

THE ORACLE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF MEADVILLE
346 Chestnut Street Meadville, PA 16335
(814)-724-4023
WWW.uumeadville.org

JANUARY 2021

The Six Sources of Unitarian Universalism

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic people which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Join us for our weekly online worship service, religious education and social hour Sundays at 10:30 am.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Our **COVENANT** is to be a loving, joyful community that nurtures spiritual growth, promotes compassion, social responsibility, and service in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

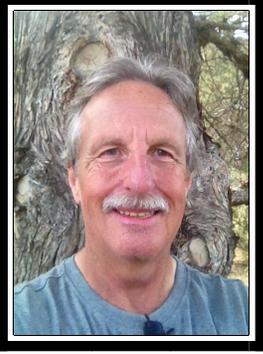
Our **MISSION** is to be a faith community devoted to love and respect, reason and justice.



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MINISTER'S MUSINGS AMONG THE MOUNTAINS



By the time you read this, 2020 and all its drama will be in the rearview mirror. It's tempting to say 'good riddance' after a year of isolation, pandemic, election, and violent storms along with wildfires.

Perhaps there are some positives as well from 2020.

People have adapted to new conditions thanks to covid. Months of isolation, teaching children at home while managing one or more jobs that require ample wi-fi, grocery and restaurant delivery. All these changes forced us to abandon vacations, visiting family, and much more. Zoom and other digital media forced many of us out of our comfort zones.

Most of us adapted. Masks were a natural remedy for covid prevention but we saw how many of our fellow citizens worried about personal liberty and keeping businesses open. We all had choices: risk covid without masks or make masks a normal item of clothing when we go out. Those choices speak to how we live together as a people.

Covid reminded us how important community can be. It's especially true for all those who couldn't stay at home – first responders, clerks in stores, transit drivers, people working construction, medical teams, and all those who picked produce in fields for our meals. Imagine all of them gone. We owe them all a debt not only of gratitude but also fair living wages.

2020 kept many of us home and watching the news. The murder of George Floyd and many other Black people – known and unknown – was right in front of our eyes and ears. The nationwide protests by Black Lives Matter and many allies showed us that our population isn't passive and lethargic. The vote in November was the largest (percentage wise) since the Presidential Election of 1908.

The storms and fires of 2020 forced us to begin facing the climate crisis rather than kicking it down the road for the next generations.

Generation Theory is controversial but the predictions of Howe and Strauss have come true. They predicted a major world crisis sometime between 2010 and 2020. They believed that we collectively would be forced to abandon our rugged individualism for the sake of our neighbor, our grocery clerk, our first responders and many others. Young people would step up to find ways to resolve the crises upon us.

Is that true? Too soon to tell but there are encouraging signs that social activism and facing injustice head on are pushing American culture into new directions. White supremacy is also controversial but many of us who are White are having our eyes and ears opened to the reality of America as a White culture. We are learning that racial reckoning is a long, messy process. If we want America to not only survive but to succeed, we must move beyond philosophy and aspiration to make this country an America for everyone.

2020 also taught us how important touch can be. A simple thing like a hug or shaking hands will feel strange when we can do that again. Seeing an elderly relative through a glass window cannot substitute for touching and embracing.

Nonetheless, the holidays are upon us. The rituals of Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, the Solstice, and New Years will have special significance this year as we move toward light, warmth, vaccinations and whatever a new normal will be.

Someone in the checkout line at a local grocers told me recently that they planned to have double the fun, food, and festival of the holidays this coming year to make up for 2020. Sounds like a reasonable plan to me.

There's much more we have learned this year. What do you think you learned?

Debra in Oregon and I both wish you happy, safe, and healthy holidays. May we ride the waves of change to reach the farther shore of health and wisdom.

Alex

ACTION ITEMS: DECEMBER 9, 2020 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

- Deb Lehman will continue to look for someone to fill the Outreach position on the Board of Directors.
- The Board approved the annual staff bonuses and noted the exceptional work being done by the staff in these challenging times.

