



The CommUUnicator

Newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship of Waynesboro

Memorial Day: A UU Observance

By Clint Nicely

Remembrance Day, V-E Day, Yom Hazikaron, ANZAC Day, and Victory Day: nations, cultures, and peoples around the globe sanction various days to honor their military heroes lost in battle. In the United States, we observe, on the last Monday in May, Memorial Day, a day to pay homage to those military personnel lost in the service of their country. The tradition began shortly after the American Civil War. Originally called Decoration Day, the term Memorial Day was pretty much adopted nationwide by the end of the 1800s and would later become an officially recognized national holiday.

It is of course easy enough to find and read the full history of Memorial Day, but as Unitarian-Universalists, we should perhaps make a special effort to observe this sacred day. While many in our Fellowship have served, many more have lost family members, friends, and loved ones in defense of our nation and our way of life.

One might argue that Memorial Day is the most important holiday for us UUs, despite how we might feel about the military and war. Its bedrock purpose is embodied in so many of our UU values and in our Eight Principles: dignity, justice, equality, peace, liberty, acceptance, truth, and “the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process.” When one enters the military, they pledge “to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States,” a constitution

which states or implies all of those values and principles we as UUs hold dear.

For many, this day, originally intended as a somber time for remembrance, tribute and honor, has become a day of backyard cookouts and a celebration of the arrival of summer. And that’s great, but it’s important that we not forget the real meaning and purpose of Memorial Day.

You can watch on TV the wreath laying at The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a most dignified and moving ceremony. But I would suggest one of two other options. At the intersection of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Route 56 east of Vesuvius, a sign points you to Haines Chapel, a peaceful church in the woods, where at the back of the cemetery, you can find the graves of a few Revolutionary War soldiers. Who better to honor? (There is a small pavilion; you can take a picnic.)



Or closer by, visit the [Staunton National Cemetery](#) on Richmond Road, east of downtown. Much smaller than most national cemeteries, it is

nonetheless a most humbling place, in a most intimate setting. From beside the flagpole, observe the uniform stones laid out in absolute military precision. Stand for a few minutes and contemplate, maybe meditate: Just be—honor that presence, in that place, in that moment. There, you will experience the full essence of Memorial Day

News From Your Board President

By Kay Yost

The year has gone by quickly, and it's hard to believe I only have a little over a month left to serve in the role of UUFW Board President! Beginning July 1, Vice President Margot Kephart will become President, and I will continue on the Board for another year in the non-voting role of Past President. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the rest of our FY2024 Board members—Steve Maxwell, Secretary; Peggy Anders, Treasurer; Nancy Lay, Past President; and Sylvia Woodworth, Erin Milnes and Bob Norvell, Members-at-Large. They have put in many hours and worked hard on behalf of UUFW so we can continue to grow into our vision of being a diverse and vibrant spiritual community. I have asked current Board members to wear a bright purple lanyard these next few Sundays so that you can identify them and speak with them about Board activities or just say thank you.

As has been announced in our weekly email blast, Sunday, June 2 following the service there will be a meeting reviewing the proposed FY2025 budget and providing an opportunity for members to ask questions. The next Sunday, June 9, we will hold our annual congregational meeting following the service. **We need to establish a quorum so that nominees to the**

Board, a new trustee and the proposed FY2025 budget can be voted on, so please do plan to be there!

Nominees to the FY2025 Board include Marilyn Nash (for Vice President), and for members at large, Peggy Anders (beginning a second term) and Nancy Trimble. As Blake Clark has decided to step down from the role of Trustee that he has held for many years, we will also be nominating Wayne Nolde for a six-year term as Trustee. Watch your email for the proposed budget and the agenda packet for the annual meeting.

Serving on a Board of Directors has been a new and interesting experience for me, and during the past two years, I've been a part of the decision-making process related to playgrounds, TV screens for the Hall and new kitchen countertops; hiring pianists and directors of religious education, as well as fundraising activities, cancellation of Sunday services for weather or COVID19, investment in socially-responsible funds, recruitment of new Board members and much more. It has given me a new appreciation for those who volunteer to serve on our Board of Directors. I will move on from my role as President with great gratitude for everyone who has served on the Board, for our team leaders, and all of our UUFW volunteers.

In addition to our own annual congregational meeting, I'll take this opportunity to remind you that the UUA General Assembly 2024, *Love Unites, Stories Ignite*, will be taking place online June 20-23. Sunday worship and the general sessions will be streamed online for anyone to view free of charge, but much of the program requires registration. Details can be found at www.uua.org/ga. Steve Maxwell will be serving as delegate again this year.

