



Coming Home

The Newsletter of the Cache Valley Unitarian Universalists

JANUARY 2021 | VOLUME 27 | ISSUE 1

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>

Jan
3

Group Conversation: New Year's Hopes

presented by Sondra Scott

Jan
10

Facing Death with Life

presented by Emerson James and participants from the class

Jan
17

Social Justice: Bear River Massacre

presented by Darren Perry

Jan
24

Leadership & Civic Engagement

presented by Emerson James

Jan
31

Bringing Light to Our Lives

presented by Sondra Scott

What's New at CVUU?

An Invitation to Be Instead of Become

photo by VisionPic .net from Pexels

It is that time when we are drawn to reflect back and look forward. Many people may be making resolutions for the year ahead. Following 2020—a year encompassed by personal and collective disruption—the status quo of our individual and societal lives has been confronted, challenged and questioned. I'd like to do the same with New Year's resolutions.

The four most common resolutions Americans make are to exercise more, save more money, eat more healthily, and to lose weight. I fully support the heart and intention behind these resolutions: they express our desire to have healthier habits, to live well. What I question is the common word among them: *more*. This, albeit subtle, expresses an implication of the capitalistic culture at the bedrock of our society that emphasises growth. It implies that we do not have, or are not enough exactly as we already are.



That we are sometimes unconscious of the deep influence of capitalism, even in something as benign as resolutions, isn't a judgement of anyone's character. I am just as implicated. It was only a few weeks ago, at the end of a long walk, that I realized I had become ensnared in the idea that my worth was tied to if I had exhibited significant growth. For five miles I lamented all I had not done. I beat myself up for having only broken even financially, for having been unable to put money into savings. The great irony in this is that I knew better than to believe this exact narrative that I needed to be or do *more*.

The December 2019 issue of *The Sun* featured an interview, "[The World We Still Have](#)," with the environmental writer Barry Lopez. The interview discussed the sentients of the world, the necessity for us to reconnect with nature, and the need to give language to pain, injury and injustice. Of all of the ways the article is ripe with insight, a seeming digression is what stuck with me. Lopez talks about the role of spiritual practice in modern times and the importance of the "handful of just people who are unaware of each other but who continue their prayerful way in the world." These "elders"—not necessarily tied to age—are, "the ones, many believe, who provide humanity with stability." Not progress, Lopez emphasises, but stability.

At the onset of 2020, I was in the throws of trying to find an effective treatment for chronic

migraine and was making the transition from graduate school to the working world again. There were lots of compounding challenges that made being a functional, contributing human an uphill battle. Inspired by Lopez's insight, the mantra I carried for this past year was "steadiness over progress." The phrase appears over and over again in my notebooks, scribed in capital letters: STEADINESS OVER PROGRESS. STEADINESS OVER PROGRESS. And yet, there I was unable to recognize the success, the steadiness of breaking even. I'd completely undervalued all the resources and effort that had gone into maintaining because I wanted to feel as though I was progressing. I was so focused on becoming, the intent within resolutions, that I lost gratitude for and forgot the value of my being.

So, how do we remember? I think ritual—as it “fulfills our need to honor, acknowledge, and empower as we move through life's transitions. It is a vehicle to heal ourselves, our social fabric and our planetary home¹”—is the answer. As we look ahead to 2021, instead of setting a resolution I'd like to invite you to try a different ritual: discovering your sankalpa.

Sankalpa translates to a resolve or as a solemn promise to oneself. If this initially sounds just like a resolution, consider the meaning of sankalpa's Sanskrit roots, *sam* and *klrip*. *Sam*, conveys the sense of perfection, completeness, togetherness, integrality. *Klrip* means to correspond with, be adapted to, in accordance with, suitable to; to be fit for.² A sankalpa, therefore, is a vow and commitment to affirm your highest truth. It is your deepest heartfelt desire and sense of who you are and why you are here. It is not, “I will,” but rather, “I am.” It is what you already are.

