

# CVUU Monthly News

ADMIN & COMMUNICATIONS PUBLICATION



Coastal Virginia  
Unitarian Universalists

APRIL 2020

ISSUE 27

## A Word from Rev. Justine

*"...have you ever found God in church? I never did. I just found a bunch of folks hoping for him to show. Any God I ever felt in church*



*I brought in with me. And I think all the other folks did too. They come to church to share God, not find God."*

- Alice Walker in *The Color Purple*

My Google calendar doesn't know that everything has been canceled, postponed, changed. I keep getting these alerts from my phone, reminding me, taunting me, challenging me to remember when we could do the things we want to do in the ways we like to do them. Meetings and meals, parties and trainings, conferences, retreats, visits – all different now, many of them just gone. And it's sad and scary and infuriating. I have felt all those things – sad, mad, and scared, and I'll bet you have, too.

Cont. page 2

## Many need assistance due to Corona Virus

*By Steph Sterner*

Stuck at home? Unemployed or extremely reduced hours at work due to the Corona Virus? Below is a list of organizations that are providing some financial relief. We can get by with a little help from our friends.

**Meals on Wheels:** Delivers prepared food to seniors all across the country. This is especially important in the pandemic, as seniors are at high risk, and limiting their need to go to the grocery store by delivering these meals is a critical service.

<https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>

**No Kid Hungry:** Makes sure that children get the food they need, especially since schools are closed across the country. Their service is especially important as families who lose their jobs need to keep their kids fed.

<https://www.nokidhungry.org/>

**Restaurant Workers' Community Foundation COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund:**

Provides direct financial support to restaurant workers who are out of work or have reduced hours because of the pandemic.

They are also supporting community organizations of local workers and providing

loans to restaurants to re-open when it is safe.

<https://www.restaurantworkerscf.org/>

**National Domestic Workers Alliance:**

Gives financial support to in-home care workers, nannies, and house cleaners who have to stay home and not work in order to reduce the spread of the virus.

<https://www.domesticworkers.org/>

**One Fair Wage Emergency Fund:** Gives funds directly to service workers affected by the pandemic, including restaurant, salon, airport, rideshare, and gig economy workers who find themselves out of work or without customers.

<https://ofwemergencyfund.org/help>

These five groups cover a large section of the problems that we are immediately facing as the health crisis creates an economic crisis. Click here for a list of area food pantries: <https://www.c-vuu.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Food-Pantries-March-16-30.pdf>

*Steph Sterner is an active member of CVUU. She serves on the Social Justice and Racial Justice Committees as well as being a member of the Hampton Roads Poor People's Campaign.*

# CVUU commits to staying connected!

Right now the only event continuing in our building is our commitment to staying in community with our CVUU family in new and creative ways!

For the immediate future we will offer our weekly service every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. via **Facebook Live** from our CVUU Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/covauu/>  
You don't need a Facebook account to view the service. It will be streaming from our public page, open to everyone. You may ignore the prompts to sign up or log in if you aren't already on Facebook. Instead, scroll down until you see the video!

The service will be followed by a **Cyber Sunday Coffee Hour** via Zoom for a chance to connect with other worship attendees for deeper conversation.

You can participate from your favorite web browser or on any platform (Mac, PC, iOS, Android) using a free app that you download. Visit <https://zoom.us/download> and find Zoom Client for Meetings to download the app for your computer. If you are on a portable device, find the Mobile app link on that same page.

Our RE kids, social groups, committees and

covenant circles will also continue to “meet”—many are doing so already!

**CVUU Youth Group** is now meeting Sundays at **11:30 a.m. via Zoom**.

The meeting link will be placed in the CVUU Youth Group **Discord** server as well as sent via email to parents. Encourage your youth to utilize the Discord server during the week for activities and friends to talk with. And if they need a religious adviser to speak to, Rev. Justine has virtual office hours reserved for our youth group. Youth can sign up here: <https://signup.com/go/WcGUKbx>  
Contact our Youth Program Coordinator Rayven Holmes at [YPC@c-vuu.org](mailto:YPC@c-vuu.org) or Religious Education Director Paul Greggs at [DRE@c-vuu.org](mailto:DRE@c-vuu.org) to find out more! (See page 7 for tips to keep your little ones engaged at home.)

