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Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock

APRIL SERVICES

The month of April brings worship services that engage us deeply in heart and mind. First, on April 7, we'll have a service the Worship Arts Team will lead a service to celebrate the total solar eclipse. Fox Durham will speak about how the eclipse can invite us to seek balance in the joys and sorrows of our lives, using the Tarot as a contemplative tool. On the 14th, Rev. Paul will give us a nuanced look at capitalism, and on the 21st, he will examine Fausto Sozzini's sophisticated Unitarian view of Jesus as fully and only human. And finally, on the 28th, we'll celebrate our annual Flower Communion with an inter-generational service co-led by Rev. Paul and our youth. Be sure to bring flowers that day to share for the communion—we will also have extras so that everyone leaves with a flower.

As we enter Spring, a time of so much natural beauty here in Arkansas, the Worship Arts Team invites you to consider this poem by e.e. cummings. No matter whether your word is God or Nature or Spirit or Love, these words capture a feeling a gratitude for our natural world that is profound:

*i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural which is infinite which is yes*

*(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)*

SUNDAYS IN APRIL

Join us for Sunday Worship at 11:00am

SERVICES

- April 7** "Darkness and Light - Interpreting the Eclipse Through the Tarot"
Fox Durham
- April 14** "Dimensions of Capitalism"
Rev. Paul Beedle
- April 21** "Sozzini's Jesus"
Rev. Paul Beedle
- April 28** Flower Communion
Youth Sunday

FORUM 10:00 AM

- April 7** "How I Became a UU"
David McCullough
- April 14** 2nd Sunday
- April 21** "Conversation on Strengthening Congregational and Personal Safety" — Sherman James and Phil Peters, Health and Safety Committee
- April 28** "What's on Your Mind?"
Rudy Rieple

*how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?*

*(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)*

OUR MISSION: We strive to build a beloved community through shared worship, responsible spiritual freedom, exploration and reverence. We are a Welcoming Congregation, embracing our interconnectedness, engaging with principles in our community, and working to transform our world and ourselves.





REFLECTIONS — REV. PAUL BEEDLE

“THE WHITEWASH OF THE DISMAL SCIENCE”

You might know that economics has a nickname: *the dismal science*. At college in the early 1980s, I learned that this was because economics is a science that tells us things that are true that we wish were false. The poster child for this explanation was Thomas Malthus, author of *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, who asserted that population increase drives down wages and produces poverty.

What you might not know is that this account is a whitewash. Malthus, named England’s first professor of political economy in 1805 (teaching nearly 30 years at the East India Company College until his death in 1834), *did* write that essay, published anonymously in 1798 and with his name attached in five subsequent editions (1803, 1806, 1807, 1816, and 1826) *and* a condensed edition (1830). But it only indirectly inspired the nickname, coined much later – in 1849 – by Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle.

Carlyle was inveighing against a particular assumption of the dismal science: that people were basically all the same. Many political economists, notably John Stuart Mill (author of *On Liberty*), opposed the institution of slavery: if people are all basically the same, then all equally deserve liberty. Carlyle was among those who supported slavery in England’s Caribbean colonies to ensure that their nonwhite labor force remained productive.

In an *ad hominem* attack on Mill and other anti-slavery economists, Carlyle wrote: “Not a ‘gay science,’* I should say, like some we have heard of; no, a dreary, desolate, and indeed quite abject and distressing one; what we might call, by way of eminence, the dismal science.” (*Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question*).

Well, perhaps the nickname arose because economics told *Carlyle* something he wished were false.

Even so, that we have changed the narrative of its origin as we have presents another example of how racism leads us from truth unto “truthiness.” It’s important that the stories we tell ourselves are true. The nickname was a defense of racism, not a reaction to Malthus.

Better all of us more alike than unlike; and better all of us more like Mill than Carlyle.

