Tufts UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY

E-NEWS 9.10.20

Goddard Chapel
Medford, Massachusetts

Welcome Letter

Dear Tufts Community,

As classes begin and we adjust to new ways of being community and new ways of engaging in the sacred work of teaching and learning, I want you to know that we at the University Chaplaincy are here to accompany you. The return to campus likely brings a full range of feelings and responses. If, like me, your anticipation is intermingled with apprehension, I offer you a poem that has often brought me solace in unsettled times.

The Peace of Wild Things

When despair for the world grows in me

And I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,

I go and lie down where the wood drake

Rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things

Who do not tax their lives with forethought

Of grief. I come into the presence of still water.

And I feel above me the day-blind stars

Waiting with their light. For a time

I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

- Wendell Berry

In our inaugural fall 2020 edition of the University Chaplaincy ENews we are pleased to share announcements about two wonderful new staff members who have joined our chaplaincy team over the summer. In addition, we are anticipating the arrival of the new permanent University Chaplain on October 1. If you missed the notice about her appointment, you can read about Reverend Elyse Nelson Winger here.

Whatever your experience of returning this week, this month, in person or virtually, we hope you will reach out and let us know how we can best support you.

Warmly,

Jenny Peace

Tufts University Chaplain, *ad interim*

Introducing our new Hindu Advisor and Africana Spirituality Advisor

Preeta Banerjee
Hindu Advisor

We are pleased to share the news that Preeta Banerjee, Ph.D. and Azmera Hammouri-Davis, M.T.S. have joined the University Chaplaincy Team.

Preeta has joined the Tufts University Chaplaincy as the first ever Hindu Advisor. As Hindu Advisor, Preeta will work in partnership with the Hindu Students Council (HSC) to provide opportunities for nourishing the mind, body, spirit and soul. She is committed to educating the campus at large about Hinduism and connecting the Hindu community to the rest of the campus. Preeta says, "I am honored to be the first Hindu advisor at Tufts and look forward to connecting to the Tufts community in spiritual care from a Hindu lens. I bring to this work a broad and deep range of experience, having spent over twenty years in academia, coaching, and consulting as an advocate, educator, and researcher at the intersection of spirituality, sustainable business, and innovation. I look forward to working with the Hindu Student Council and am available to anyone curious about learning more regarding Hinduism across the spectrum of philosophy, spirituality, religion, and practice."

Azmera Hammouri-Davis
Africana Spirituality Advisor

As Africana Spirituality Advisor, Azmera will work in a partnership with the University Chaplaincy and the Africana Center to provide opportunities for students to deepen their curiosity, and nourish their critical reflection around spiritual cultivation. Azmera received her Master's of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, is a scholar-practitioner of the Afro-Brazilian martial art of Capoeira, and has worked at the intersection of arts education, innovation, and social justice for nearly a decade. Operating at the nexus of spirituality, creativity, and transformative justice, she is committed to cultivating and sustaining lasting bonds that center interfaith dialogue for liberation and justice among the Afro-diasporic community. Azmera says "I am eager to learn alongside, grow and guide students curious about meaning-making across the spectrum of African spirituality and its myriad forms of expression. I bring to this space a deep commitment to passion and compassion for the imperfect, the flawed, the

seeking."

You can read more about our new team members on our website and email Preeta and Azmera any time.

Check in with a Chaplain

Our chaplains and advisors are here for you, no matter where you are in the world or how you are doing in this time. Click on a chaplain's name below to schedule a time for conversation, meditation, prayer, or to check in about anything else on your heart or mind. You can go to the contact page on our website to find bios and additional information, too.

Jennifer Howe Peace, University Chaplain ad interim
Preeta Banerjee, Hindu Advisor
Rev. Dan Bell, Protestant Chaplain
Rabbi Naftali Brawer, Jewish Chaplain
Walker Bristol, Humanist Chaplain
Lynn Cooper, Catholic Chaplain
Azmera Hammouri-Davis, Africana Spirituality Advisor
Abdul-Malik Merchant, Muslim Chaplain
Venerable Priya Sraman, Buddhist Chaplain

Religious and Philosophical Life Programs

You can find more information about our weekly gatherings and student group meetings on our website. You can also find the Zoom links for each event there. If you have an idea for how University Chaplaincy programming can better serve you this semester, please contact program manager Nora Bond.

