

September 2020 Old Ship Newsletter

Visit our Website

Worship in September

We will be gathering virtually for worship once again beginning Sunday, September 13 – streaming from the Meeting House, where we now have WiFi. Our musical prelude will begin at 10:25. It will be very good to be together again, if only virtually. Watch each week's "Weekly Update" and "Sunday Reminders" and the Old Ship website for details about linking in to the service. (We've been live-streaming on YouTube up until now, as you know, but might be switching to Zoom – we will let you know in plenty of time, including details about how to access the service.) Each Sunday's service will be followed by a Zoom coffee hour for conversation and community. We'll be sending fresh links for the service and coffee hour this week. And... watch for updates about one or more outdoor services as long as the weather holds.

Sunday, September 13

Our annual Homecoming Service and Water Communion... virtually. Ken's message will be "More Important than Ever" – community that is. In this divisive time, we need one another for strength, comfort, and inspiration – and because we know there are many things we can only accomplish when we work together.

As for our annual "Water Communion" – during the service we'll invite everyone to write in the live chat where your water came from (or from what exotic place in your dreams you would have brought water), symbolizing our re-gathering in community.

Sunday, September 20

Ken's message will be "For Such a Time as This." Unitarian Universalist principles call us to sustained reflection on our values and beliefs; but we don't stop there. Our principles also call us to live from our values and beliefs, striving to bring more justice, peace, and ecological sustainability to this world we share. These days, that means everything from challenging systemic racism, healing our democracy, and meeting the climate crisis. We can't do everything – but we are called to do what we can. What can we do here and now?

Sunday, September 27

Ken's message will be "Spirituality for These Times." Do our spiritual lives need to be any different from any other time? Or is just more important than ever to seek deep spiritual grounding in the midst of challenges from personal to global?

from the minister's desk

Musing

We approach our not-as-usual Homecoming Service on Sunday, September 13. You are no doubt not surprised to know that we will once again be gathering virtually rather than in person. The virtual part makes me sad, but the gathering part pleases me deeply. I really look forward to "seeing" you soon, if only on a screen. For the good news is that, however imperfectly, 21st century technology has enabled us to maintain connections as a community in spite of the need to physically distance. In this regard, I think we've done pretty well at Old Ship with our Zoom gatherings for groups, classes, and meetings... even though undeniably something, in fact much, is missing: To begin with of course, the hugs and handshakes that come (or used to come) with actually being in the same room; yet also the sorts of casual conversations that a Zoom class or meeting doesn't naturally encourage. For example, I love teaching a class or leading a group in the parlor, whether with three or thirty-three. I am enriched, as I hope others are, by the give and take about some topic or a poem or ancient text. But at the same time I miss the conversations I have with one or two or three of you as we gather and later as the class disperses; and I miss the energy in the room as group members are chatting with each other before and after a class. These casual (seemingly casual) conversations, lovely in themselves, are among the things that strengthen and deepen our connections in community; and they can't be easily replaced – though I do intend this year to start any groups I'm leading a little early, and to let groups end at their own pace to leave a little more room for "casual" conversation. With all this in mind, as we continue for some yet to be determined time to meet virtually, I encourage us all to make extra efforts to have those sorts of "seemingly casual" conversations: Make a call to an old friend, or to someone you'd like to get to know a little better, or to continue a conversation with someone who began on-screen. Maybe arrange a socially distanced walk or outdoor chat if you're comfortable with that.

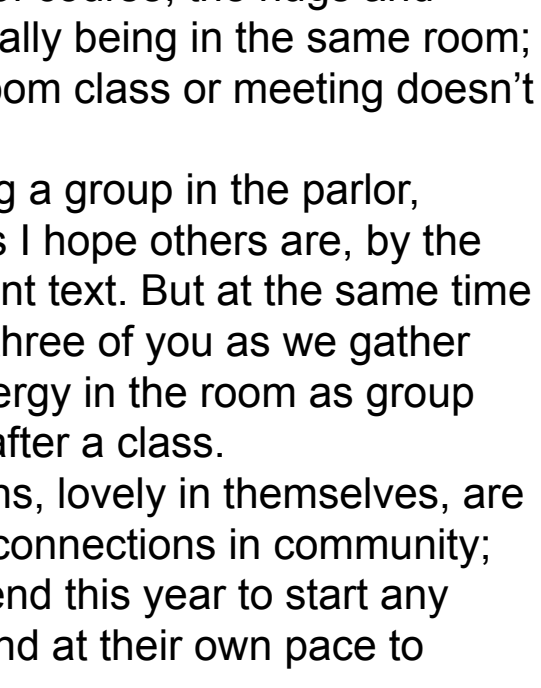
It seems to me that during these tumultuous times community, spiritual community in particular, is more important than ever. A strong Old Ship community can not only enrich each of our lives, but can help us together to address the issues that press upon us all: systemic racism, the climate crisis, inequality in all of its forms, and the threats to the health of our democracy.

