good people almost by the accident of where we lived, of our parents' views, and of various situations that molded us without our even thinking about it. He awaits to hear your reflection on this as well.

May 10th

Rev. Kimberley's sermon is called "Freedom is Coming."

Our Journey Through our Living Tradition makes one more stop at Liberation, where we will consider what grounds our calls toward equity and justice.

May 31st

Rev. Kimberley's sermon is called "A Million Stories About Love."

We will consider our journey through our theologies and shared values, and explore what this means for who we are now as we face the future.



May 24th

Rev. Pat Guthmann Haresch's sermon is titled "The Love Ethic."

These days we might all agree with the sentiment of the old Burt Bacharach song, "What the World Needs Now is Love." Rev. Pat will raise up an ethic of love or compassion that can be found in every faith tradition.

OPEN AUCTION EVENTS

Auction Event - Open Seats in May

Cindy Hirshberg's Chocolate Tasting has been rescheduled for **May 23**. There are still 6 spots left. Other May events with open spots are the Croquet Game and Lunch on May 9 and Salon and Sandwiches on May 30. You can read more about these events in the [2025 Auction Catalog](#). Please contact Linda Joy if you would like to attend.

CUU Auction Open Events

Looking for things to do this year? Here's a list of open events from the 2025 auction happening in 2026 Your contributions help support Cedarhurst's operating expenses!

AUCTION EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

Event	Date	Time	Host	Available spots	Price
Croquet Game and Lunch	5/9/2026	10:30	Beth Blevins, Cindy Hirshberg, Barb Bradley	1	\$65
Chocolate Tasting Around the World	5/23/2026	1:30	Cindy Hirshberg	6	\$50
Salon & Sandwiches	5/30/2026	2:00	Terri Ebaugh	2	\$35
Pool Party (clothing required)	6/20/2026	1:00	Linda and Dave Joy	6	\$35
Skinny-Dip Pool Party	7/11/2026	1:00	Dave and Linda Joy	7	\$35
Girls' Overnight at Georgetown	9/19/2026		Sherry Dean	3	\$50

Contact auction@cedarhurstuu.org or Linda Joy 410-790-5496 or Terri Ebaugh 443-789-2307 if you would like to attend an event!



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sign Up for Summer Lay-Led Services



It's that time of year again -
time to start thinking about summer
services!

As is our custom, we will have lay-led services during the summer,
from **June 28 - Sept 6** (with June 21 being the General Assembly
Sunday service).

There is a sign-up sheet in the building or contact Maria Warburton
to sign up or for more information! Even if you don't have a topic
yet, you can sign up to hold your spot!

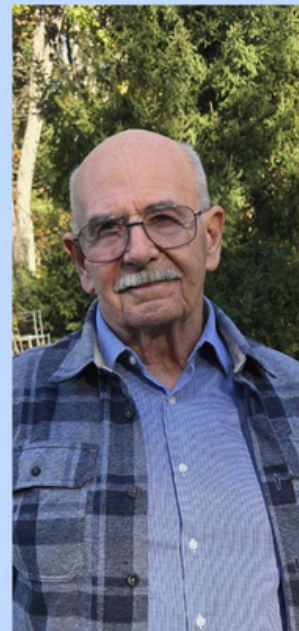


Save the Date:

Remembering Don Ebaugh

Don Ebaugh's memorial service will be on
Saturday June 13.

More details will be provided as they are
available.



CUU MEMBERS JOINING TOGETHER



Several people pooled their time and talents to restore the two antique benches located near the Memory Garden.



Baltimore Museum of Art - April 2nd Outing - We received hellos from other UU's when they saw our t-shirts. Beautiful day, delicious food, great art and fabulous friends!

Kudos to Maria Warburton for getting our group ticket!

Left side: Maria Warburton, Terri Ebaugh, Linda Prause, Cindy Hirshberg, Right: Pamela Malkin, Holly Thompson, Lisa Galuardi, Francine Hahn.



CUU VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE FOOD FOR THE HOMELESS

The Night by Night Shelter in Westminster provides a free place to stay on a Night-to-Night basis for those who are homeless. Volunteer groups provide a meal to feed the shelter residents. CUU volunteers continue to serve 45-50 homeless people on the third Friday of each month.



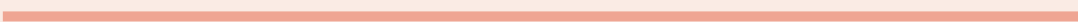
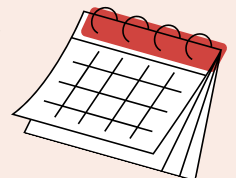
Our menu varies from breakfast-for-dinner, salads and sandwiches, and casseroles and sides. We have a team of about 10 people who provide food each month, including 4 who are friends of the church.

In April we served 60 various sandwiches, sloppy joes, pulled BBQ chicken on rolls, 6 assorted salads, fruit, yummy desserts and drinks. Whew! Lots of food!

For May we will have an assortment of casseroles, stews and sides.



Looking forward to the future, we will be joining Shepherd's Staff in Westminster to serve lunch on July 4th. Mark you calendar!



MAY SPECIAL EVENTS

DAY TRIP TO BRIGHTON DAM AZALEA GARDEN

Friday, May 1st at 10:30am

Everyone can meet at CUU at 10:30am to carpool to the garden.

We will stop for lunch at the Common Kitchen in Clarksville on the way.

Admission and parking are free.