Our Music Director, Matt Griset, is hosting **Virtual Vespers** via Facebook Live on



Wednesday nights now. These calm, evening services will include UU songs, solo piano, and poetry readings. Matt encourages attendees to pour some tea and “put your feet up.”



Both our Young Adults Group (YAG) and our Stitcher's Circle are using **Discord**, an audio & text app that allows you to speak in a 'channel' while still text chatting in other channels. You can download Discord on your computer or mobile (both free) to join together online <https://discordapp.com/download>

Here's a handy tutorial: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le\\_CE--Mnvs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=le_CE--Mnvs)

Both Stitcher's and YAG have audio channels. Click this invite link to enter Stitcher's Circle space: <https://discord.gg/KY5Hr3>. (They will gather at 6:30 p.m. each Tuesday as normal!)

You can get to YAG Chats by clicking this invite: <https://discord.gg/8APmVC>

If you would like help with setting up a Zoom meeting for your group, contact our Communication Coordinator Tracy Brune at [comm-coordinator@c-vuu.org](mailto:comm-coordinator@c-vuu.org).

## Cont. from page 1

How many times and in how many different ways can we say and hear – we're living in unprecedented times? What is the good word that I can offer you, offer myself? It would be terrifying, I imagine, for me to say “I don't know,” and yet disingenuous to pretend to have answers I don't have (I suspect many of you join me in feelings of exasperation at the false bravado and empty reassurances offered by people who are supposed to be offering competent, trustworthy leadership. I have given myself the gift of no longer watching those daily press briefings).

Here is what I do know. You all are the temple, the church, the sacred space; it's not the building, not the minister (though serving you as your minister is a great blessing to me), and it's not the physical place or the things. It is you, your courage and your tenderness, your resolve and your flexibility, your willingness to do things differently so that we can be together – in whatever ways possible. That's the thing. Even with imperfect worship with technical difficulties, you show up and you stay for coffee hour. You

*“You all are the temple, the church, the sacred space; it's not the building, not the minister ... and it's not the physical place or the things. It is you, your courage and your tenderness, your resolve and your flexibility, your willingness to do things differently so that we can be together – in whatever ways possible.”*

find ways to have meetings to do the work of church, and you gather virtually in true circles of care. You reach out to each other and to me, always asking – are you alright? Do you need anything? Is there anyone out there who needs support? Yes, beloveds,

you are the temple.

And if you need more concrete evidence of how you are the temple, the church, the sacred space beyond walls; as I write this, there are 10 or 11 or 12 people planning to JOIN CVUU as official members in our worship service on Sunday, March 29th. Our plan is to hold the joining ceremony during our virtual coffee hour because that “space” allows for interaction. These folks are joining CVUU at a time when we cannot gather in person and don't know exactly when we'll be back together again! Think of it! What an act of faith and fellowship. They want to be part of you. Let us welcome them warmly and remember this entering class of Spring, 2020 as courageous and faithful partners on this journey of building the beloved community.

Peace be upon you, dear ones. Be careful, and know that you are loved.

In faith,  
Justine Sullivan

**Interim Minister, CVUU**  
**C 508-662-0279**  
[Minister@c-vuu.org](mailto:Minister@c-vuu.org)

# NAMI protects mental health in the time of Coronavirus

By Rick Docksai

Living in the current coronavirus pandemic is stressful for any of us, but especially so for those of us struggling with mental or emotional health conditions. The anxiety, depression, or other inner pains they face already can be magnified by frightening news alerts, prolonged isolation at home, and disruption of normal daily routines. Making matters worse, they may feel like there is no one to talk to about it all: Most in-person support groups and even some doctor's offices have closed due to the virus.

But the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Coastal Virginia wants these struggling individuals to know that they are never alone. NAMI Coastal Virginia provides counseling and education to persons with mental/emotional issues, their families, and the general public throughout Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, and surrounding areas.