Rev. Paul Beedle

**The ‘gay science’ that Carlyle had heard of was not that of Nietzsche, published some 33 years later; the term was commonly used in the mid-19th century to refer to the art of the troubadours.*

GRATITUDES

For 22 years, I have traveled to a retreat center in California (or to a Zoom room, in the dark days of the pandemic) for the annual meeting of the Malibu Study Group, a UU ministers’ study group of at most 12 members (membership by invitation). The group’s name commemorates that it



(Continued on page 2)

CHOCTAW CRAWDADS FUNDRAISER CONCERT

It's been a while since the Crawdads have staged a fundraiser concert and they invite you to a Fundraiser for UUCLR's Baby Grand Piano Fund. They are planning a "variety show" with members of the Crawdads and friends.

They will remember their founder, Mr. Joe Meehan, and share stories about the Crawdads over the years! They encourage you to **SAVE THE DATE** of **Saturday, May 4 from 6 to 8 pm**, and join us for fellowship, fun, old-time and contemporary folk music.

APRIL GROUNDS WORK DAY

Mark **April 20** on your calendars for a churchwide grounds work-day. It's time to replant, mulch, and start some additional cleanup in our beloved backyard.



The more help we have, the more we can get done and the more beautiful our grounds will look. We will start at 8:00, but come when you can. If the weather is bad, we'll reschedule. Refreshments will be provided. Questions? Contact Joanne Kriehn at (501) 580-4523.

Gratitudes (Continued from Page 1)

began meeting in 1990 at the Serra Retreat Center in Malibu, CA, the former Rindge estate (home of the family who made Malibu tile). We changed our venue some years ago to St. Dorothy's Rest, about 20 minutes west of Santa Rosa. This group was a source of inspiration and collegial support for me as a new minister, and has remained so. Also, whether it took only a local drive or a plane trip to get there, the natural beauty of California has contributed to the renewal of spirit the retreat affords.

Rev. Paul

TREASURER WANTED

Nell Mathews, Financial Officer, is looking for a treasurer to replace outgoing Chris Abbeduto, who is moving. Job duties include receiving all checks and cash for deposit into Bank OZK, logging all contributions against donor names, recording pledges, the church database, and uploading data from Vanco into Breeze. Familiarity with online banking is a must. Time requirements are about 2 hours every week. If this is something you think you could do, please contact Nell at uucrnell@gmail.com or call her at (501)5 63-6734.

UUCLR IS CELEBRATING!

What: Fellowship Event

When: Saturday, April 13, 6 PM

Where: Thomson Hall in the Mehta Wing

RSVP: Send an RSVP to uucrl@uucrl.org, sign up on the church web site, or in the main foyer.

This event celebrates calling Rev. Paul Beedle to be our settled minister and the end of the 2024-25 pledge drive. Dinner is being provided by Catering to You and entertainment is by Parkstone, a group playing an eclectic range of mountain, Irish, and American songs.

It is essential that you RSVP so we may provide caterers with numbers.



Fellowship Meal

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to Members and Friends!

Margaret McLellan.... 1	Lisa Brents..... 16
Valerie McNea 3	Stephanie Judkins... 21
James Scribner..... 4	Cindie Alwood..... 24
Gabriel Watson 8	April Ambrose..... 27
Rose Govar..... 10	Joanne Kriehn 27
Andrew Kessel 13	Teresa Knight 28
Vicky Kessel 13	Greg Barr 29
William Goolsby 14	

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

Fresh Fruit and Veggies Very Popular at Pantry

For the past six months, the food pantry has benefitted from a grant from Pulaski County that allowed us to purchase meat or other protein and fresh vegetables and fruit. We were awarded \$12,000 in October and a second \$12,000 tranche in February.

The plan is to spend every cent by the final report due on April 29. The money has been greatly appreciated because it let us buy meat when the Arkansas Foodbank had nothing. Meat has been the most popular item in the weekly bags we hand out. A close second is bananas. Often the people will peel and eat one of the bananas immediately.

The grant money is from the American Recovery Act, which Judge Barry Hyde believed would be best used in improving nutrition in elderly and marginalized individuals. Sadly, this source is not going to continue to be available but Judge Hyde wants to find ways to some sort of support as a part of the county budget.

Edwards Food Giant grocery store has been supporting the Pantry by selling us fresh fruit and vegetables at a discount. Every Monday, the produce manager gets a card from us with the weekly food order. Then on Friday, one of the pantry volunteers shows up at 7:30am to collect the boxes of bananas, oranges, onions, and tomatoes.