University Chaplaincy Offerings

Jenny Peace
University Chaplain ad interim

Knitting with the Chaplain
Fridays, 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. ET

Back by popular demand - join University Chaplain *ad interim* for three weeks of virtual crafting. Jenny can help you with your knitting, admire your artistic creations of any kind, and answer your thorny theological questions in a fun, casual Zoom setting. All are welcome! The first session is Friday, September 11, and the last session will be Friday, September 25. For more information, contact University Chaplain *ad interim* Jenny Peace.

Virtual Welcome and Q&A with the University Chaplaincy
Monday, September 14, 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. ET

Curious about some of the many religious and philosophical student groups on campus? Wishing you had someone to connect with about life's big questions? Wondering about the campus bells that ring every evening? Join student leaders and chaplains for a Q&A session about the University Chaplaincy – no question is too big or small. We will share more about the mission of the office, the care we can provide to anyone in the Tufts community, and the programs we will be offering this fall. All are welcome. Please email program manager Nora Bond with any questions.

Be-Friend: Interfaith Friendship Program
"Friendship is intimate and ordinary. It can also be revolutionary." -Dana Robert

In this acute moment, building and nourishing relationships is vital to good health and wellbeing. This 10-week interfaith friendship project is designed for students to go deep and to talk about this things that matter like our values, our sense of purpose, and our questions about life. You will learn the skill of active listening while experimenting with shared spiritual practices from different religious and philosophical traditions. Several of our chaplains have contributed to the program offering a diverse array of spiritual practices, including nature walks, meditation exercises, listening to music, deep reading—of poetry, art, the world, our lives and one another. Participating students are paired in dyads and commit to spending an hour together each week, as well as another half hour in private reflection. Contact Catholic Chaplain Lynn Cooper if you are interested or have any questions; there is no deadline to apply by.

For Zoom links to any offering listed above, please visit our website.

Buddhist Chaplaincy Offerings

Tufts Buddhist Mindfulness Sangha Meditation and Reflection
Mondays and Fridays, 12 p.m. - 1 p.m. ET

This semester, Sangha will meet on Mondays for a discussion and shorter meditation, and on Fridays for a full hour of meditation. In September, Monday discussion topics will include: how to make an altar for personal use, and the purpose and practice of Buddhist prayer. Please connect with Buddhist Chaplain The Venerable Priya Sraman for more information. The first session is Friday, September 11. All are welcome.

Priya Sraman, Buddhist Chaplain

For the Zoom link to the offering listed above, please visit our website.

Lynn Cooper
Catholic Chaplain

Catholic Chaplaincy Offerings

Catholic Spirituality Hour
Wednesdays, 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. ET

Catholic Virtual Mass Gathering
Sundays, 5 p.m. - 6 p.m. ET

The Catholic community will not be offering in-person worship this year, but will be gathering virtually at 5 p.m. ET each Sunday to watch and celebrate Mass together. Throughout the course of the semester, they will “visit” the parishes of different members of the Catholic Community at Tufts by watching that week’s previously recorded Mass. All are welcome.

Confession by appointment

For more information please connect with Catholic Chaplain Lynn Cooper.

Rooting Out Racism: An Online Retreat for White Christian Folks
Launching in October; dates and times to be determined

Author Isabel Wilkerson notes that, “This moment we’re in is not just a social crisis and not just a political crisis. It’s a spiritual crisis.” The Catholic and Protestant Chaplaincies are seeking to address this spiritual crisis by offering a small group series based on “Rooting out Racism,” a pray-at-your-own-pace online retreat consisting of streaming audio reflections and prayer prompts. It invites white Christians to search their souls, understand how Christianity has contributed to racial inequity, and to commit more deeply to uprooting racism from their hearts and from the world. The group will meet over the course of five weeks in small groups facilitated by Catholic Chaplain Lynn Cooper and Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell for discussion and mutual support. If you would like to participate or learn more, please email Catholic chaplain Lynn Cooper or Protestant chaplain Dan Bell.

