Tufts UNIVERSITY CHAPLAINCY

E-NEWS 4.22.20

A peach blossom in Ven. Priya Sraman's yard

A note from the Buddhist Chaplain

With the change of weather—from frosty winter cold to warm spring temperatures here in Massachusetts—I have developed a new connection with the peach tree in the backyard of my house. It has pinkish flowers with green sprouting leaves (a picture is included above). Standing like a canopy over the wooden bench, the tree is a resourceful presence for birds, squirrels, bees, and me. I spend time with the tree daily, looking at the blossoming flowers, sometimes taking photos and videos of the bees and birds around it, and always feeling joyful with the reflection of its gracefulness. The peach blossom tree has added serenity to my backyard.

Now, whenever I open the backdoor of my house to take a walk there, it is not simply for the purpose of getting sunshine, fresh air, or looking at the vast open sky. Now I do that with curiosity—how is the peach blossom tree doing? As I enter into the backyard, an image comes to my mind that echoes with the reality out there—the peach blossom with its flowers, offering shade to the wooden bench. At times, there are other creatures around. Rabbits, squirrels, bees, and other birds whose names I do not know, nibbling on the grass or looking for their next meals.

about their business as usual, these little creatures are giving me company in this time of physical distancing, and enhancing my connection with the world around me. I am grateful to them.

I share this to remind you and myself that there is so much life around us. There are so many little parts of life existing in their own way, in their respective places, welcoming our participation in the world that they create. We may be physically distant from many people whom we want to spend time with, but where we are now has a world of its own. We can choose to find that world and benefit from its resources graciously.

We can allow ourselves to keep connecting with all the good that the Earth still continues to offer. Paying attention to the world around us can help us create a much needed connection—a connection that sustains joy, positivity, and gratitude. At least, I know that it is helping me. As Earth Day is today, I invite you to consider it as an opportunity to find and reconnect with parts of nature—plants, trees, flowers, birds, animals, etc.—as little details that fill up the space wherever you are.

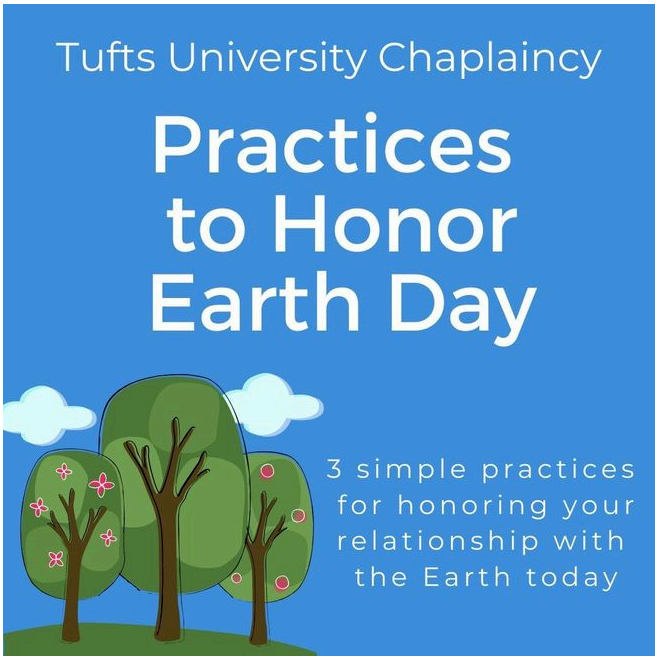
In peace,
Ven. Priya Sraman
Buddhist Chaplain

Earth Day with the University Chaplaincy

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, the University Chaplaincy has created a series of practices and a collection of wise words from different traditions. These practices and quotes respond to our guiding question this year: What is your relationship to the Earth?

Follow our Instagram account here to see "3 simple practices for honoring your relationship with the Earth" today, tomorrow, and Friday this week.

We invite you to share your honoring practices this Earth Day by tagging us in your posts at @tufts_chaplaincy and using #TuftsEarthDay2020. Together, we can uplift the variety of ways our community is celebrating Earth Day this year



Sustaining Practices with the University Chaplaincy

The University Chaplaincy team is offering short videos to the community, featuring a range of ideas for grounding and centering. These videos include practices and invitations to reflect, hosted by a chaplain or University Chaplaincy staff member. Our team hopes the videos will offer sustenance in this time, and speak to people from a range of religious and philosophical backgrounds. Each video will be posted to our Facebook page.

This week, Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell and Muslim Chaplain Abdul-Malik Merchant will offer reflections for

Check-In with a Chaplain

Our chaplains 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.

Jennifer Howe Peace, University Chaplain *ad interim*

Rev. Dan Bell, Protestant Chaplain

Rabbi Naftali Brawer, Jewish Chaplain

Walker Bristol, Humanist Chaplain

Lynn Cooper, Catholic Chaplain

Abdul-Malik Merchant, Muslim Chaplain

Venerable Priya Sraman, Buddhist Chaplain

Religious and Philosophical Life Programs

Coffee and Kabbalah with Rabbi Naftali Brawer

Join Rabbi Naftali Brawer in Coffee & Kabbalah, a short video spiritual reflection over excellent coffee. Find Rabbi Brawer's videos on the Tufts Hillel Facebook page.

