

MAY 2024

MONTHLY MUSINGS FROM UUMFE

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Overview

This month, we finish our series on eco-virtues as described in [Religious Naturalism](#). On page 202 of Sacred Depths of Nature, Ursula Goodenough says that eco-justice (or fair mindedness) entails seeking and advocating just and sustainable environmental configurations, the goal being a planet wherein human cultural ecosystems cohabitate with planetary ecosystems in ways that preserve and restore the integrity and dignity of both.

As Unitarian Universalists, we honor the worth and dignity of all life. In our work for climate justice, simply reducing emissions is not enough; we need to prioritize those most impacted by climate disruption and systemic oppression while creating communities of care to ensure that everyone thrives in a changing climate.

You can find past issues of Monthly Musings on [our website](#). And this [Google folder](#) is where you can find them in Google Doc and PDF formats.

We provide these resources at no charge! Would you consider a donation to sustain our ongoing work? Donate [here](#). Learn about sharing your congregation's offering plate [here](#).

May 2024 Justice



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
MINISTRY FOR EARTH

Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.

Service and Sermon Prompts

To prepare:

- [Use this tool](#) to explore your local area and the communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate disruption. Start with your zip code. Then click to zoom in. Then notice the categories on the right and the respective percentiles of risk.
- [Read this article](#) about how environmental justice is a civil rights issue.
- And [this article](#) about the five ways the Environmental Justice for All Act will empower frontline communities and help remedy decades of environmental injustices.

Reflection:

Tell a story about yourself or others in your local community who are most impacted by climate disruption AND systemic oppression. Share the facts about how simply reducing emissions is not enough; we need to prioritize those most impacted by climate disruption and systemic oppression while creating communities of care to ensure that everyone thrives in a changing climate. (Use the research on environmental justice as a civil rights issue.)

Instead of jumping right to action, think about the following:

- Start with the question: “What is the world we want?” rather than “What is a win that is possible and realistic?”
- What networks and communities of practice can we as a congregation create to help us connect and strengthen webs of care? How could those spaces deepen into both an understanding of conditions and of future possibility? How could they help us deepen our faith?
 - Consider the [UUA Side with Love’s Green Sanctuary Community Meetings](#).
 - And...join UUs from across the country for the [UU Climate Revival September 28 and 29, 2024](#).

Chalice Lighting

[A Spark of Hope](#) - by [Melanie Davis](#)

If ever there were a time for a candle in the darkness, this would be it.
Using a spark of hope, kindle the flame of love, ignite the light of peace, and feed the flame of justice.

Opening Words

Prayer for Living in Tension by Joseph M Cherry from *Voices from the Margins*

If we have any hope of transforming the world and changing ourselves, we must be bold enough to step into our discomfort, brave enough to be clumsy there, loving enough to forgive ourselves and others. May we, as a people of faith, be granted the strength to be so bold, so brave, and so loving.



Reading

Carolyn Wayne White, a religious naturalist scholar, says, “Religious naturalism and environmental justice advocates share a general maxim: harm done to any one sector of natural processes, inclusive of human organisms, is harm done to all.” She also says, “During this time of rampant species endangerment, global climate change, and looming ecological crisis, African American religious naturalism evokes a moral imagination that emphasizes our willing participation in movements of scientific inquiry, movements of cultural expression, movements for global distributive justice, movements to eliminate needless suffering, and movements to preserve the ecology of our home planet. This model of African American religiosity shares with the #MeToo movement and the Black Lives Matter movement an uncompromising demand that all lives be viewed and treated as intrinsically valuable life forms.”

Meditation

Meditation on Hope and Love in a Time of Struggle - Alice Anacheka-Nasemann

In a world so filled with brokenness and sorrow
It would be easy to lose ourselves in never ending grief,
To be choked by our outrage
To be paralyzed by the enormity of suffering,
To feel our hearts squeeze tight with hopelessness.
Instead, this morning let us simply breathe together as we hold our hearts open.
Breathing in as our hearts fill with compassion
Breathing out as we pray for healing in our world & in our lives.
Breathing in, opening ourselves to the transforming power of love
Breathing out as we pray for peace in our world & in our lives.
Breathing in as we hold hope in our hearts
Breathing out as we pray for justice in our world & in our lives.
May we know our strength
May we be filled with courage
May our love flow from us into this world.
Breathing in, we are the prayer
Breathing out, we are the healing
Breathing in, we are the love
Breathing out, we are the peace
Breathing in, we are the hope
Breathing out, we are the justice
May we know our strength
May we be filled with courage
May our love flow from us into this world.
Amen, blessed be, may it ever be so.

Music

#1018 Come and Go With Me
#1074 Turn the World Around

Closing Words

Let us leave here today as a people of faith
bold enough to step into our discomfort,
brave enough to be clumsy there,
loving enough to forgive ourselves and others.

Small Group Ministry Resources

As a group, use [this tool](#) to explore your local area and the communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate disruption. Start with your zip code. Then click to zoom in. Then notice the categories on the right and the respective percentiles of risk.

[Read this article](#) about how environmental justice is a civil rights issue.

And [this article](#) about the five ways the Environmental Justice for All Act will empower frontline communities and help remedy decades of environmental injustices.

For discussion, start with the question: “What is the world we want?” rather than “What is a win that is possible and realistic?”

What networks and communities of practice can we create here to help us connect and strengthen webs of care? How could those spaces deepen into both an understanding of conditions and of future possibility? How could they deepen our faith? Could this small group become a space to imagine a future? How? Consider the [UUA Side with Love’s Green Sanctuary Community Meetings](#).

Action you can take: [UUs for Social Justice on the Environmental Justice for All Act](#).

[More resources here on the UU Ministry for Earth website](#).

Work with your congregation to participate in the [UU Climate Revival](#) September 28 and 29, 2024.