A capacity building grant of \$500 was awarded by the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. This money was spent on purchase of shopping bags that are thick enough so that they don't tear when loaded with canned goods. This is a great help to the 'walkers,' the community members who have no cars. They come with bicycles, old strollers, and wagons.



YOUNG AT HEART LUNCHEON

Tuesday, April 9 at 11:45am

is our next Young at Heart gathering. Join us for a delicious lunch (\$8 suggested donation) and visiting.

After lunch, we will be treated to a program on Jan Bowen's recent journey to Iceland! For most of us, this will include new views along with a well-planned narrative.

Of course all members and friends are invited to come ready to enjoy lunch at 11:45. If you can, please come earlier and/or stay after to set up or clean up. We always appreciate help. We look forward to a lovely event! We hope you'll be there.

Selma Blackburn, Coordinator

BABY SHOWER APRIL 15

New members Dylan and Ginny Ashcraft are expecting a baby girl due April 28. Her name will be Olive Ruth.



Sue McDonald and Valerie

Pearsall are hosting a shower for Olive on Saturday, **April 13, at 1:00pm**, in the Pehrson Room at the church. The Ashcrafts are listed on babylist.com. Olive's nursery is decorated in green, and they will be using disposable diapers. Please plan to come to celebrate!

Food Pantry (cont.)

Whenever there is an announcement of grants for food pantries, Nell Matthews will submit a proposal. Unlike National Institutes of Health grants that she helped write during her working career, food grants are relatively easy to apply for and frequently fully funded.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are in the midst of a busy church season, and it is amazing to see the energy and excitement each day as we build deeper relationships within our congregation and in our community at large. In the last few days of March, we had a wonderful dinner with our friends at the AR Culture and Dialog Center to break their Ramadan fast, and our CUUPS group celebrated the Spring Equinox with beautiful decorations and scrumptious spring foods. We are gearing up for our annual Fellowship Dinner on **April 13 at 6:00pm** (please RSVP when you get the invitation!!), and continuing our annual pledge drive (please turn in your pledge form if you haven't – all gifts of any size are honored and welcome).

We are creating our budget for the next church year, focusing on the priorities you identified at our town halls, including Religious Education, welcoming new families, and working for social justice in our community and our world, just to name a few. You have all shown up and spoken up, and we are moving forward with our goals! As one member said to me this week, “there are so many wonderful opportunities at this church, it's hard to decide which to attend!”

I also want to take the time this month to focus on our commitment to the 8th Principle. The church voted to affirm the 8th Principle at our annual meeting in June 2022, and the board voted to create an 8th Principle ad hoc committee at the end of September 2022. The committee has done an excellent job of creating opportunities for our congregation to begin to identify the racism in ourselves and in our society and work to change our behaviors. The goal is to “build a diverse multi-cultural Beloved Community” and to “accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.” This vitally important work will take time and effort. Please take advantage of these opportunities to learn and consider joining Margot's Dismantling Racism classes (when the next group begins) or take part in the quarterly Quests or come to the 8th Principle movie screenings and discussions. You might also feel called to join the 8th Principle committee, and we would welcome more hands and voices. This is life-changing work, and it will take all of us sharing the load and encouraging each other. Thank you for your commitment to changing our world.

With love and gratitude,
Laurie Smith Prud'homme, Board President

MARCH BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Following approval of the minutes, we heard reports from Rev Paul, Finance Committee, Program Council, Executive Committee, Health & Safety, 8th Principle, and the Outdoor Spaces Committee.

In old business, Nell reported on the annual pledge drive and we reviewed the current draft of the 2024/25 budget. We discussed the Fellowship Dinner on April 13th to celebrate the conclusion of the pledge drive and calling Rev. Paul as our settled minister.

In new business, we discussed opportunities to collaborate with the members of the Queer Collective, such as educational events or OWL trainings.

The next board meeting will be **Thursday, April 18th, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.** We will return to our usual meeting date of the third Tuesday of each month for the May board meeting on the 21st.