You can view the short videos any time, and new ones are posted weekly on Fridays through the semester. More information about Hillel's offerings are available on their website and Facebook page.

Muslim Chaplain Chats
Wednesday, April 22, 8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. ET

Join in a conversation with Muslim Chaplain Abdul-Malik. Note this event formerly happened on Thursdays, and this week is on Wednesday. You are welcome to join, discuss, and be in community. This week's topic is Practical Spirituality. This is the last meeting of the semester.

Join the event via Zoom by clicking here.

For more information, please contact Muslim Chaplain Abdul-Malik Merchant at Am.merchant@tufts.edu.

For updates about the upcoming MSA E-Board election find the event here on the MSA Facebook page.

Check-In and Reflection with Tufts Buddhist Sangha

Mondays, April 27 and May 4, 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. ET

Join Buddhist Chaplain Venerable Priya for meditation, Dharma-discussion, and spiritual reflection every Monday and Friday. All are welcome. For more information, please contact Buddhist Chaplain Priya Sraman at Priya.Sraman@tufts.edu.

Join Monday events via Zoom by clicking here and Friday events via Zoom by clicking here.

Humanist Hangout by Zoom
Friday, April 24 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET

Join Humanist Chaplain Walker Bristol for an informal hangout through Zoom in place of the regular HCAT (Humanist Community at Tufts) meeting. This will be the last meeting of the semester. You are invited to bring a candle or small light as a way of being connected during our time together. All are welcome.

For more information please contact Humanist Chaplain Walker Bristol at Walker.Bristol@tufts.edu.

Join for the event via Zoom by clicking here.

Hindu Students Council Discussions
Friday, April 24, 9:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. ET

Tufts Hindu Students Council (HSC) will hold their weekly discussion via Zoom. The Council will be continuing to talk about the stories and epics discussed this semester, as well as various topics surrounding Hindu customs and traditions. HSC hopes that you are staying safe and healthy during this time, and that you can join us to de-stress. This will be the last meeting of the semester.

Join the events via Zoom by clicking here.

Open Hour - Check-In and Reflection with the Catholic Chaplain
Sundays, April 26 and May 3, 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. ET

All are welcome to gather virtually to be in solidarity with one another. Come for as long or as short as you are able. This informal hour is a time to see one another and to draw from our tradition's wealth of wisdom on sustenance.

For more information, please contact Catholic Chaplain Lynn Cooper at Lynn.Cooper@tufts.edu.

Join the events via Zoom by clicking here.

Catholic Chaplaincy on Instagram (@tufts_catholic_chaplaincy)

Check out the Catholic Chaplaincy's new Instagram account. This account will be a place to collect and reflect on videos and photos from Catholic Chaplain Lynn Cooper and the broader Catholic Community of Tufts. Follow the link to view the latest on the Instagram account.

Protestant Evening Worship
Sundays, April 26 and May 3, 7:00 p.m. ET

Wherever you find yourself in mind, body, and spirit in these challenging times, there is always room for you in the PEW. Join the Protestant student community for worship through prayer, singing, preaching, and reflection over Zoom, led by Protestant Chaplain Dan Bell. While we cannot be together in person right now, Christ is still present among us and the Spirit draws us together to be God's people in the world. After each service, everyone is welcome to stay and hang out.

On April 26, PEW welcomes the Reverend Wendy Miller Olapade as a guest preacher. Rev. Wendy is the Lead Pastor of Sanctuary United Church of Christ in Medford, Massachusetts. She will be reflecting on the story of the Road to Emmaus, when the risen Christ becomes known to the disciples in the breaking of the bread. Rev. Wendy will celebrate Holy Communion with us as well. If possible, please bring bread and wine or grape juice with you, or any food and drink you have.

Join the events via Zoom by clicking here.

Rev. Wendy Miller Olapade

Do you have an idea for how the University Chaplaincy can support you?
Please contact the Program Manager, Nora Bond, at Nora.Bond@tufts.edu. We are working to be responsive to student needs in this time of a virtual chaplaincy, and welcome your insights, suggestions, and requests.

Email Nora

Partner Programs

EarthWeek 2020

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Earth Day. Even in these uncertain times of the Covid-19 virus, the Office of Sustainability invites you to come together (at a safe distance) to care for our planet. Check the Office of Sustainability page throughout April to learn about #AtHomeActivism you can participate in, virtual events, webinars, campaigns, a raffle, and more.