Together may we continue to sustain and deepen this treasure we call the community of Old Ship.

See you soon, one way or another... with all good wishes to you and your dear ones.

Peace and blessings,
Ken
oldshipkrb@gmail.com
cell: 781-635-2060

p.s. – The virtual Boston Marathon (yes, that's a real thing!) takes place between September 5 and September 14. I'm signed up, and I plan to run a course I've mapped out in Hingham early on Monday, September 7 – continuing for five days for the Alzheimer's Association, as I have since 2013 in memory of my mother and with many others – including many of your dear ones – in my mind and heart. (If you'd like to contribute, you can find my fundraising site right here.)



MUSIC NOTES

Dear Old Ship Members, I hope you have all had a relaxing summer! I spent much of my time outside enjoying the warm weather and my vegetable garden, going for walks with my dog, and reading some wonderful books. I'm looking forward to the new church year, and I know our flexibility and enduring spirit will carry us through inevitable twists and turns. Stay tuned this fall for wonderful music from our vocal soloists and other guest musicians. Happily, since we now have the capability to stream live services from the Meeting House, we can all once again hear the beautiful sounds of the Old Ship organ and piano. I sincerely look forward to sharing and creating music with you all, whether it's on a screen, in person, or somewhere in between!

Musically Yours,
Christopher
cnickelsonmann@gmail.com

EDUCATING MINDS AND HEARTS

Welcoming Chloé Briedé: Interim DRE (and Office Administrator)

Some of you have already been getting to know Chloé in her role as half-time interim DRE. But many of you may not have learned that we have also hired Chloé as half-time administrative assistant. She brings a wide range of skills, experience, and energy to both positions, as she also continues her preparation for Unitarian Universalist parish ministry. With everyone's support and understanding, Chloé will navigate boundaries between her two Old Ship roles. (Chloé will be physically in the office in her administrative role from 10-4, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday each week. These would be the times to contact her as administrator, via the office phone and email: 781-749-1679; office@oldshipchurch.org.)

Please offer Chloé (whose newsletter column is below) a warm welcome when you have a chance to "meet" her in either of her roles – whether on the phone, through email, on a screen, or perhaps even in person... at a distance. We are fortunate to have her with us for this coming year!

—Ken Read-Brown

Greetings from RE!

My name is Chloé Briedé and I am the Interim Director of Religious Education and Parish Administrative Assistant. I am excited to be at Old Ship. As you may know, I am a candidate for UU ministry, and I will be seeing the Ministerial Fellowship Committee the first weekend in October. I currently live in Brighton near Boston College with my partner, Divya, and our rat terrier mix, Dobby. My partner is studying for a PhD in Economics at BC. I love being outside, and I can be found at parks around New England hiking and camping. Spiritually, I am an agnostic with a deep interest in Buddhism.

This past month I have been working hard to get to know the Old Ship RE program. Beverly did great work at Old Ship and left the church a stable, energetic program. I have enjoyed getting to know the youth group and the members of the Children's Religious Education Committee. Everyone I have met has shared important insights with me. I also visited with the ladies from the Women's Breakfast and met folks at the Zoom Coffee Hour.

In August, I finished the Unitarian Universalist Association's Professional Interim Training. Over the next month, an Interim RE Team will form. Their mission will be to work with me to consider the history, present, and future of the Old Ship RE program. If you are interested in this work or have insight on the history of the program, I would love to hear from you!

The Interim RE Team will work through the following developmental tasks of an interim period:

1. **Coming to Terms with History**- What is the history of RE at Old Ship? What does our history tell us?
2. **Evolving a Unique Religious Education Program Identity**- What makes Old Ship's RE program special? How does it relate to the larger Old Ship community?
3. **Leadership Changes During the Interim Period**- How should the program be staffed? How do we engage new leaders and volunteers in the program?
4. **Renewing Associational Linkages**- How can we continue to connect with the wider UU community?
5. **Commitment to Future Program Vitality**- What will the program look like going forward? How can we sustain and grow the program?