WORSHIP MATTERS – JANUARY 2021

JANUARY 3, 2021

"“Imagine Your Best Self” - Karen Schreiber Mason and Aimee Reash

As the new year begins, let us imagine our best selves, who we want to be, how to get there, and how to sustain it.



JANUARY 10, 2021

"Imagine a Great Turning"- Rev. Alex Holt

This morning, we will consider whether we collectively are entering a new era in human understanding. It is based in part on Karen Armstrong's theory of Axial Ages.

JANUARY 17, 2021

"Can You Hear Me?"- Rev. Alex Holt

The Civil Rights movement has evolved into its new generation led by Ibram X Kandi and so many others. Can we truly hear them and learn?



JANUARY 24, 2021

TBA Please check the B&B Weekly Newsletter for more information.

JANUARY 31, 2021

"The Power of Poetry: People Presenting Poems"- Rev. Alex Holt

This service will offer up the gifts of poetry and what it teaches us as a spiritual practice.



ADULT RE CLASS

Calling all those interested in improving community relations and working toward social justice.

Join us in a community workshop and dialogue based on Ibram X. Kendi's* book *How to be an Antiracist*. Celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. and take part in Black History Month in February. Gain the knowledge, the tools and the ways to personally and publicly engage in antiracist work.

Dates: Sunday, January 17 12 noon to 1:30, January 31,
February 14, February 28 and continuing on.

All sessions online with Zoom. All are welcome but we urge participants to join us regularly if possible.

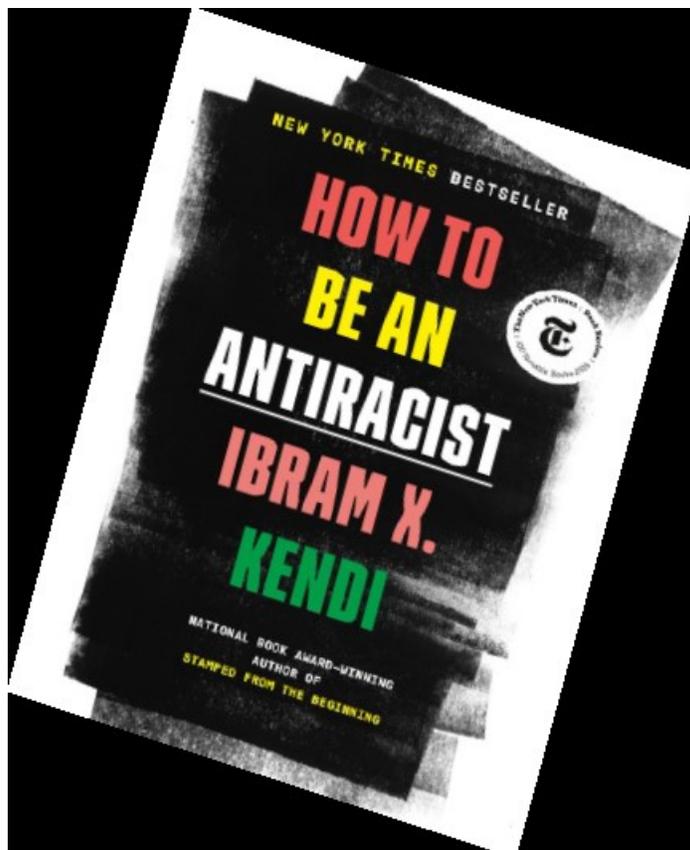
A YouTube video to watch before the class : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doHhMjudb3c>

*IBRAM X. KENDI is one of America's foremost historians and leading antiracist voices. He is a National Book Award-winning and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author. Kendi is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities and the Founding Director of the [Boston University Center for Antiracist Research](#)

Interested people should sign up in advance by contacting the church office.