The Mellon Sawyer Seminar at Tufts University presents Black, Indigineous, Queer Family Futures
Wednesday, April 29 8:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. ET

The 2019-2020 Mellon Sawyer Seminar at Tufts University presents Black, Indigineous, Queer Family Futures

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conversation, and an open question and answer session. Alan Pelaez Lopez is an AfroIndigenous poet, installation and adornment artist from Oaxaca, México; their poetry has been selected to appear in Best New Poets 2019 and Best American Experimental Writing 2020. Deanna Bowen is a descendant of two Alabama and Kentucky born Black Prairie pioneer families from Amber Valley and Campsie, Alberta; she is a recipient of a 2020 Governor General Award for Visual and Media Arts Award, 2016 and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. Find more information through the Facebook event. Follow this link to register for the event on Zoom.

Mindfulness and Yoga Opportunities

Christina Pastan, D91, DG94, director of Mind-Body Wellness at the Tufts School of Dental Medicine, will lead virtual drop-in meditation on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. ET through May 28. She will lead virtual yoga Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. ET through April 28. Write to her at Christina.Pastan@tufts.edu to be added to the e-list for information. Please also visit the webpage Tufts Health Promotion and Prevention for more information about its mindfulness sessions and its Student-Athlete Mindfulness Program.

CARE: Art for April

April is Sexual Violence Awareness Month. CARE is asking for art submissions that raise awareness for the diverse and intersecting narratives of folks harmed by sexual violence, to honor and empower all impacted people and communities. Submissions can be pictures, drawings, spoken word performances, poems, social media pages, and many more works of art. Artists can submit their work here and email any questions to Kyla Martin at Kyla.Martin@tufts.edu.

CMHS Virtual Support Group for Undergraduates
Wednesdays, April 15 through May 6, 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. ET

A group for Tufts undergraduates currently living on campus or in the greater Boston area. Join a small group of other students in four weekly meetings via Zoom. This confidential group aims to help you build connection, get support, and share strategies for self-care and coping in the current challenging times. Facilitated by Counseling and Mental Health Services Staff Clinicians, Marilyn Downs and Sophie Ricks. For more information or to sign up, please contact: Marilyn.Downs@tufts.edu or Sophie.Ricks@tufts.edu.

CMHS Virtual Support Group for Graduate Students
Fridays, April 17 through May 8, 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. ET

A group for Tufts graduate students currently living on campus or in the greater Boston area. Join a small group of other students in four weekly meetings via Zoom. This confidential group aims to help you build connection, get support, and share strategies for self-care and coping in the current challenging times. Facilitated by CMHS Staff Clinicians, Sophie Ricks and Marilyn Downs. For more information or to sign up, please contact: Sophie.Ricks@tufts.edu or Marilyn.Downs@tufts.edu.

Resources, Scholarships and Opportunies

Work as a Peer Leader for Leadership for Social Change with Tisch College (Virtually)
Apply by Thursday, April 30 2020

Tisch College's Leadership for Social Change Program: Virtual Edition is hiring six Peer Leaders and two Graduate Teaching Assistants located across the country and the globe to take on the role of working with high school students (entering grades 10-12) who are passionate about learning how to enact social change in their communities. The program will run from July 12-24, 2020. Follow this link for the Peer Leader job description and this link for the Graduate TA job description.

If interested, please email your resume and cover letter to Brianda Hernandez at brianda.hernandez@tufts.edu. In your cover letter please describe why you want to be a peer leader or graduate teaching assistant and what skills, knowledge, and experiences you bring to this role. Please specify in your application materials your local time zone during the dates of the program.

COVID-19 Documentation Project

While health and safety is everyone's first priority, the Tufts Digital Collections and Archives (DC&A) have been working to develop a community documentation project. Creating documentation of this historic moment not only provides firsthand accounts of life during a pandemic but can also serve as an emotional outlet for the people living through it. To that end, DC&A invites you to keep a journal or create other documentation of what is happening in your life now: at school, with your family and friends, in the news. We are especially interested in stories about the shift to remote learning, displacement from student housing, impact on student or off-campus jobs and other changes to your daily life.

If you're interested in contributing to the Tufts COVID-19 Pandemic Collection at Digital Collections and Archives, please fill out this webform. Additional details and guidelines for submission are also available on the DC&A website. Any questions can be submitted to archives@tufts.edu.

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.

Ramadan
Thursday, 4.23 – Saturday, 5.23.2020
Tradition: Islam
The Holy Month of Ramadan is the month of fasting during which Muslims who are physically able do not eat or drink from the first sign of dawn until sunset in honor of the first revelations to the Prophet Muhammad. The evening meal is celebrated with family.

Beltane
Thursday, 4.30.2020
Tradition: Wicca/Paganism
The final fertility festival, celebrating the Earth's fecundity and anticipating the power of the sun and the Earth in summer.

Ghambar Maidyozarem
Thursday, 4.30 – Monday, 5.4.2020
Tradition: Zoroastrianism
Celebrates the creation of the sky and harvesting of the winter crop.

About the University Chaplaincy Enews

The University Chaplaincy Enews is published weekly by the Tufts University Chaplaincy to promote programs and opportunities related to spirituality, ethics, culture, and social justice. To propose announcements for inclusion please contact the University Chaplaincy at chaplaincy@tufts.edu.

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

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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