



## Reflections for Water Communion

By Rev. Heather Janules

Nadia Bolz-Weber is a progressive Lutheran minister. Her latest book, *Shameless: A Sexual Reformation*, explores how the Christian church has caused harm in its approach to human sexuality and invites us to consider a new way.

While I found her book insightful, it was a tangential passage about water that inspired me the most. Bolz-Weber writes:

*I've heard it said that all the water on the Earth today is the same water that existed at the beginning of time. If that's true, it means that in the beginning God created all the water that is. What evaporates returns to the clouds, from which water in another form is then rained down again on Earth. It means that we drink the same water that the triceratops drank. And it means that the waters of our baptism - whether they were poured on our head or subsumed us when we are lowered into them; whether those waters were river, tap, ocean, pool or bottled - are possibly the waters of creation. The same waters that God spoke into existence at the very beginning. Our divine origin.*

While I have a different spiritual perspective on water, her observation that we live with a fixed amount of water and encounter this same water again and again helps me understand the meaning of this life-giving, life-sustaining element. Her words inspire me to think of the water I encounter and take for granted every day - from my faucet, in my water bottle, in the food I eat, raining from the sky. I think of water that has great meaning, such as Horn Pond where I walk many times a week, often contemplating people in my community "standing in the need of prayer"; or the family cabin at the shore of a lake, home to many good memories and peaceful summer moments; or the edge of the Gulf of Mexico where I released my mother's ashes.

When I think of how water has touched and does touch my life, I am reminded that I - that we - cannot live without it, in body or spirit.

I share this reflection on water to invite you to collect some water this summer. We will gather and pour our offerings into a common bowl at Water Communion on September 8<sup>th</sup>.



Perhaps the water you gather will be from a distant and exciting destination. Perhaps it will be from a puddle in the park down the street. Perhaps it will symbolize a season of great change, happiness or loss, or maybe it will recall a quiet, uneventful summer. No matter the story behind your water, like all good rituals, when we each pour our water into the bowl, we will participate in a ritual that is simultaneously individual and collective, ordinary and profound. We will celebrate the raw elements of life that command our attention, our gratitude, our praise.

And we will connect with friends old and new. We will re-member the community of memory and hope also known as the Winchester Unitarian Society.

I wish each and all a peaceful summer. May the waves of life hold you.

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# WUSYG: Climate Justice & Service at Ferry Beach

By Sam Wilson, Director of Youth Ministries

22 teens and 5 adults went on WUSYG's climate justice-focused service trip to Ferry Beach, Maine this year. Ferry Beach is a UU Conference Center located on the shore. Our Service Trip Subcommittee and youth specifically chose this location because of our interest in learning about climate justice and doing work related to the environment. Our supplemental programming also kept in mind how our work extended to the larger theme of climate justice and how these issues impact marginalized communities in different ways. Our hope is that this trip did not only allow them to do direct service that week, but also activated their engagement in the climate crisis so that they can take this issue back home with them and become engaged leaders in this movement for the rest of their lives.



We did a variety of projects throughout the week: We cleaned up driftwood and trash from the beach, a lot of which had actually come from a nearby river. Due to the erosion of the shoreline, sand had to be dredged from the Saco river to recreate the beach, and along with it came a lot of driftwood and other trash. We also dug out a variety of invasive species (and discussed how the flora and fauna in the US has changed dramatically since the country was colonized, and why it's important work to plant native species).

We then repurposed a lot of the driftwood that we had picked up and a lot of other compostable plant matter that we had dug up/raked, etc. to create 5 keyhole gardens.

Keyhole gardens follow the principles of permaculture, which focus on sustainable gardening tactics that are also attentive to the local and natural ecology, habitats and wildlife.

Each of our 5 "family groups" (teens were broken down into 5 "family groups," each with a senior youth leader and 1 adult) created its own unique masterpiece and we had a competition with prizes at the end.

The large gardens each have a big circle in the center for compost (which is otherwise not something that Ferry Beach is able to do except during the summer), so, immediately we were able to provide composting while we were there, and, we created a lot of room now for them to grow lots of things this spring and





summer (which will feed off of the composting material in the center of each garden).

Finally, we propagated some dune grass so as to rebuild a part of the dune grass barrier that had been destroyed along the shore, which serves to help with the erosion of the shoreline (the rapid erosion is a direct result of climate change).



Each day we had a different “word of the day” that helped focus our activities and service work (e.g. grassroots, repurpose, etc.).

In the morning, after breakfast, we started with a half hour of spiritual practices, primarily led by youth (pictured here: guided blind-walking on the beach, and yoga) then a half hour centering/framing time (akin to a circle worship) that was led by Haley and me, or one of our family groups. Then we worked hard until lunch, then worked after lunch until dinner time.

After dinner we had bonding games, family group time with reflection questions and check-ins, and presentations from guest speakers or Samme. Each evening concluded with a worship service, which included one around a campfire (pictured above), one utilizing a labyrinth that Haley had constructed in the sand, and a finale with sparklers on the beach (pictured above; now that we’ve \*sparked\* their engagement in climate justice and they need to carry this spark forward in their lives!)



# In Praise of Summer Music

By John Kramer, Music Director

If you haven't been to a summer service and enjoyed the creativity and knowledge that the members of our congregation share, then I highly encourage you to do so. The service topics are varied, topical and well presented, as are the musical offerings. We've had a little bit of everything over the years including drumming, classical arias, steel guitar, saxophone, lots of singing, fiddle, an electric bass duet, new songs written by members, organ, piano, flute, and more singing.