Respectfully submitted, Laurie Smith Prud'homme, Board President

BOOK EXCHANGE & RECYCLING

APRIL 7

We collect the following for recycling: Used/outdated electronics (computers, copiers, DVD players, paper shredders, printers, TVs, VCRs, phones, stereos, radios, fax machines, and microwave ovens); dead batteries—AA, AAA, C, D, 9 volt (no rechargeables); selected light bulbs containing mercury (CFLs/4-foot fluorescent tubes). We will have a list of “green stations” and other glass collection sites on the Recycle table. Look for our table in the north end of Thomson Hall in the Mehta Wing.

Bring your books and current magazines to the Mehta Wing/Thomson Hall to share. You do not have to bring a book to take a book.

Please be aware that there are recycling bins at the Coffee Bar and a paper recycling bin by the office. Our team members are responsible for emptying these on a regular basis.

FAITH IN ACTION OPPORTUNITIES

2nd Sunday Share the Plate

We choose a worthy non-profit organization and donate our 2nd Sunday Share the Plate collection for the month. To make suggestions as to future recipients, contact Dylan Ashcraft at ashcraftjd@gmail.com.

Stephens Elementary School Food Pantry

Every Friday at 8:30am our Pantry Team picks up food from the Arkansas FoodBank and distributes it to school families at the school. Contact Nell Matthews at uclrnell@gmail.com

Potluck Food Rescue

Our new outreach is the Potluck Food Rescue in NLR. There are 3-4 UUCLR volunteers that either pick up from restaurants or sort and clean veggies on a weekly basis. Questions? Contact Sue McDonald at sue6696@gmail.com.

The Van

Members volunteer at The Van warehouse in SW Little Rock to sort donations. The Van is a grassroots non-profit that helps those without shelter. Contact Cas Rifkin at casrifkin12@gmail.com.

Our House Monthly Meal

Volunteers cook, deliver and serve a monthly meal at the Our House shelter. Contact Kevin Jones at kmjones1231@sbcglobal.net

Can Recycling at the Church

Bring your aluminum cans on Sundays for recycling (just cans!). Lance Scott picks them up and makes \$\$\$ that he donates to the church. He also finds cans all over town that he saves and sells. **Put them in the new deck box** behind the arbor in plastic bags, please! Paper bags get wet and disintegrate. Thank you, Lance, for your Faith in Action!



UUCLR Volunteers at The Van

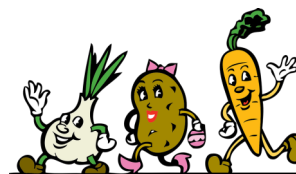
FELLOWSHIP TEAM VOLUNTEERS

Your Fellowship Team is looking for a few more members. We throw a few parties/gatherings each year as well as handle the food and drink needs of other church events. Not many meetings and you can choose which events to help on. Or would you like to do something to help out that doesn't involve any special skills OR meetings? How about being a cleanup angel? You just need to stick around for coffee hour and help clean up the coffee mugs and drinks table. Contact Kater at 501-952-5951 katerviola@gmail.com.

VEGETARIAN POTLUCK

Our next vegetarian potluck will be on Sunday, **April 14**, immediately following the worship service. Please bring a dish to share that will serve 8-10 people so we'll have enough for everyone, especially new visitors!

Come early and help set up or stay after and help clean up. Many hands make light work! Join us!



CLASSES AND GROUPS (ADULT)

BETWEEN THE LINES BOOK CLUB (ON SITE)—FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7:00PM

The book for discussion on **April 1** will be *Madame Fourcades Secret War* by Lynn Olsen. Between the Lines attendees meet in person at the church. If you are interested in joining the discussion, contact Mindy Morrell at (501) 951-7773 or mindymorrell@hotmail.com.

RECONNECTION—SUNDAYS AT 10:00AM (RE DOWNSTAIRS)

This gathering is for those in their 20s to 40s who are looking to connect with like-minded peers. Each week attendees engage in open discussion about current events and life's persistent questions. The class is currently meeting in the Sr. High room downstairs in the RE. REConnection members meet with the Forum group on odd numbered months.