The organization has had to postpone public events since coronavirus's emergence. However, it's creating new online support services where all who need NAMI's help can continue to find it. Jen Williams, outreach and marketing coordinator for NAMI Coastal Virginia, spoke with CVUU's Rick Docksai about her organization and how it's adapting to the pandemic. The interview is below.

**Every community is unique, and it may have unique mental-health needs. How would you describe the mental-health challenges in the coastal Virginia area? What kinds of problems come to NAMI Coastal Virginia's attention the most?**

Jen Williams: I think one of the biggest needs we have is housing. There is very little supportive housing. I work in the office, and a lot of the calls that come in are a person who is coming out of the psychiatric center and they are not going to be going back home, but they don't know where to go. They need a supportive atmosphere, and there is just not a lot of it.

And some people with mental health conditions have very little money. We've got to get more funds for supportive housing. It's difficult to navigate housing services when you have little money. And then when you put a mental health condition on top of it, it's very hard.

I think we also need education. Because



*"We've got to get more funds for supportive housing. It's difficult to navigate housing services when you have little money."*

- Jen Williams

people are not educated about what mental illness is or isn't, and their view of mental illness is what they see in news headlines, and that doesn't give you an accurate picture—most people with mental health illness are victims of violence, not perpetrators of it.

So we started several educational programs. One is called In Our Own Voice. The speakers all have mental health conditions, and they talk to the public about when their mental health symptoms first started and where they are in their recovery. It's a wonderful program. I see the light come on in the audience's eyes; it's like, now they get it.

Another is the Family-to-Family program, for family members of people who have mental illness. It's eight weeks of learning all about mental illness, the types the treatments, advocacy, and self-care. Sometimes I find that people come in with a preconceived notion of what this is all about, and as they go through this class,

their whole outlook changes. They come to understand so much better what is going on with their loved one.

There's also the Peer-to-Peer program. It's once a week, eight weeks, and it's learning to live successfully with a mental illness. By the way, everything we do is free. We charge for nothing.

We also started working with sheriff's departments: talking with their inmates about the NAMI programs and about mental illness. And it's so rewarding. I see some understanding in the inmates' eyes, and also some relief that someone understands what they are living with.

**To what extent has the coronavirus situation exacerbated many people's mental health difficulties and driven up demand for counseling and other services?**

Williams: For anybody, it's difficult. But for someone with mental health issues, it's especially difficult. Anybody with a mental health condition on a good day can struggle. It's not just because of all the issues on TV that you're bombarded with, but also reduced access to your psychiatrist or psychologist, and the need for just getting out and not isolating.

**What does it mean for NAMI and its efforts to meet local mental health needs?**

Williams: The in-person programs are paused for now. We may look at doing Peer-to-Peer as online classes if this goes on for much longer. We're also creating a weekly Zoom meeting online for people with mental health conditions and for their family members. We're going to open this up to anybody, to any NAMI

member or non-member. Our idea right now is to start with one Zoom meeting a week. And as we see that it's expanding and there is a greater need, then we're going to open up another one. My feeling is that at some point we will have them several times a week. We also have other NAMIs up in Gloucester and other areas, and they might not have online platforms. So we will open it up to them, too. And when this pandemic is over, we're going to keep it. One thing that came out of the COVID-19 is that we realized the need for online support, and so we're moving in that direction.

**What role can online support groups play in your efforts?**

Williams: I think they're crucial. When you are going through hard times and you don't have a support network, you can start to feel isolated. And the more that you're isolating, the more your mind can run. And that's not good for people. They need that support. And especially in the

mental health community, it's wonderful to have the opportunity to share with people who know where you're coming from. Because when you're with family, and they're not educated on what you're going through, it can be difficult to have a conversation with them.

**To what extent do you see NAMI's community efforts adapting in the months or years to come?**

Williams: We want to do more community outreach and attend more fairs and community events. And we want to do more educational training for employees and training for employers, so that they understand about employing someone with a mental health condition.

There's still a stigma around mental ill-



ness. It's not like saying "Hi, I've got diabetes." People don't want to say they have a mental health condition. People are afraid to talk about it. But we need to be able to talk about it and not be afraid. We want to break down these barriers. We want to make this a discussion that can be comfortable and empowering.