I am kind.

I am grateful

I am an advocate.

I am willing to serve.

I am dedicated to social justice.

I am spacious.

I am light.

I am tender.

I am guided by love.

By naming our sankalpa and saying again and again throughout the year, “*I am, I am,*” each day becomes an affirmation. Each day we are able to manifest what is good, what already exists that is the best of us.

-Emerson James

1. Artress, Lauren. *Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscover the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Practice*. New York, Riverheadbooks, 2006, pp. 169.
2. Mishra, Sampadananda. “What is Sankalpa?” *Bhagavad Gita*, <http://bhagavadgita.org.in/Blogs/5ab0b8125369ed21c4c74bfe>, 28 December 2020.

Logan Youth Action Network

LOGAN YOUTH ACTION NETWORK

Who? Youth age 14-18

Where? Due to COVID-19, we'll meet over zoom or outside with masks.

When? The 1st and 3rd Sunday from 5:00-6:30 pm (January 3 – April 18)

Instructor Bio: Meridian Wappett is a junior at USU studying ecology and pre-law. Meridian has worked in student and youth activism for the past 6 years and is excited to share her knowledge and learn with the class!

What? A youth-driven program that empowers young people to strengthen their communities through social and environmental action.

Youth will learn about social and environmental issues and work together to put their energy into action.

How: Sign up by scanning the QR code or at:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfF9SZGXgwkMq5-r9vy79r78GuqsalknLU6CR7mRKck31K4Mw/viewform?usp=sf_link

Sponsored by Cache Valley Unitarian Universalists

CVUU is sponsoring a new youth program! Participants will learn about social and environmental issues and work together to put their energy into action.

They'll meet over zoom or outside with masks on the 1st and 3rd Sundays from 5:00-6:30 pm (January 3 – April 18).

You can learn more and sign up at [this link](#).

Winter Connections

CVUU would like to provide some added support and help to our members and friends. We would like to build a simple caring chain in which each of us would be given the name and number of a friend or member to check in on. We hope for non-invasive, roughly weekly check-ins with the goal to see how everyone is doing, have a conversation, or join for a virtual cup of tea. The person or family you are checking on would in turn check in on someone else, forming a chain of connections in our community. We envision this caring chain as a more formalized way to identify needs, and provide conversation and fellowship. This check in process will also help us find out who might need a bit of help—say with snow shoveling or

grocery pickup—and to determine if there are significant needs that require added support services.

Please notify Jim Evans at jpevans@protonmail.com and let us know if you are:

- willing to call someone in our caring chain.
- willing to be called by someone in our caring chain.
- already doing this with someone, and would like to continue with that specific person. If so, please indicate who you are in contact with.
- currently experiencing a need that we might be able to help with (these will be held in confidence).

Thanks and wishing you a warm and healthy winter.

-Jim Evans, Anne Hedrich, Emerson James

Events & Announcements

Jan
3,17

Logan Youth Action Network for youth who have registered for the program.

Contact info: Kate Stephens or Jo Leary

Sunday, January 3 and 17, 5:00–6:30pm online through Zoom

Jan
14

CVUU Board Meeting: All are welcome to attend and give input.

Contact info: Anne Hedrich at president@cvuu.org

Thursday, January 14, 5:30–7:00pm online through Zoom

Snow Shoveling

Several of our community members will need help clearing walks and driveways after snows. Please let Jim Evans, jpevans@protonmail.com, know if you can help out. Thanks in advance for your generosity to and support of the CVUU community.

Highlights from the Last Board Meeting

- Jim Evans is organizing a caring chain system to maintain contact.
- We approved a new environmental and social justice youth program.
- The retaining wall will be repaired on December 14.
- Strategic planning group 5 of 5 (visibility in the community) will meet in the near future. We revised the strategic plan to reflect all 5 teams coming soon.

In Our Thoughts



- ◇ Friends, members, and their families mourning the loss of 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](#)



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[Logan Pride Festival](#)
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