RE-QUESTORS—SUNDAYS AT 10:00AM (ON SITE AND BY WEBX)

RE-Questors meets every Sunday at 10:00 am in the Pehrson Room or on WebX to discuss a chosen book. The new book is "Preparing for War: The Extremist History of White Christian Nationalism—and What Comes Next" by Bradley Onishi . You do not need to have read the book to join the discussion. To receive updates, contact Joe Meehan at josmeehan@gmail.com

SHORT STORIES DISCUSSION GROUP

The Short Stories discussion group meets on first Fridays at noon in the Pehrson Room and on Zoom. The stories are selected from the *Best American Short Stories of 2021* by Jesmyn Ward. The **April 5** story will be *You Are My Dear Friend* by Madhuri Vijay. Join us for a stimulating discussion. Feel free to bring lunch. Look forward to seeing you there. If you have questions or want to get on her list for updates and Zoom invitations, contact Janice Peters—Janicep@comcast.net

SOMETHING NEAT! ABOUT UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM—THIRD THURSDAYS AT 6:30

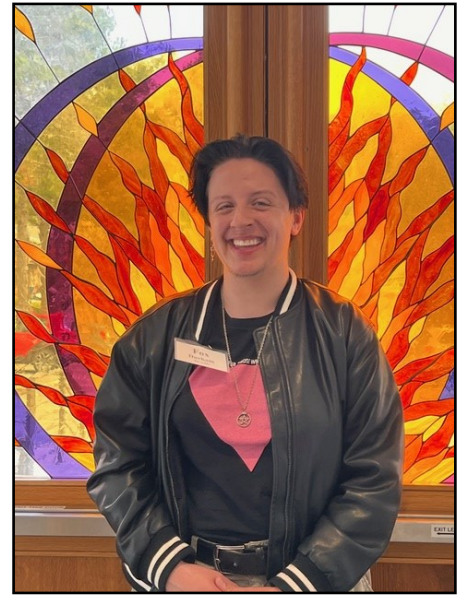
We have a brief presentation about a UU topic, after which we talk about it and, if time allows, other matters of concern to UUs. We meet in the Pehrson Room and by Google Meet (which requires no special software and runs in your browser). Questions? Contact John Adams by email at arkansawyer@outlook.com.

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Fox Durham

Fox Durham (they/he) was raised in Hot Springs, Arkansas. They were interested in world religions from a young age, and eventually received a BA in Religious Studies from Hendrix College. Fox's interest in interfaith community work eventually prompted him to explore Unitarian Universalism, and he briefly attended UUCLR services pre-pandemic before in-person services ceased. After a few years away, they decided to return to church and become more involved. Since then, Fox has started co-teaching elementary RE classes, and joined the Worship Arts team.

Fox recently obtained his Masters in Library and Information Science from the University of Missouri. Fox hopes to one day work with Children and Teens in a public library, and is currently working on an archival project at Arkansas PBS. In their spare time, Fox enjoys crochet, weaving, and writing.



Fox Durham

8TH PRINCIPLE DOCUMENTARY SCREENING MAY 11

Deep in the Arkansas Delta lies the legacy of the worst racial or labor conflict in American history—buried for 100 years. The Elaine Massacre of 1919 – perhaps the largest single race or labor massacre in American history – is a buried story with strong contemporary resonances. It's also a story still being denied, debated, and (re)written. We invite you to join us for a screening of the film *We Have Just Begun* at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock (UUCLR).



Date and Time: Saturday, May 11th | 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: 1818 Reservoir Road, Little Rock, Arkansas 72227

A panel Discussion and Q & A with Director Michael Wilson will follow the film showing. We will also share reflections about our UUCLR 8th Principle.

8th Principle: Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse, multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions.



... FOR PARENTS

...while **Fairy Godparents watch the children** is offered on the last Saturday of each month from 5:00 to 8:00. This month it is **April 27** and the registration deadline is **April 24**, so that the Fairy Godparents can make plans.

You may sign up on Sunday morning in the foyer. If you love children and would like to help support our families with children as a Fairy Godparent, please contact Cas Rifkin at casrifkin12@gmail.com.