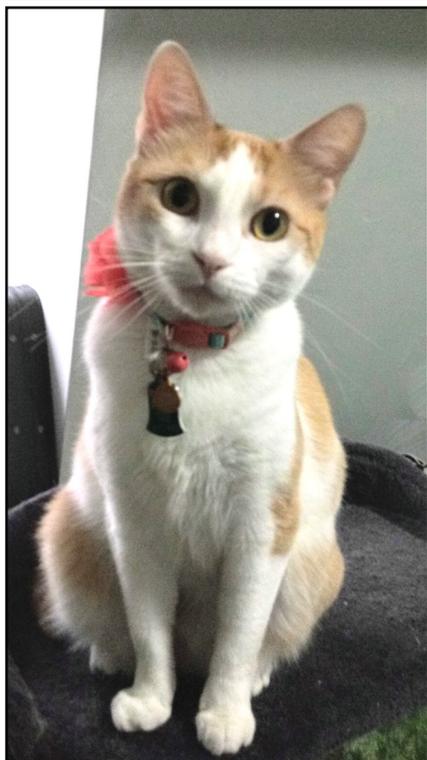
**What are some ways people can get involved?**

Williams: We really need volunteers. Because we are expanding our outreach. We need people to train to facilitate classes. We give them free training; we ask that they take a class so that they understand what it is all about, and they train to teach. We need some people to step up.

**Note:** For more information, you may visit NAMI Coastal Virginia online at <https://www.namicoastalvirginia.org>

*Rick Docksai is a freelance writer, a technical editor for the U.S. Navy, and a member of CVUU's Communications Committee.*

**April's Beloved Pet**



**Meet CVUU Housekeeper Samantha Philip's kitty Whiskey. She also responds to beautiful, precious pretty kitty, and killer. She is 3! She came from a home with 6 other cats and is still adjusting to being an only child. Her favorite treats are corn on the cob and yogurt. Her hobbies include napping, being nosy, and complaining. She is also addicted to catnip & cuddles.**

**SAVE THE DATES**



*All events are subject to change while we move forward in these uncertain times. The staff & board are researching ways we can continue with our schedule using some of our new online resources.*

- **Now – April 15:** The Stewardship Pledge Campaign
- **Sunday, April 26:** Election Meeting of CVUU Officers, Directors and some committee members. Revised date under discussion.
- **April 26 - May 3:** Candidating week for our new Minister. The Minister will preach on each of those two Sundays.
- **Sunday, May 3:** The minister will preach a second sermon, and then the congregation will decide together if this will be your new minister.
- **June 7:** The CVUU Annual meeting. We will be discussing the adopting the FY2021 CVUU Operating Budget. Revised date under discussion.

**April Birthdays**

Happiest of wishes to Declan Donigan, Madison Rawls and Landon Turner —4/1; Barbara Buck, Walker Lowe—4/3; Lindsay Pryor and Henry Foster—4/4; Jace McBride—4/5; Lauren Ayres—4/7; Jessa Stark—4/8; Maya Brown, Carson Reeves and Amy Taylor—4/9; Barbara Zimmer—4/11; Janet Hixson, Anne Odell and Amanda Ruiz —4/13; Harvey Jones—4/14; Jake Schmader and Owen Thomp-

son—4/15; Darcy Blouch and Anne Denton —4/16; Joe New—4/18; Brandon Harris and Valentine Laubach—4/20; David Stanley and Bob Sterling—4/24; Ari Palczewski—4/25; Sam Ciganek and Sean Curiel—4/26; and Ronald Zimbardo—4/30.



# Corona Aid 757 meeting the needs of at-risk citizens

The Poor People’s Campaign, an Affiliate Member of our congregation, is contributing efforts and people power toward Corona 757, a brand new group looking to provide assistance during this difficult time.

These disaster relief workers wish to alleviate stress and slow the spread of Coronavirus/COVID-19 in our community. They will help provide assistance with groceries and medical supplies, physical and mental health check-ins, or any other type of errand. And they are looking for volunteers!