This fall we will continue to have our **Sunday Mornings with Debbie (grades K-4)** and the **Youth Group (grades 9-12)**. OWL will resume meeting this fall. If you are an OWL, please watch for emails from Debbie Squires-Lee. **Grades 5-8** stay tuned for more information. On **Friday, September 25**, we will have our annual **Bingo Night!** More information on Bingo and other RE happenings will be emailed to parents.

Finally, please reach out! In this virtual environment, it is hard to meet everyone. I would love to meet every member of this community as we work together to craft the future of RE.

Blessings,
Chloé Briedé
cbriede@gmail.com

Sunday Morning for Young Kids – begins at 9:30 a.m. Sunday mornings continue with Debbie Squires-Lee! We will light a virtual chalice, read books, play games, and be together. Email Debbie for the Zoom link: dsquireslee@gmail.com.

Life Learning on Zoom!

Upcoming class:

Climate Change Solutions

four sessions, Wednesdays, September 23 – October 14, 7:00 p.m. led by Lisa Sawyer and Ken Read-Brown In the midst of the pandemic and a contentious election season, the climate crisis doesn't go away – it continues to accelerate. We'll use the book *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming* (ed. by Paul Hawken) and the web site (www.drawdown.org) based on the book to explore the wealth of strategies and solutions to address climate change, including energy use, agricultural practices, land use, building efficiency, and more. To sign up and get the Zoom link, contact Ken (oldshipkrb@gmail.com).

New Book Group:

Anti-Racism Book Group – Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m., monthly – first session September 20 Through fiction and non-fiction we will explore this history and reality of racism in America and how to better advocate for an more diverse, anti-racist future. The first two books, for September and October, will be *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi (fiction) and *How To Be An Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi (non-fiction). To attend this book group and get the Zoom link, or if you have questions or comments, let Davalene Cooper know at 781-749-0790. davalenecooper@verizon.net

Ongoing groups and gatherings:

Bodhisattva Study Group – Gathers each Sunday morning at 8:30 a.m. On the first and third Sundays, Ken Read-Brown leads us in a twenty minute meditation, then we read aloud this year from Welcoming the Unwelcome by the American Buddhist teacher Pema Chodron, then we talk, concluding by 9:45. The other weeks will include meditation and conversation facilitated by members of the group. All are welcome. For questions and for the Zoom links, email Ken Read-Brown (oldshipkrb@gmail.com).

Men's Breakfast – Gathers on the second Sunday morning of each month at 8:30 a.m. for sharing and conversation. The next gathering will be September 13. Contact Ralph Brown (ralph.a.brown@gmail.com) or Rich Elliott (richelliott55@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.

Women's Breakfast and Conversation – In September, we return to our usual schedule of meeting on the fourth Sunday morning of each month. We will meet on September 27 from 9 a.m. -10:15 a.m. Open to all the women of the church. If you would like to attend, send an email to Janice McPhillips at jbmcp@phila@gmail.com and she will send you the Zoom invitation. We gather to share our lives and enjoy one another's company. Conversations are confidential and, again, all are welcome!

Conversations with Ken – This is the successor to "Tea with the Minister" and is held on Zoom every Tuesday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. All are welcome for "conversation about things that matter" and sometimes lighter fare too (which we all need!). Some weeks there will be a suggested topic, and some weeks we'll just see where the conversation goes. Questions? Email Ken Read-Brown (oldshipkrb@gmail.com). The Zoom link for September is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8272670175?bisp>

Sacred Texts Meditation Group – Gathers on the second and fourth Thursday of each month at 4:00 p.m. We sit for about ten minutes meditation, then read a chapter from the Tao Te Ching, then we talk, concluding at about 5:15. All are welcome. For the Zoom link, email Ken Read-Brown (oldshipkrb@gmail.com).

Celidht - Our next monthly song/poem circle will be gathering on Zoom Tuesday evening, October at 7:00 p.m. Email Ken for the Zoom link if you'd like to attend: oldshipkrb@gmail.com.

Stay tuned for additional Life Learning opportunities for 2020-2019! Life Learning programs will most likely be on Zoom, but our Life Learning Committee hopes our offerings will be as rich as always. We intend to have a full schedule to share with you by the end of the summer.