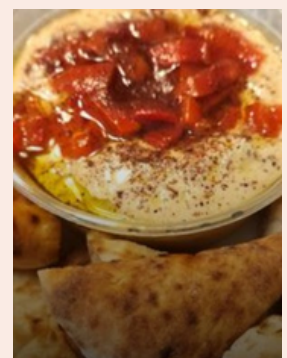


LUNCH AT OTZI MEDITERRANEAN MARKET AND EATERY

Friday, May 15th at 11:30am

This restaurant has a 4.9 rating known for Mediterranean and Italian food including wood fired pizza, shawarma and house-made pita bread and mozzarella.

The address is 20A Liberty Rd., Eldersburg 21784.
It is near the Highs at Klee Mill Rd.



MAY EVENTS

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 4th at 7:30pm on Zoom

We are always looking for activities that bring us together for fun and/or learning. If you cannot come to the meeting please stop by the Welcome Table with your ideas.

All are welcome to attend on Zoom.

Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.



CUU IN-PERSON GAME NIGHT

Friday, May 8th at 6:00 pm in-person

Our monthly game night will begin at 6pm to enjoy dinner together with each person bringing their own food and drink (no potluck). Games begin at 6:30. Please bring a game or games you love. As always, folks are welcome to just come and eat or just come to play games.

Call Beth Schilpp at 443-904-1304 with questions.



MAY EVENTS

CUU BOOK CLUB

Sunday, May 10th at noon in-person and on Zoom

The book for May is ***The One in a Million Boy*** by Monica Wood.

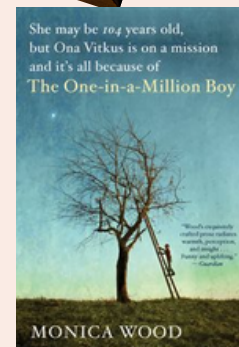
"The story of your life never starts at the beginning. Don't they teach you anything at school?"

So says 104-year-old Ona to the 11-year-old boy who's been sent to help her out every Saturday morning. As he refills the bird feeders and tidies the garden shed, Ona tells him about her long life, from first love to second chances. Soon she's confessing secrets she has kept hidden for decades.

One Saturday, the boy doesn't show up. Ona starts to think he's not so special after all, but then his father arrives on her doorstep, determined to finish his son's good deed. The boy's mother is not so far behind. Ona is set to discover that the world can surprise us at any age, and that in this story of found family, sometimes sharing a loss is the only way to find ourselves again. – Amazon

Please come and participate even if it is your first time....would love to have more people participating. Call Beth Schilpp with questions.

Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.



CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, May 12th at 5:30pm on Zoom

If you are or have been physical and/or emotional support for another person, this could be the group for you. We have no experts, just people that are willing to share their experiences.

Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.



MAY EVENTS

SPIRIT CIRCLES

Tuesday, May 12th at 7:30pm on Zoom

Spirit Circles groups offer connection, companionship, and spiritual deepening. Tuesday's group is led by Rev. Kimberley on Zoom. June will be the last session, until they resume again in September.



Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Wednesday, May 13th at 7:00 pm on Zoom

May's Board meeting will be on Zoom for all who wish to attend.

Board meetings are open to all unless otherwise noted.

Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.



NIGHT-BY-NIGHT: FOOD PROGRAM

Friday, May 15th at 6:15pm

Our food team is AMAZING! Every month we serve a hot cooked meal the third Friday of each month at the Night-by-Night Shelter in Westminster. We bring a variety of items so everyone can find something to eat. In April we served 60 various sandwiches, sloppy joes, pulled BBQ chicken on rolls, 6 assorted salads, fruit, yummy desserts and drinks. Whew! Lots of food!

For May we will provide an assortment of casseroles, stews and sides.

Contact Pamela Malkin at 443-487-1299 for more details.



MAY EVENTS

SPIRIT CIRCLES

Monday, May 18th at 10:00am in-person

Spirit Circles groups offer connection, companionship, and spiritual deepening. Monday's group is led by Becky Zimmerman at Cedarhurst. Becky's group will continue throughout the summer.



SPIRIT CIRCLES

Thursday, May 21st at 7:30pm on Zoom

Spirit Circles groups offer connection, companionship, and spiritual deepening. Thursday's group is led by Beth Schilpp on Zoom. June will be the last session, until they resume again in September.



Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, May 27th at 7:30pm on Zoom

Interested in helping to create the Sunday worship services? Then this is the committee for you! All are welcome.

Follow Zoom link on CUU website Calendar to join.





CONTACT

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President: Rich Dean BoardPresident@cedarhurstuu.org

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David Pittman d.s.pittman@verizon.net

Lydia Dundon lmillike42@gmail.com

Minister: Reverend Kimberley Debus minister@cedarhurstuu.org

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Outreach Coordinator: Nalina White Outreach@cedarhurstuu.org

Header and calendar photos by Mark Pollitt

CEDARHURST UU

MAY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 10:30am Trip to Brighton Dam Azalea Garden	2
3 10:30am Sunday Service	4 7:30pm Congregational Life Committee Mtg.	5	6	7	8 6:00pm In-Person Game Night	9
10 10:30am Sunday Service 12 pm Book Club	11	12 5:30 pm Caregivers Support Group 7:30pm Spirit Circles on Zoom	13 7pm Board of Trustees Mtg	14	15 11:30am Lunch at Otzi Mediterranean Market and Eatery 6:15pm Night-by-Night Shelter Dinner	16
17 10:30am Sunday Service	18 10:30am Spirit Circles in-person	19	20	21 7:30pm Spirit Circles on Zoom	22	23
24 10:30am Sunday Service	25	26	27	28	29 7:00pm Drinks and Dessert	30
31 10:30am Sunday Service	NOTES:					