If you are a low-risk individual with transportation and time to spare, you can sign up on their website, [www.coronaaid757.com](http://www.coronaaid757.com) to help the more vulnerable members of our community.

They have already had a tremendous response, receiving an outpouring of donations for their March 26th #CoronaAid757 FILL THE BUS event.

Donations were sanitized and organized



CORONA AID 757



into care packages to give to those in need!

Grocery and supply drops will be made at the door with no physical contact in order to maintain social distancing.

They urge everyone to keep the donations coming by either giving monetary donations to [www.coronaaid757.com](http://www.coronaaid757.com) (there’s a donate button), or by going to either of their donation drop locations @ **Analogue**

Lab + Studio or Cracker's Little Bar Bistro in Norfolk.

**Items most in need:**

- non-perishable food items, especially things like bulk rice and beans
- gluten-free items, diabetic-friendly food items, low-sodium items for those who may medically require those
- toilet paper
- cleaning products
- person hygiene items
- sanitizer hoard
- over the counter medications
- vitamins & supplements
- baby products, especially food & diapers
- adult incontinence products
- personal hygiene products
- pet items, food, kitty litter, etc.
- PACKAGED items for children, to help out their parents “who are desperate to give them fun activities to do while we ride this out.”

The group also has a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/510830746536540>

# Corona Aid 757 to benefit from our Second Sunday collection

By a majority vote of our CVUU members at our Mid-Winter Meeting, Feb. 23rd, the Hampton Roads Poor People’s Campaign became an Affiliate Member of our congregation. And in March, our Second Sunday offering brought in \$1,216 for them, which sent a strong signal that CVUU’s members are committed to social justice!

The requested funds were to provide transportation for low-income individuals to attend the June 20 Mass Poor People’s Assembly in Washington, D.C. However, since that time, the event has transitioned from a march on the Nation’s Capitol to a digital event in response to COVID-19 restrictions.

Still, this will be the largest digital gathering of dispossessed and impacted people, faith leaders, and people of conscience ever. But of course, a digital event does not require bus transportation.

In consultation with Rev. Justine, the Board President, and the Social Justice Committee, CVUU’s generous offering will instead go to Corona Aid 757 (see above article!) This project is filling a vital need in our community by assisting people impacted by COVID-19. The HR Poor People’s Campaign is already a contributing organization.

## Poor People’s Campaign

**A NATIONAL CALL for MORAL REVIVAL**

**MASS POOR PEOPLE’S ASSEMBLY & MORAL MARCH ON WASHINGTON IS GOING DIGITAL**

On **June 20th**, we will hold the largest **digital and social media gathering** of poor and low wealth people, moral and religious leaders, advocates, and people of conscience in this nation’s history. A global pandemic is exposing even more the already existing crisis of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy and militarism, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. **On June 20, the 140 million poor and low-wealth people across this nation will be heard!**



IN THE MIDST OF CHANGING TIMES, OUR MOVEMENT CONTINUES...

... because we won't be silent anymore.

... because everybody has a right to live.

... because poor and low wealth people will suffer most in this crisis.

... because our demands must remain front and center in this critical election year.



Twitter: @UniteThePoor | Facebook: @anewppc | Website: [poorpeoplescampaign.org](http://poorpeoplescampaign.org)

# Tours, tips and stories to entertain kids during this crisis

By Director of Religious Education Paul Gregg

With all Hampton Roads schools canceled through the end of the year, our CVUU parents could use some creative solutions for cooped up kids. Here are some web cameras and virtual tours you can take without leaving home:

## Yellowstone National Park

<https://www.nps.gov/yell/index.htm>

## Live Cams at the San Diego Zoo

[https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/site-search?search\\_api\\_fulltext=live+cams](https://zoo.sandiegozoo.org/site-search?search_api_fulltext=live+cams)