If you have ideas for upcoming classes or workshops, please contact a member of the committee: Ralph Brown, Rich Elliott, Claire Petrie, Elizabeth Torrey, Ken Read-Brown

Among Us

Patience Gardner is recovering at home after hospitalization for a serious infection (not Covid). We send prayers and good wishes for quick and complete healing.

If you would like to submit an article for "Among Us" send it to office@oldshipchurch.com

Wreaths for Merrie Market

We don't know what form our Merrie Market holiday fair will take this year, but we are hoping to have a wreath sale in any case. With that in mind, here's a request from our wreath makers:

As you are strolling the forest, you'll see that pine cones abound. The wreath makers at Old Ship will carry on from the garage in November. Please gather pine cones and pods of any kind – things that will dry well – and pretty shells, large ones too. You will have to store them in your garage as the PH is not accessible, but please collect for us. Thanks, the wreath-makers

SERVING OTHERS

Social Justice Council News

The Social Justice Council (SJC) met recently to discuss how best to serve Old Ship during this time of pandemic and social distancing. We decided we would use the Old Ship Newsletter and Constant Contact to inform the congregation of opportunities to engage in helping those most in need during this challenging time. We also will use the Social Action Alert Network to inform Old Shippers of opportunities to engage in advocacy on behalf of those persons or those issues. Finally, we will continue our "special plate collections" in a somewhat different format for as long as we are meeting online and not in person.

Another issue we discussed is our focus for social justice work at Old Ship. In the past decade we have identified a specific focus for our work for a three-year time period. Last spring would have been the time to discuss whether we continue the focus on protecting and serving vulnerable populations since it was our third year with that specific focus. As you may recall, our first focus was on access to education and our second focus was on those experiencing homelessness and hunger. We like the broader focus of as it permits us flexibility in responding to issues that arise. For example, given the recent ascendancy of racial justice issues, we provided support for the UUA's Reconstruction class this summer and we are sponsoring an antiracism book group this year at Old Ship.

However, we have come to realize that the specific naming of our work is a bit off the mark. The populations experiencing social injustice are not themselves vulnerable people. They are strong and resilient! And it is not our role to protect them, but to work with them in creating a more just and equitable world. We are beginning the conversation as to what our focus should be for the next three years and how we name it. We would like to engage the congregation in this conversation, and we are planning for a Zoom forum sometime this fall to discuss these matters.

Until then, here are updates about our current projects and plans for this year:

Father Bill's Cooking Teams: Our Old Ship Cooking Teams have continued to provide meals for Father Bill's in Quincy throughout the pandemic. Due to social distancing and occupancy rules, Father Bill's is serving fewer people, but our cooking teams continue to cook the same amount of food as before, which allows for another meal to be available at the shelter. Thanks to all who cook and deliver these meals to Father Bill's.

Hingham Food Pantry: As you may recall, each year we have held a food drive at Anticipating a September food drive. We realize that a food drive is not feasible with the current need to wear masks and social distancing—and we imagine it is better for everyone's safety to support the Food Pantry in other ways at the present time. For those of you who shop at Stop and Shop in Hingham, there is a collection bin for the Hingham Food Pantry and you can always purchase items for the food pantry and drop them off in the collection box. The food pantry is most in need of the following foods: beef stew, gallon bottles of juices, 24+ oz jars of pasta sauces (marinara or meat), non-saltine crackers, and hearty soups. Finally, the SJC is planning to designate the Hingham Food Pantry as our recipient of our October special plate collection. Money donations are always welcome and in fact, the food pantry can buy \$3 worth of food for every \$1 donated. More information about the process of our October special plate will be in the next newsletter.

Anti-Racism "Drop-In" Book Group Starting in September: Would you like to learn more about how to be an anti-racist activist? Learn more about how our society, our world, is structured around white supremacy? Learn more about our racist American history? Learn how we could advocate for a more diverse future? And one that is safer for all people, but especially for persons of color. This fall, we will begin a monthly "drop-in" book group at Old Ship (via Zoom) that will explore these questions, and many others. The group will alternate between fictional and non-fictional works, written primarily, if not exclusively, by persons of color. The first two books are *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi (fiction) and *How To Be An Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi (non-fiction). We will discuss *Homegoing* at our September meeting and *How To Be An Antiracist* at our October meeting. After these first two meetings, participants will choose the books we will read. Since this is a "drop-in" group, you may decide to read and discuss some books and not others. If you would like to join this book group, contact Davalene Cooper at davalenecooper@verizon.net 781-749-0790. The first meeting will be on Sunday, September 20, at 7 p.m.