The summer is a wonderful time to share your talents, for a number of reasons. First: you probably have a little more time to practice over the summer, when schedules tend to be more relaxed. Second: Summer services are smaller and more intimate. It's an inviting audience to perform for. Third: everybody's doing it! We often have multiple people performing in the same summer service and nearly every summer service has some volunteer musicians.

Music is a wonderful expression of the human spirit and is meant to be shared – it's a true communal activity. We all know how difficult it is to make music and today's digitized world can make it harder still, especially if you start comparing yourself to YouTube videos of prodigies. Take some time to nurture your inner musician and bring your gifts to our sanctuary. Join the summer choir. The summer choir meets at 9:45am on selected Sundays of the summer and sings familiar music or music that is very easy to learn but still meaningful. Look to Highlights for the summer choir schedule. Contact [John.Kramer@winchesteruu.org](mailto:John.Kramer@winchesteruu.org) if you are interested or have questions or concerns.



## Music Director John Kramer Receives Award

John Kramer received the 2019 Ruth Rowan Award from UU Mass Action, for his original composition, The Immigrant Experience. Performances of the piece have raised tens of thousand of dollars for [Beyond Bond & Legal Defense Fund](http://www.beyondbondboston.org), which pays the bonds of those incarcerated for immigration violations ([www.beyondbondboston.org](http://www.beyondbondboston.org)).

## Mary Cares

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By Marty Teitel

I'm so glad for a chance to say hi - after more than a decade - to the warm and lively members of the Winchester church. I have such solid memories of you from when my wife Mary Harrington was your minister. Now I've been able to join with Mary's family, friends and colleagues to organize a memorial to Rev. Mary.

I met Mary when she was in her 20s. She was already practicing the core values that she carried out her whole life. Mary said it is crucial to keep clarifying our beliefs. But the key for her was then to validate those values through real world actions. So we've designed a short term project to honor Mary based on what she taught - a real world effort that is intertwined with what we care about.

Mary died in 2010 after almost six years of ALS. During that time the form of ALS care that mattered to her was the clinic model. She wanted to spend her final days in our little house on a river in Maine, but no clinic was available. Maine - where I still live - is the most rural and heavily forested state, and it is equal in size to the rest of New England put together. So when a Maine doctor finally got the ALS clinic started at the end of 2017, people with ALS and their families needed particular support, since they can't just swing by the clinic in Brunswick Maine whenever they want. We set up a project to support those special services that aren't covered by insurance, and we call it [MaryCares](http://www.marycaresals.com) ([www.marycaresals.com](http://www.marycaresals.com)).

I think the MaryCares project is an effort Mary would have liked - volunteer and zero overhead - so every penny we raise goes 100% to the families and patients who are dealing with ALS. You can learn more of what the project is doing at the MaryCares website.

Of course the website has a button you can click on to donate money directly into the clinic. If you're curious or just want to see more pictures of Mary - click away. Finally, here's a picture many of you will recognize of my wife Rev. Mary Harrington when she conducted the marriage of two Winchester church members, Betsy Bowles and Pat Meny. I'm the guy on the left. 14 years after this photo, we have lost both Mary and Pat. But our memories and love live on...



## Grandson Speaks the Truth

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By Lee Barton, WUS Member

I got in the car this morning and on the radio they were talking about the Supreme Court hearing cases about legality of discrimination based on sexual orientation.

I explained to my grandson Jonah (pictured, below flag) that it's really crazy that anyone would think it's ok to fire someone based on who they love.

His response: "That's like 80's stuff! Why are we still doing that in 2019? It's not the 80's, you're supposed to treat everyone the same now!"

This 5-year-old is speaking the truth today.



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*Our Summer Minister/Administrator!*

The Rev. Joanna Lubkin will be serving as our first ever Summer Minister/Administrator this year. I first met Joanna when she was the Intern Minister at the UU Society of Wellesley Hills and I was a (nervous) pre-candidate, about to lead worship for a community that included the WUS search committee! Joanna's warmth and calm put me to ease right away. Since then, I have gotten to know her through collegial gatherings and her leadership in the Sanctuary Boston community. From my direct experience, by reputation and through her references, I know we are in EXCELLENT hands.

Rev. Joanna is the UU Chaplain at Wellesley College and is an affiliated community minister at Arlington Street Church in Boston. She served as the Summer Minister for Pastoral Care at the First Parish in Needham for the past three summers. After a Masters in Public Administration from Clark University, Joanna studied at Hebrew College Rabbinical School, before finishing her Masters of Divinity at Andover Newton Theological School. She sings in the Arlington Street Church choir and at The Sanctuary Boston.

She writes:

*Dear WUS members and friends,*

*I'm so delighted to be spending the summer with you! I'll be putting my administrative skills to use in the office three days a week, and will be joining you in worship most Sundays in July and August. When challenges or celebrations come along, I'll be available to offer pastoral care and spiritual support. It's an honor to be welcomed into your congregation and your lives this summer.*



*A bit about me: When I'm not in Ministry Mode, I love to sing, experiment with gluten-free baking, read good time travel novels, and cherish time with my 19-year-old black cat. As an animal person, I will always want to see photos of your pets -- even better, when you're walking your dog [on Thursdays] this summer, bring them by the church office!*

*Looking forward to getting to know you through worship, connection, and church business!*

*With gratitude, Joanna*

Welcome, Joanna! - Rev. Heather