For Zoom links to any offering listed above, please visit our website.

Humanist Chaplaincy Offerings

Weekly Gathering
Fridays, 3 p.m. - 4 p.m. ET

Join the Humanist Community at Tufts for their weekly moment of connection and reflection by candlelight. Each week, they explore questions of philosophy, language, art, and meaning, drawn together by a shared concern for the goodness of humanity and our shared natural world. For more information, contact Humanist Chaplain Walker Bristol. The first session will be Friday, September 11. All are welcome.

For the Zoom link to the offering listed above, please visit our website.

Walker Bristol, Humanist Chaplain

Naftali Brawer
Jewish Chaplain
Executive Director of Tufts Hillel

Jewish Chaplaincy Offerings

Weekly Shabbat Virtual Offerings
Fridays, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. ET

Join Tufts Hillel for Shabbat Dinner To-Go meals, now with both a meat and vegan option. Pre-ordering is mandatory. If seats are available when you pick-up, you are welcome to stay and eat at Hillel. For questions please email Hillel, and to find more information about Shabbat this semester visit the Hillel Calendar. Please note that Shabbat dinner will not be available on Friday, September 18 due to Rosh Hashanah observances. For more information about High Holiday observances through Hillel, please visit the Hillel website.

Talmud Chaburah
Fridays, 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. ET

Join Rabbi Naftali on Friday mornings for Talmud study! This opportunity is for those who have studied Talmud previously and want to develop their Talmud study stills. Ability to read Hebrew is a prerequisite. For more information contact Rabbi Naftali Brawer. Please note, Talmud Chaburah will not take place on Friday, September 18 due to Rosh Hashanah observances.

For more information about any of the offerings listed, please visit the Hillel website.

Muslim Chaplaincy Offerings

Islam at Sea Level: Foundational, Practical Islamic Theology
Thursdays, 8:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. ET

Exploring foundational Islamic theology through a practical lens using a short 18th century poem. Though the class will be intentionally catering to the Muslim community, attendance is completely open to everyone. For more information contact Muslim Chaplain Abdul-Malik Merchant. The first session will be Thursday, September 17.

For the Zoom link to the offering listed above, please visit our website.

Abdul-Malik Merchant
Muslim Chaplain

Dan Bell, Protestant Chaplain

Protestant Chaplaincy Offerings

Protestant Evening Worship (PEW)
Sundays, 7 p.m. - 8 p.m. ET

Join the Protestant student community and Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell for worship through prayer, song, sermon, and reflection over Zoom. While we cannot be together in person right now, Christ is still present among us and the Spirit draws us together as God's people. After the service, everyone is welcome to stay and hang out. All are welcome, no matter who you are or where you find yourself in your journey of life and faith.

Noonday Prayer and Check-In with Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell
Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. ET

Starting in September, Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell will be available for a brief time of prayer at 12:30 followed by virtual office hours on Mondays and Wednesdays. Please feel free to drop in anytime to talk and pray. You can also email Dan or visit his Calendly to set up a time to meet.

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Partner Programs

New Counseling and Mental Health Services Program - Ask a Counselor
Available Monday - Friday between 11:00 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 2 p.m. ET

Ask a Counselor is best for students who:

- Are not sure about counseling and wonder what it’s like to speak with a counselor, or have specific questions about Counseling and Mental Health Services (CMHS) and therapy
- Would like to get a counselor’s perspective about whether and how therapy could be helpful for them
- Would like to obtain a counselor’s perspective about a particular problem or issue (for example, being concerned about a roommate and unsure of who to talk to about it or how to talk to the roommate)

Follow the link to learn more about Ask a Counselor and CMHS. To request an Ask a Counselor appointment, connect online or call CMHS at 617-627-3360.

Please note: Ask a Counselor is not meant for students who are in crisis or are having active thoughts of self-harm. In this case, please call CMHS at 617-627-3360 and let the receptionist know that you need to speak with a clinician urgently. Ask a Counselor is also not meant for students who have a problem or issue they want to spend more than 15 minutes working through with a counselor. Regular 45-minute appointments are available Mondays - Fridays from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and can be scheduled by calling CMHS.

