



# Coming Home

The Newsletter of the Cache Valley Unitarian Universalists

DECEMBER 2020 | VOLUME 26 | ISSUE 12

## OUR MISSION

CVUU strives to be a caring religious community that encourages and supports the sharing of ideas and experiences of all who travel rich and varied spiritual paths.

## Sunday Online Services

Tune in through Zoom each Sunday at 10:00 AM: <https://zoom.us/j/94154808522>

Dec  
6

### ***Group Conversation***

presenter TBA

Dec  
13

### ***The Good News and the Bad News***

(25th Anniversary Lecture Series)

presented by Dr. Dominic Sur

Dec  
20

### ***Winter Solstice***

presenter TBA

Dec  
27

### ***Season of Miracles***

presented by Sondra Scott

## Finding Gratitude in a Time of Loss

photo by Pixabay



For me, the heart of Thanksgiving is twofold: gathering together and the recognition of abundance, all we have to be grateful for.

In the last couple of years, gratitude and gratitude practices have become buzzwords. In fact, a Google Scholar search of studies published on gratitude in the last five yields some 235,000 results. These studies communicate a range of findings about the benefits of gratitude including: improved mental health, greater happiness and well being, increased self-esteem, improved physical health, enhanced empathy and a reduction of aggression, better sleep, and helping us to make friends.

I tend to resist trends on principle, but I'll admit that I've been swept up by the gratitude fad and have a daily gratitude practice myself. What I do is simple; each morning I write three things I'm grateful for in my notebook. On the whole, doing this everyday has inclined me to feel a greater sense of blessing and security, to recognize a broader range of friendships and support.

In a year like 2020, however, where there has been so much collective and individual hardship, I can also say that there have been many days where the loss seems to outweigh the gifts. On these days, being asked to articulate what I am grateful for feels a little bit like what Parker Palmer, a Quaker spiritual leader, has written about telling someone experiencing depression that the world is beautiful. In his book, *Let Your Life Speak*, he explained that, "In depression you know intellectually that it's a beautiful day outside, but you can't feel an atom of that in

your own body, and that's depressive in itself." Essentially, you know you should feel the blessings, but you can't, and that makes you feel as though there is something wrong with you only adding to your despair.

I cannot make myself feel grateful for the pandemic, the lives it has taken and the ways it has reduced my community; for the chronic migraine I have navigated this year; for the hurt caused by the political divide in this country. I am sure that there are things in your own life that you can't make yourself feel grateful for either. I don't think we should have to and there's nothing wrong with us for not being able to. So, with all of these hardships present, what does one write down each morning? What can we be grateful for this season?

There is one phrase from an [On Being](#) interview with the benedictine monk David Steindel-Rast that has anchored me this year. I'd like to offer it, "We don't have to be grateful for everything, but we can be grateful in every moment." We can look for the small things, what we usually take for granted.

I write down that I woke up, that the heat came on, that there are people that matter enough to me to miss, that to feel grief means that I have a life that is precious and rich enough to have something to lose.

-Emerson James

## Events & Announcements

Dec  
7

**Facing Death with Life (Adult RE)** for those who have registered for the class.  
**Contact info:** Emerson James at [emijame@gmail.com](mailto:emijame@gmail.com)  
Monday, December 7, 6:30pm online through Zoom

Dec  
10

**CVUU Board Meeting:** All are welcome to attend and give input.  
**Contact info:** Anne Hedrich at [president@cvuu.org](mailto:president@cvuu.org)  
Thursday, December 10, 5:30–7:00pm online through Zoom

---

### Rakes and Shovels



CCC and USU are conducting a *Rakes and Shovels* program to help senior citizens and people with disabilities during the fall and winter months take care of their leaf and snow accumulation. If you need help at your residence, or if you would like to volunteer to help, please fill out the form at the following link:

[https://www.usu.edu/servicecenter/rakes\\_and\\_shovels](https://www.usu.edu/servicecenter/rakes_and_shovels)

---

## Highlights from the Last Board Meeting

- The first two strategic planning teams have met and the other three will meet in near future.
- We made a down payment to repair our retaining wall impinging on the neighbor's property. Installation is scheduled for December.
- We discussed possible caring initiatives with Emerson and Jim Evans.
- The CAPSA grant which supports Cache Pride Center (CPC) was renewed for 3 years but the budget is much tighter. We're ok in the near term but will need additional fundraising in the future.

## In Our Thoughts



- ◇ Ron Goede's family and loved ones
- ◇ Sandy Charlson's family and loved ones
- ◇ Friends, members, and their families struggling with physical or mental illness and other life struggles
- ◇ All those unable to visit loved ones in times of sadness and grief

*"We light this chalice for the warmth of love, the light of wisdom, and the energy of action."*

## Info & Contacts

[Board of Trustees](#)  
[Staff](#)  
[Action Teams](#)

[CVUU Calendar](#)



CVUU is a  
[Logan Pride Festival](#)  
**SPONSOR**

Connect with us!