## Access Mars

<https://accessmars.withgoogle.com/>

## Monterey Bay Aquarium Live Cams

<https://www.montereybayaquarium.org/animals/live-cams>

## Panda Cam Zoo Atlanta

<https://zooatlanta.org/panda-cam/>

## Houston Zoo Web Cams

<https://www.houstonzoo.org/explore/webcams/>

## Pittsburg Zoo Cheetah Web Cam

<https://www.pittsburghzoo.org/cheetah-webcam/>

## Web Cams outside the U.S.

<http://tiny.cc/zoos>

## Pre-K

For parents with little ones (preschoolers), have them go outside in their backyard, or if they live in an apartment go outside and see what is out there. Have them really look at it and then color a picture showing the rest of us the beauty they see in their own back yard. Scan it or take a picture of it on your phone and email it to Tracy Brune at [comm-coordinator@c-vuu.org](mailto:comm-coordinator@c-vuu.org). She will post them on the CVUU web page and Facebook.

## Grades K – 3

Spirit play has been such a success this RE school year. We are pleased at how the kids have taken to the routine and process the stories. Here is a story about a young hippo and an old tortoise. Have your child draw a picture of what they felt was important in the story. Scan it or take a picture of it on your phone and email it to Tracy Brune at [comm-coordinator@c-vuu.org](mailto:comm-coordinator@c-vuu.org).



[vuu.org](http://www.vuu.org). She will post them on the CVUU web page and Facebook.

This is a true story. It takes place in the African country of Kenya. It was reported in the news following the terrible tsunami that hit south-east Asia and eastern Africa.

A baby hippopotamus, nicknamed

Owen, weighing about 650 pounds, was swept down Sabaki River into the Indian Ocean, and then forced back to shore when tsunami waves struck the Kenyan coast on December 26.

Some wildlife rangers rescued Owen and placed him in an animal refuge in the city of Mombassa. Owen had lost his mother and he was very scared. By nature, hippos are social animals and like to stay with their mothers for four years. Owen began to look for something to be his adopted mother. He decided on a giant male 100-year-old tortoise.

They established a strong bond. They swam, ate and slept together. The ecologist in charge of the animal park said: "It is incredible. A-less-than-a-year-old hippo has adopted a male tortoise, about a century old, and the tortoise seems to be very happy with being a 'mother'. The hippo follows the tortoise exactly the way it would follow its mother. If somebody approaches the tortoise, the hippo becomes aggressive, as if protecting its biological mother."



## Wondering Questions:

I wonder why Owen picked this particular tortoise?

I wonder why Owen didn't pick a female hippo?

I wonder how the tortoise feels about being a 'mother'?

I wonder if the tortoise realizes he is a 'mother'?

I wonder if Owen will begin to think he is a tortoise?

I wonder if the tortoise will begin to think he is a hippo?

I wonder if all animals are willing to adopt orphans?

I wonder who you are in this story?

I wonder why the tsunami happened?

I wonder what we can do to help the people and animals hurt by the tsunami?

## 4th and 5th Graders

### General Promise Questions:

I wonder if you have ever made a promise?

I wonder which promise you like the best?

I wonder how it feels when we keep a promise?

I wonder what happens when we keep a promise?

I wonder if it is easy or hard to keep a promise?

I wonder what happens when a promise is broken?

I wonder what here is most important?

I wonder how it feels to be on this rainbow path?

**Patience:** the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset. That is the Google Dictionary definition. What does patience mean in your family?

Is it being calm or tolerant when difficult things happen? Why practice patience now? If we didn't everyone would want what they want NOW! During this strange time we are experiencing together, although we are apart, we need to practice patience more than ever. Patience is self-control and understanding that in the end things will be better. Being stuck at home and not seeing friends in person is difficult. Talk about how you are managing as a family to be patient during these stay at home times.

# Container gardening offers a ready food supply



Never had time to grow vegetables? Let this be the year that you try it! Vegetable plants are appearing in garden centers and even grocery stores; and nearby you'll find seed racks. The best vegetable seeds are the ones with detailed instructions about how to space your plants and how many days until harvest. Great info if you've never done it before. Then again, the cheapest seeds can be purchased in bulk at a feed and seed store (and the people there usually are great at answering questions).