New Workshops with the StAAR Center this Semester

Registration is open

The StAAR Center (Student Accessibility and Academic Resource) offers workshops throughout the semester to help you have a well-rounded experience during your time at Tufts. This semester, workshops include: Planning Systems: Managing Life with Calendars; Motivation & Inspiration from Identity & Values; Go Hard, Rest Hard: Creating Balance and Realistic Goals - and more! Check out the Workshop Calendar to see all of the offerings. To register go to Tutor Finder and click "Workshops." The Center also provides academic coaching, writing tutoring, small group tutoring, and study groups as well. Please note: All StAAR Center Workshops during Fall 2020 will be held via Zoom. Workshops are open to any student in the Tufts community.

Tisch College Election 2020 Initiatives

The student-led JumboVote initiative is ramping up its efforts to ensure all our students are ready to participate in democracy this fall, wherever they are and wherever they plan to vote. JumboVote has an updated website and up-to-date resources to help students make a voting plan and know state-by-state absentee voting deadlines and processes.

Tisch College is also expanding and enhancing two existing programs. The Tisch Fund, which offers grants for student civic engagement projects, is accepting applications earlier than usual this year, and they have set aside additional funding for projects that address racial injustice. You can apply to the Tisch Fund here. In addition, just as Tisch did this summer, they are offering Fall 2020 Campaign Fellowships to support students who secure internships in 2020 campaign organizations. You can apply for a Fellowship here.

Resources, Scholarships, and Opportunies

An Introduction to Jewish Mysticism & Kabbalah
Tuesdays, 9:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. ET

This course serves as a broad overview of the intellectual history of Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah. It will introduce mystical ideas and doctrines from Biblical texts to contemporary sources. When applicable, it will situate these ideas and doctrines within a wider non Jewish context. It will pay special attention to the inherent tensions within the mystical enterprise, as well as the conflict between mysticism and rationalism. Finally, it will invite the student to reflect on the uses and limits of mysticism in shaping contemporary religious experience. This course is cross-listed between Judaic Studies and Religion. You can enroll here.

Learning to Walk with God in the World: Online Retreat Hosted by the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
Register by September 25

The Episcopal Diocese of Masachusetts is hosting an online retreat on Saturday, October 3 for young adults (ages 18-39). The theme of the retreat is Learning to Walk with God in the World and it will focus on helping participants gain practices of discernment, which "help us isten to our lives and sort out where the Holy Spirit may be active." Dr. Kathy Staudt, a college and seminary teacher, spiritual director and writer, will facilitate the event. This event is offered free of charge to all participants thanks to the Young Adult Ministries budget of the Diocese of Massachusetts.Follow the links to find more information about the event, and the registration form. Please contact Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell with any questions.

Upcoming Religious Holidays and Festivals

These events are drawn from the multifaith calendar maintained by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at Harvard Divinity School. To see more upcoming religious holidays and festivals, please follow the link to the Harvard Divinity School calendar.

Ghambar Paitishem
Saturday, 9.12 – Wednesday, 9.16.2020
Tradition: Zoroastrianism

Celebrates the creation of plants, the sowing of the winter crop and the return of herds from pasture

Rosh Hashanah
Friday, 9.18 – Sunday, 9.20.2020
Tradition: Judaism
The Jewish New Year and the anniversary of the creation of the world, Rosh Hashanah is the first of the Ten Days of Awe (also known as the Ten Days of Repentance) that conclude on Yom Kippur. It marks the beginning of the holiest time of the year for Jews.

Mabon
Sunday, 9.20.2020
Tradition: Wicca/Paganism
Autumnal equinox and the second harvest festival, celebrating the equivalence of light and dark, the arrival of Autumn, and thanksgiving for the Earth's bounty. (Begins at sundown)

Support the University Chaplaincy

Supporting dynamic programs at Tufts University in religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life is easy and vital to our work. To donate, please click on the button below. Thank you for your generosity.

Give Today

ABOUT US

The University Chaplaincy is a dynamic hub supporting religious, spiritual, ethical, and cultural life for all members of the Tufts community. We provide pastoral care, support religious and philosophical communities, educate about spiritual and ethical issues in society and the world, and promote multifaith engagement.

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