

From: tcjlm@aol.com
Sent: Monday, January 06, 2020 11:29 AM
To: m_mcdonald@charter.net
Subject: Fwd: Benzie UU programs: Where I think we've been and where we might be going, weather permitting!

Can you include this in our packet just for information. Lots of good things going on with our Benzie folks

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Catherine Green <seecgreen@gmail.com>
Date: January 5, 2020 at 10:39:46 PM EST
To: Judy Myers <tcjlm@aol.com>
Subject: Re: Benzie UU programs: Where I think we've been and where we might be going, weather permitting!

Sure.

On Sun, Jan 5, 2020, 4:54 PM Judy Myers <tcjlm@aol.com> wrote:
can I share this with the Board?

Judy

-----Original Message-----

From: Catherine Green <seecgreen@gmail.com>
To: Judy Myers <tcjlm@aol.com>
Sent: Sun, Jan 5, 2020 3:53 pm
Subject: Re: Benzie UU programs: Where I think we've been and where we might be going, weather permitting!

Thanks Judy!! Hugs and kisses to you! Your support in this helps me out a lot.

On Sun, Jan 5, 2020, 8:47 AM <tcjlm@aol.com> wrote:
Wow!!! You Go Girl. Beautiful!!!!

Sent from my iPhone

> On Jan 4, 2020, at 6:10 PM, Catherine Green <seecgreen@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> Hello Benzie UUs and Friends,

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> It's a funny time of year for us, isn't it? Some of us have left for, possibly, easier climes. Two of our "prime time" programs have had to be postponed due to bad roads, and even when the weather isn't keeping us in, it can be nice to stay cozy at home.

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> I realize that along with reminding you about our programs of earlier in the year, as well as what's scheduled for the upcoming programs, I want to make two pleas. First, I know you are tough Northern Michiganders, but stay safe, and don't come to programs if you are seriously worried about the roads. And call someone for a ride, if you want to. You could call me. 231-499-7276. But the second plea is

this, consider making Benzie UU and our programs, priority. (Let's get to know each other, find joy in each others company, and see what we want to do together.) So please and please.

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> My thinking has evolved in the course of scheduling programs for us. Partly because I've attended Rev. Cathy's services at UUCGT, but largely, I am getting to know us better, I think. There were nine of us at the New Years Day brunch at PapaJs the other day, and as we were leaving, someone said, "Its fun getting to know other UUs". I think that's so right, and so fun!

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> I wish we'd had a "prime time" service something like one Rick and Jan Robb suggested, a "This I Believe" service, so we could really get to know each other more deeply. Anyway, we will, I hope, if the group wants to. I'd like it if we were to cultivate this thinking and talking about what we believe, as individuals and as a group. What are our commonalities and what are our differences? But now, to review where we've been together so far.

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> We began with Dodie trying to lift us out of despair and anguish by suggesting the cultivation of joy. We might consider this to be spiritual practice, and we might complicate that practice or not. We would do well to remember her formulation: intentional noticing, staying present, labeling the event (maybe with some whimsy), elevating its significance, celebrate and share it with others.

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> Reverend Dr. Cathy Harrington beautifully complicated our discussion of joy by preaching on the giving and receiving of gifts. It was so important to me to think about the kindness, generosity, and joy of receiving, as well as of giving. So the joy and pleasure of receiving the gift of human touch when one is suffering . . . The joy of being in the presence of human compassion, in the worst of times, is just as much joy as a butterfly on your nose in easier moments? Well. Who's measuring? How much weight does one syllable of joy hold? But, maybe our suffering shapes our joy. And maybe we might experiment with seeing and receiving gifts where they find us?

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> Oh course, we had our wonderful conversation between Laurie and Rosemary about Rosemary's life-her indomitable zest and embrace of life's challenges. Also, George offered a song and we said good bye to Bev Toomey.

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> Misty brought us the Mary Oliver service, collaborating with Amanda Mangiardi and Mary McValen from UUCGT. Here I was struck by how attentive our group was and how we all together made the occasion beautiful.

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> Kathy Ross discussed Engaged Buddhism and the "Ecosatva". So Kathy is moving us toward activism. But at the same time as we work in the world, we cultivate spiritual practice, meditation, to understand ourselves and our connection to, or place in, the world. Where are we triggered? Where are our biases? Where are we curious and how do we cultivate openness? How can we hear an "other"? Where do we find peace?

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> Of course, Barb brought us together in these terrifying times with her wonderful comforting and stimulating exploration of Winter Solstice. George Granlund helped powerfully with the beautiful music.

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> So a number of us have made these substantial offerings of time, energy, imagination. They've given of themselves. It's a big deal. Then there are the people who make things work. Marty, Laurie, Misty, Jan Howe, Val, Bruce, Pat Sharp. Always Ann and Barb. And the people who have been the backbone for years. This really pretty much adds up to all of us one way or the other. So again. This is a big deal. What we are doing here. I'll say more about that in my next email. But for now, on to what we have in store for these dark evenings to come.

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> Happily, we have been able to reschedule Josh and Annie, for our next program, Jan 15. Carla Gipson will speak briefly as well. This program is largely about building community, and Grow Benzie. I wonder if, or how we Benzie UUs might fit in. Do we have a role to play in community building? I think so. What do you think? We might have some interesting questions for Josh and Annie, maybe?

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> February 5, we've got Loghan Call. Loghan was associated with Grow Benzie, and is now doing important work on sustainability, and also bringing people together to talk, over dinner, and sometimes across differences. He is also working at building community. What clues might he have for how we might work to build community?

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- > February 19, our Val will discuss personality types and how we can understand them for the purpose of enhancing communication. How do we speak and hear each other across our differences?
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- > March 4, Rev. Cathy will return and talk about what we need to hear.
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- > March 18, Carla Gipson will speak to us.
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- > Apr 1, Bob and Mary bring us the long awaited Marcelo Betti, of Justice for Our Neighbors. Hopefully this will Not be the night Winter decides to show up!
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- > April 15, Misty speaks about Hindu Tantrism. It's not what you think, but enjoy your thoughts!
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- > May 6, will probably be the Women Making a Scene, or a Women's Service of some kind. There is interest, but the concept is in process .
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- > May 20, is intentionally open for annual meeting, maybe conversation, and general celebration of our having survived!
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- > I'll be sending a couple of other emails soon. But what I'm trying to get at here is something like, we've got something going on. Maybe what we've got going on is important. I think in these days, in this time, it's important that we are Unitarian Universalists. It's important what we believe!
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- > Among some materials, given to me by Jan Robb, I found the following.
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- > "It Matters What We Believe" by Sophia Lyon Fahs
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- > Some beliefs are like walled gardens. They encourage exclusiveness, and the feeling of being especially privileged.
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- > Other beliefs are expansive and lead the way into wider and deeper sympathies.
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- > Some beliefs are like shadows, clouding children's days with fears of unknown calamities.
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- > Other beliefs are like sunshine, blessing children with the warmth of happiness.
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- > Some beliefs are divisive, separating the saved from the unsaved, friends from enemies.
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- > Other beliefs are bonds in a world community, where sincere differences beautify the pattern.
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- > Some beliefs are like blinders, shutting off the power to choose one's own direction.
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- > Other beliefs are like gateways opening wide vistas for exploration.
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- > Some beliefs weaken a person's selfhood. They blight the growth of resourcefulness.
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- > Other beliefs nurture self-confidence and enrich the feeling of personal worth.
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- > Some beliefs are rigid, like the body of death, impotent in a changing world.
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- > Other beliefs are pliable, like the young sapling, ever growing with the upward thrust of life.

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