When you buy your vegetable plants, buy some herbs too. Many herbs do double duty in the vegetable garden; they attract bees and repel insect pests. Parsley is a great companion for vegetables; if you're growing in the front yard you can even make a little hedge. Parsley stays green all winter here and puts on new growth the following spring. I use it by the handful in soups, salads, even meatballs. Basil is a great bargain, because you can cut off the tops, root them in a glass of water, and make extra plants. Rosemary likes a sunny dry spot and makes a big bush adorned by blue flowers in the spring; it will live for years and is tasty year-round.

Don't be disappointed if selection is limited on your first trip to the garden center. Now is the time for cool-season vegetables like lettuce, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and bok choy. Plan to go back and purchase more plants over the next month or two and before long you'll start seeing summer vegetables like eggplant, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, and zucchini. If you have room from green beans, go to the seed rack and buy seed. Cucumbers and green beans grow 2 ways— in tidy little bushes and on climbing vines. Cucumbers need 3 to 4 feet to climb; for green beans prop up some netting (soccer is fine) or an old piece of wire fence. Pole beans will grow on a

teepee made of six-foot poles and feed your whole neighborhood.

When you buy your warm-season vegetables, check out the nearby flowers— mid-afternoon is the best time for this— and observe which ones are being visited by bees. Buy those and plant them near your vegetables. Most vegetables require pollination and the bees will take care of that for you. Of course you can do it yourself with a tiny paintbrush, but it's awfully time-consuming. I always look for sweet alyssum which is so compact it can be tucked anywhere around your plants; white seems to be the most fragrant.

If you're growing in containers, fill them with "potting soil" or "container mix". The big box stores have a dizzying selection of various soils for lawn and garden use; for a container you need a special mix which drains well. I look for potting soil labelled moisture control which requires less frequent watering, a boon if your containers get full afternoon sun. To be successful with vegetables, the more sun the better but you can get by with as little as six hours of sun.

A liquid fertilizer like Miracle-Gro is perfect for container gardening. Another great convenience food for plants is called Osmocote; a little sprinkle of this dry fertilizer will last for months. If you look at garden center plants, you can often see little round colored beads on the top of the potting mix; that's the stuff! If you are growing in the ground fertilizer can be scattered around the plants; one vast array of organic fertilizers has "Tone" in the name. All you need is Plant-Tone for everything (even your Japanese maple). Dogs think Plant Tone is delicious. Fair warning.

Take advantage of every inch of space in your garden. The traditional widely spaced rows were to allow room for the farmer to walk up and down with his hoe, chopping weeds. Plant your vegetables in groups leaving just enough room to get your hands in there to pick off pests, and to harvest. To control weeds in the garden, cover the soil with lots layers of newspaper moistened and patted flat; pine straw, shredded leaves, and glass clippings also work well. If weeds grow anyway, let them bloom to bring in the bees; just cut off the tops before they go to seed so things don't

get too crazy. I don't need to tell you that if the weeds are taller than the vegetables, that's bad right? Right.

Harvest gently, cutting stems with heavy scissors or a pruner if you need to. Lettuce and spinach will produce for a long time if you just take the outer leaves; it will look awful but it will keep right on growing. When it looks tired or starts growing tall and producing flowers, pull every plant and use the space for another crop. The BEST way to avoid spending a lot of time weeding is to have new plants ready to fill in the spaces. By the end of the season you will have had two or three different vegetables growing in the same space.

One last tip: grow only stuff you and your family like. And it is much better to plant small quantities over a long period of time, so you have a steady supply in amounts you can easily deal with. When you come in from the garden, make a big plate of raw vegetables and set them out with a little dish of salad dressing. Chop imperfect vegetables to go in soups, stews or stir-fries; the trick is to use them right away. If you are sharing them with your pets cook them very thoroughly and leave out onions and garlic. My golden retrievers like theirs pureed and stirred into their dog food.

Here's a great article about growing vegetables in containers from the Virginia Tech Extension website:

[https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu/426/426-336/426-336\\_pdf.pdf](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/426/426-336/426-336_pdf.pdf)

*Barbara Perry Gelzer is an experienced horticulturist & Chair of CVUU Grounds Committee. She has worked in the wholesale nursery trade. She has also served as Landscape Coordinator at the Chesapeake Arboretum.*



ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE PRESENTS

# CLIMATE CHANGE PREVENTION

SIMPLE STEPS WITH HUGE IMPACT

## CONSERVE WATER.

NOT USING IT? TURN IT OFF!



Turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth (and washing the dishes). Check your home for leaks. Reduce your time in the shower if you can. Plant hardier, native plants that require less water. .

Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y7uyac6l>

## REDUCE YOUR WASTE.

&amp; MAKE IT A HABIT TO RECYCLE

Only use what you need, and consider ways to replace disposables with reusable options! Carry your own washable utensils, or handkerchiefs in place of paper towels! Take bags and containers to the store to replace plastic bags and plastic/styrofoam containers.

Source: *Zero Waste Home* by *Bea Johnson*



## SAVE AND MAXIMIZE ENERGY

USE ENERGY-SAVING APPLIANCES



Open your curtains and blinds during the day and close them at night to conserve heat. When boiling water on the stove, keep a lid on the pot to speed the heating process. Properly set your thermostat according to the season.

Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y3fnk7ra>

## WALK AND TRAVEL GREEN.

LESS POLLUTION, MORE BENEFITS

Ride a bicycle. Opt for taking walks close to home. Take public transportation. Carpool. Avoid travelling during rush hour. Plan your route ahead of time.

Source: <https://tinyurl.com/rull4rs>



## STAND UP AND GET INVOLVED

VOICE YOUR CONCERNS



Keep track of local initiatives to advocate a more environmentally friendly society!

Resource: <https://tinyurl.com/yx633q3k>

Make sure the whole family knows these tips so they can be on board too!

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/CVUUENVIRONMENTAL](https://tinyurl.com/cvuuenvironmental)



# The EcoUU: What Is Your Carbon Footprint?

By *Valerie Rottink*

Have you calculated your carbon footprint yet? It can be confusing and overwhelming, trying to determine how our lives can affect the planet, but a carbon footprint is a great way to determine the impact that our lifestyle can have on the planet. This is determined, in part, through the products we buy.

This quick and easy carbon footprint calculator calculates your carbon footprint based on your home energy, personal vehicle usage, and waste habits. It is a great place to start, but these are not the only things that go into the make-up of your carbon footprint. Also consider your diet, travel, recreational activities, and purchases. Author *Bea Johnson* offers an alternative to the normal waste hierarchy: refuse (what we don't need), reduce, reuse, recycle, and rot (compost). An edible garden reduces emissions from product transportation. Are you outdoorsy? How far do you drive? Do you prefer to stay inside? How much energy do the systems that connect you across the world take?

Now, this isn't to say you suddenly need to go live on a commune living off the land. Although, if that is what you want to do, that's awesome. Asking you to calculate your carbon footprint is merely a way to start thinking of how

we can reduce our impact on the world. I'll go first. I drive everywhere, eat meat regularly, and spend time playing videogames, board games, Facebooking, and watching shows. I even shop on Amazon.

But I've also started putting more thought into my habits. I use handkerchiefs in public restrooms to dry my hands. I now intentionally meal prep meatless lunches. (Did you know kale can actually taste good?) I ask myself: do I really need those hysterically snarky socks on Amazon? I could buy more durable ones from the local alpaca farm instead. Or, do I even need a new pair of socks? I own reusable bags...but I often forget to put them back in my car. It is a process, and no one is expected to be perfect.

So, let's start a conversation. I'd love to know how you've tried to reduce your impact on the planet and exchange tips; things that worked, and those that didn't. Find me on Facebook to discuss what went well (and what didn't) and look for the Environmental Initiative's posts on Facebook to start a community-wide conversation!

*Valerie Rottink is a life-long UU, raised in our congregation. She leads the Young Adult Group & is a member of the Stitcher's Circle & Environmental Initiative Committee.*

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

## Let's Make Every Day Earth Day

Earth Day Service & Activities  
04.19.2020



Earth Day  
04.22.2019

Visit CVUU's Environmental Initiative to see what you can do from home.  
<https://c-vuu.org/justice-2/environmental-justice/>