



Old Ship August Update

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September newsletter deadline: August 28
Send items to Ken: oldshipkrb@gmail.com

*f*rom the minister's desk

Musing

The book that our Bodhisattva Study Group will be reading beginning in October is *Welcoming the Unwelcome* by the American Buddhist teacher Pema Chodron.

What?! We're meant to welcome the pandemic? Welcome racism? Welcome climate change? Welcome personal misfortune and loss?

Well, I have barely opened the book, but I know enough about Buddhism and the teachings of Pema Chodron to know this: By "welcome" she does not mean that we should pretend that whatever difficulty we're facing or experiencing is actually okay. Rather, the sort of "welcome" she is talking about has to do with accepting that this (whatever it is) is the situation we are facing – so that we can then more effectively choose how to deal with whatever it is.

For example, I don't much like that we have not been able to gather for worship in the Meeting House or that we haven't been able to sit in a circle for a class or conversation in the Parlor or that we haven't been able to share coffee hour or a meal in the Fellowship Hall. I don't like this at all!

But it doesn't help to just sit around not liking it... because here we are. Just as here we are in the pandemic more generally, here we are with racial inequities laid bare, here we are in the midst of the accelerating climate crisis. So now what do we do? Well, it seems to me that the subtitle of Pema Chodron's book suggests, in general terms, our way forward: "Wholehearted Living in a Brokenhearted World."

You've heard me affirm that a broken heart is an open heart – if we allow it to be. So... with wholehearted open hearts we have been finding ways to maintain and even deepen our Old Ship connections and friendships; with open hearts we can rise to the challenges of systemic racism and the climate crisis; with open hearts we can vote and support candidates who are more likely to seek to meet our nation's needs, including sustaining our democracy; with open hearts we can live kinder lives one with another; with open hearts we can meet each day, each person, each situation.

May it be so.

I'm about to begin my August vacation time. But you will continue to be in my thoughts and prayers. In an emergency I can still be reached – please don't hesitate.

As I've been saying each Sunday:

Be well... be safe...

take care of yourself... take care of each other...

take care of everyone... as best we can.

Peace and blessings,
Ken



Sundays in August

We're taking a break from our YouTube live-streamed worship services – but all the live-streams since March 15 still available: Click on the link we've been using these past few months to be brought to our Old Ship YouTube page: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI1bHW_M6G6P56F16XcvFdA

And we can worship virtually at other UU congregations. There's a list with links at the New England Region UU web site (<https://www.uua.org/new-england>) – just scroll down a little bit on their home page.

Zoom Coffee Hours

Though our summer services have ended, our great conversations can continue! There will still be Zoom Coffee Hour chats from August 2 through Labor Day, kindly hosted by Karen Churchill while Ken is on vacation. We will get together at 11:00 on Zoom, as we have been doing, for visiting each other and chatting about whatever. Here is the Zoom link, which will be the same link for all these Coffee Hours. Everyone is invited:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85184380703>

If you have trouble with the link you can contact Karen:
781-812-5518
xplasticfishx@yahoo.com

Bodhisattva Study Group – Will continue to gather every Sunday morning from 8:30 – 9:30: meditation for about twenty minutes, reading aloud, then conversation. All are welcome. Weekly readings will be provided in the Zoom invitation. From now through Labor Day, the group will be hosted and facilitated by Catherine Mayes, Laurie Sprague, and Kitty Ward. Newcomers are always welcome; no experience with Buddhism or meditation is required. Email catherinesmayes@aol.com for the Zoom link for these summer gatherings.

Men's Breakfast – Gathers on the *second Sunday* morning of each month at 8:30 for sharing and conversation. So the next gathering will be August 9. Contact Ralph Brown (ralph.e.brown@gmail.com) or Rich Elliott (richelliott56@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.

Women's Breakfast and Conversation – Will meet on August 9 and 23 from 9-10:15 a.m. Open to all the women of the church. If you would like to attend, send an email to Davalene Cooper at davalenecooper@verizon.net 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!

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

And one *not* Sunday: Friday Afternoon Youth Zoom - Gathers every week at 4:30 p.m. We do a check-in... We share stuff we did during the week... We make plans and discuss current events... We are in the midst of figuring out a summer2020 social justice project.... We play games... We come up with new ideas every week...please join us. Email Maureen Butler for the zoom link (maureen.butler@neurorestorative.com).

Homecoming Service September 13

It won't be the same as in past years, since for the health and safety of everyone we will still be worshiping on-line – but it will still be very good to be back together! So... we will resume our live-streamed services via YouTube on Sept. 13 – and we hope to be able to offer the service from the Meeting House! (*Our Tech Team is working hard to get good WiFi into the Meeting House by then. If you'd like to be part of the Tech Team for worship, email Janet Asnes: asnes@comcast.net*)

As for our annual **Water Communion** : Our Zoom Coffee Hour on September 13 will give us each the opportunity to virtually share some water from someplace we've been – or wish we'd been! (*The Zoom link will be shared in our September newsletter.*)

Welcome our Interim DRE!

We are delighted to be welcoming Chloë Briedé as our Interim Director of Religious Education, beginning on August 1. Chloë brings a broad and long background and a wealth of skills to this position. A long-time Unitarian Universalist, she is a candidate for UU ministry, a recent graduate of Harvard Divinity School, and has just completed her ministerial internship at First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Arlington, MA, which currently has the largest religious education program in New England. Prior to entering her studies for ministry, her experience included working for the Red Cross supervising disaster responses, and working summers as a manager at a UU camp (the Mountain Retreat and Learning Center in North Carolina), which included coordinating a program for teens engaged in volunteer work and creating camp schedules and programming – including workshops for campers from between ages five and eighteen.

We look forward to getting to know Chloë as she begins her work with us, which will include not only leading our religious education program, but also helping our congregation to reflect on the past, present, and future of religious education at Old Ship.

Ways to help during these days of pandemic and the rising for racial justice:

Our Social Justice Council invites us to serve others and protect vulnerable populations by helping in any of a variety of ways which they've posted on our Old Ship web site. Go to www.oldshipchurch.org and scroll to the bottom of our homepage.

Reminder

At least through Labor Day, and perhaps beyond, the Fellowship Hall, kitchen, and downstairs bathrooms in the Parish House are completely off-limits to all but Launch program students and staff. This is to enable Launch, this state-funded program that rents from us five days a week, to follow mandated COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines - for the safety of everyone. Thank you for your understanding.