APRIL CALENDAR

Monday, April 1

4:00pm Rental (Mehta Wing/Sanctuary)
7:00pm Between the Lines (Pehrson Rm)

Tuesday, April 2

9:30am Rental (Library)
6:30pm Racial Healing Group (Pehrson Rm)

Wednesday, April 3

11:30am Rental (Pehrson Rm)
3:00pm String Group Practice (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Dulcimer Group (Mehta Wing)
6:30pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)
7:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Thursday, April 4

9:00am AARP Tax Aide (Mehta Wing)

Friday, April 5

9:00am AARP Tax Aide (Mehta Wing)
12:00pm Short Story Discussion Group
Pehrson Rm)
9:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Saturday, April 6

3:00pm Pledge Drive Dinner (Mehta Wing)
1:00pm Rental (Library)

Sunday, April 7

10:00am Recycle Sunday & Book Exchange
10:00am Forum (Mehta Wing)
10:00am RE-Questors (Pehrson Rm)
10:00am REConnection (RE downstairs)
11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Indian Education Group
(All Church)

Tuesday, April 9

9:30am Rental (Library)
5:00pm Membership (Pehrson Rm)
6:30pm Racial Healing Group (Pehrson Rm)

Wednesday, April 10

3:00pm String Group Practice (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Dulcimer Group (Mehta Wing)
6:30pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)
7:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Thursday, April 11

9:00am AARP Tax Aide (Mehta Wing)

Friday, April 12

9:00am AARP Tax Aide (Mehta Wing)
9:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Saturday, April 13

1:00pm Rental (Library)
4:00pm Pledge Drive Dinner (Mehta Wing)

Sunday, April 14

10:00am Forum (Mehta Wing)
10:00am RE-Questors (Pehrson Rm)
10:00am REConnection (RE downstairs)
11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)
12:15pm Vegetarian Potluck (Mehta Wing)
2:00pm Iris Society Meeting (Mehta Wing)
4:00pm Indian Education Group
(All Church)

Monday, April 15

11:30am Tentative Rental (Mehta Wing)

Tuesday, April 16

9:30am Rental (Library)
6:30pm Racial Healing Group
(Pehrson Rm)

Wednesday, April 17

3:00pm String Group Practice (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Dulcimer Group (Mehta Wing)
5:30pm Program Council (Zoom)
6:30pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)
7:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Thursday, April 18

6:30pm Board Meeting (In person/Zoom)

Friday, April 19

9:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Saturday, April 20

1:00pm Rental (Library)

Sunday, April 21

10:00am Forum (Mehta Wing)
10:00am RE-Questors (Pehrson Rm)
10:00am REConnection (RE downstairs)
11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)
1:00pm Freethinkers (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Indian Education Group
(All Church)

Tuesday, April 23

9:30am Rental (Library)
6:30pm Racial Healing Group
(Pehrson Rm)

Wednesday, April 24

3:00pm String Group Practice (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Dulcimer Group (Mehta Wing)
6:30pm Choir Practice (Sanctuary)
7:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Friday, April 26

9:30pm NA Group (Mehta Wing)

Saturday, April 27

1:00pm Rental (Library)
4:00pm Night Out (RE Wing)

Sunday, April 28

10:00am Forum (Mehta Wing)
10:00am RE-Questors (Pehrson Rm)
10:00am REConnection (RE downstairs)
11:00am Worship Service (Sanctuary)
4:00pm Indian Education Group
(All Church)

Tuesday, April 30

9:30am Rental (Library)
6:30pm Racial Healing Group
(Pehrson Rm)

Minister

Rev. Paul Beedle
Call for an Appointment
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Tuesday - Friday
Approximately 8 am - 1 pm
(Hours may vary - call
before coming)
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Program Council Team Liaisons

Communications	Teresa Knight
Facilities	Bill Kimpel
Faith In Action	Sue McDonald
Fellowship	Kater Reynolds
Lifespan Faith	
Development	Joe Meehan
Membership	Cas Rifkin
Worship Arts	Monica Clark-Robinson