UU the Vote: The UUA has launched a new initiative for the 2020 elections. The "UU the Vote" webpage and resources can be found at <https://www.uua.org/libertyelectionreform>. We will be sending out action alerts and other information related to this campaign as appropriate.

Old Ship Social Justice Action Alert Network: Sign up for the Old Ship Social Justice Action Alert Network to find out about specific advocacy opportunities such as letter writing, advocacy calls, participating in educational/advocacy events with local legislators, send your email address to Davalene Cooper, Keeper of the List, at davalenecooper@verizon.net. Also, if you have an action alert to share, contact Davalene Cooper and she will send it out, as long as it meets our criteria. (If it doesn't, she will discuss it with you.)

Ways to Help During the Pandemic:

During this pandemic, SJC invites you to continue to Serve Others and protect vulnerable populations by helping in any of the following ways. Updates will be posted on the Old Ship website.

Hingham Food Pantry: The Hingham Food Pantry is accepting unexpired, non-perishable and unopened food donations on the following dates:
o Mondays, September 14 and 28, and October 12 and 26 from 2:30 to 4 p.m.
o Wednesdays, September 25 and 30, October 14 and 28 from 12:30 to 2 p.m.

o The food pantry is most in need of the following foods: beef stew, gallon bottles of juices, 24+ oz jars of pasta sauces (marinara or meat), non-saltine crackers, and hearty soups.
o Donations can be left in the carts outside the pantry (behind 2nd Parish) during the above times. Alternatively, you can order donations online via Instacart.com. Any such orders should be sent to Brooke Bartletta (note the "t" in Bartletta), 52 Fearing Road, Hingham, MA 02043.

o Donations may be dropped off at the collection box at the Hingham Food Pantry with a check.
o Monetary donations are also always welcome. Checks may be made out and mailed to: Hingham Food Pantry, 685 Main Street, Hingham, MA 02043 or Vernio@BrookeBartletta (note the "t" in Bartletta) with a note of Hingham Food Pantry in the "What's It For" section. Brooke will provide Hingham Food Pantry with a check.

o The Hingham Food Pantry would like to offer help to any local family who may need assistance during this difficult time. Please help get the word out that should anyone need help, please call the Pantry at 781-740-8100.

The **Weymouth Food Pantry** is accepting monetary donations to allow purchases of the foods needed at this time when their usual supply of rescued foods from grocery stores is severely reduced. <https://www.weymouthfoodpantry.org/donation-page>

Wellspring in Hull is open, masked required. For hours and kitchen information regarding donations to the thrift store or the furniture annex, go to <https://wellspringmultiservice.org/>. Additionally, Aunt Dot's Kitchen, the Wellspring food pantry continues to need extra help. They need non-perishable foods, as well as fresh produce. Gift cards to supermarkets and monetary donations are especially helpful and greatly appreciated. To donate, go to <https://wellspringmultiservice.org/donate>

Medical Care for the Homeless: Boston Health Care for the Homeless provides health care to the homeless. They continue to care for the homeless during the COVID crisis. To learn more about their work or to donate, go to <https://www.bhchp.org/>.

Cradles to Crayons in Boston has established an Emergency Essentials Fund to help its community partners meet urgent needs for new diapers, school and art supplies, hygiene items and other essentials for children. The Emergency Essentials Fund will allow them to leverage their logistics expertise and bulk purchasing power and serve thousands of families in need. For more information or to donate online, go to <https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston/>.

UUMM (UU Urban Ministry) needs funds to continue to meet the needs of the women and youth they serve. Donations can be made on their web page at <http://www.uuum.org/>.

Important parish house use reminder

Our weekday renter of the Fellowship Hall is "Launch" – a state-funded program whose mission is "to empower and encourage determination for individuals with disabilities by accessing work and social opportunities in a truly community-based setting." Launch is a source of very helpful income for us, but just as importantly we are pleased to be able to support their good work.

So, please remember that the Fellowship Hall is exclusively for the use of Launch – do not walk through or enter for any reason on any day (even weekends). This is more important than ever during the time of Covid-19, to help ensure the safety and health of Launch clients and staff. Thank you!