Phone: 814-724-4023

Email: church@uumeadville.org



FAITH IN ACTION

SOUP KITCHEN

Every second Friday each month a group of UU volunteers serve meals at the Meadville Area Soup kitchen as a way to help alleviate some of the symptoms of poverty in our region. You are welcome to volunteer. Our congregation's contact is Marty Thaeler, mthaeler@zoominternet.net 14-807-1480



BIG BROTHERS AND BIG SISTERS (affiliated with Family Services of NW PA)

Is looking for mentors to help with their program. For more information, contact the office or check out the poster in the Parish House. For more information visit <http://www.fsnwpa.org/our-services/parent-education/big-brothers-big-sisters-program/>

WHY WE SHARE: JANUARY'S SHARE-THE-PLATE

RECIPIENT: MEADVILLE SOUP KITCHEN

The soup kitchen was founded in 1982 when the former Avtex and Talon industrial plants began shutting down operations. As jobs disappeared, the United Way of Western Crawford County and the Meadville Ministerium decided the soup kitchen was needed.



JANUARY SAVE THE DATE



SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

Thursdays at 7:30 am

SOUP KITCHEN

Friday 8th at 10:00 am

WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

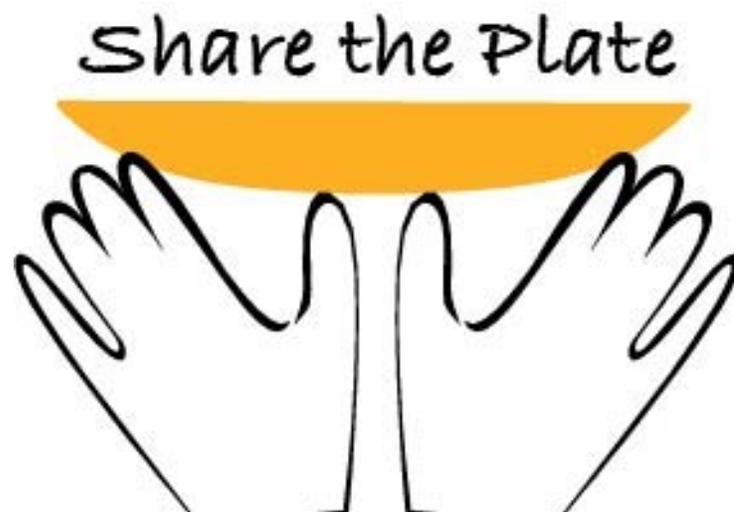
Tuesday 12th at 11:00 am

RE CLASS

Sundays 17th & 31st 12:00-1:30 pm

ORACLE SUBMISSIONS DEADLINE

Monday 25th by 9:00 am



RESOURCES

UU-seful Web Links
UU Church of Meadville:
www.uumeadville.org

Oracle: www.uumeadville.org/Oracles

UUA: www.uua.org

UU Service Committee: www.uusc.org

Ohio-Meadville District:
www.ohiomeadville.org

RIDES TO SERVICE

If you need a ride to any event or to Sunday's worship service, please call the church office by 9:00 am on Fridays and leave a message (814-724-4023)

Amazon Associates Shop

Remember that our church is a member of the Support us when you shop at amazon. smile.amazon.com/ch/25-1322866 and Amazon donates.



2021 Church Officers

President: Rick Holmgren
(richard.holmgren@allegheny.edu)

Vice-President: Deb Lehman
(deblehman51@gmail.com)

Stewardship: Josh Searle-White
(jsearle@allegheny.edu)

Clerk: Jane Anderson
(jane.anderson811@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Mike Baker
(Rmbaker1@windstream.net)

Coordinator of Out Reach Teams:
TBD

Coordinator of Mission Teams:
Karen Schreiber Mason
(karen.schreiber1@gmail.com)

Church Staff

Minister

Rev. Alex Holt
revalexholt@gmail.com or
(814)- 724-4023 Ext. 302

Music Director: Aimee Reash
(areash@allegheny.edu)

Office Administrator: Jodi Sipos
(church@uumeadville.org or
(814)724-4023)
Monday-Friday: 8:00 AM – 2PM