

## **One Spiritual Practice for Community Ministers: Community Ministry Sunday**

By Rev. Cat Cox  
UUSCM Good Officer

Did you know that Community Ministry Sunday is an official date on our UUA calendar for the first Sunday in February of each year?

This year it falls on Feb 2. The date was chosen to honor The Four Chaplains, also sometimes referred to as the "Immortal Chaplains," who were four United States Army chaplains who gave their lives to save other civilian and military personnel during the sinking of the troop ship USAT Dorchester on February 3, 1943, during World War II.

They helped other soldiers board lifeboats and gave up their own life jackets when the supply ran out. The chaplains joined arms, said prayers, and sang hymns as they went down with the ship. The four men were relatively new chaplains who all held the rank of first lieutenant. They included Methodist minister the Reverend George L. Fox, Reform Rabbi Alexander D. Goode (Ph.D), Roman Catholic priest the Reverend John P. Washington, and Reformed Church in America minister the Reverend Clark V. Poling.

The Four Chaplains are emblematic of the reality, lifted up by our own President Peter Morales in *Congregations and Beyond*, that so much of the work for and witnessing to the values of our faith is done out in the world, often in interfaith contexts, both by ordained clergy and by committed lay leaders serving in a variety of capacities.

Community ministries of both pastoral and prophetic kinds make real in the larger world the commitment of all Unitarian Universalists to the shared mission of this faith: to do all we can to contribute to the creation of the "tipping point" whereby the values we affirm in our UUA Seven Principles may lead us to a just, healed and transformed world.

Lifting up the work we do in celebratory ways is renewing, energizing and inspiring. We need to spread the good word that community ministry is for everyone who takes seriously the calling of our faith to engage more broadly and creatively in building the world we want to live in.

Please consider creating (or advocating for) a Community Ministry focused worship service - which is certainly not restricted to that first Sunday in February date. However, maybe next year you'll speak up, as I do, with a reminder about being sure it's on the church calendar. Let's be proactive in bringing the work of community ministry -- as it is now and for its enormous potentials -- into the life of our congregations and larger movement.

Blessings on Your Ministry -  
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