



MAY'S SERVICE THEME: **IMPERFECTION**

Below are the tentative topics for our May on-line meetings, using the Zoom platform. Please check the website closer to the date in case any changes have been necessary.

MAY 3

Pet Parade

Guest Minister:

Rev. Katie Stein Sather

Service Coordinator: Janet Pivnick

The animals in our lives bless us with their very presence. They give us a reason to get up in the morning, to get out and exercise, and they often love us unconditionally. Let's meet them online and share a short story about how they are precious to you.

MAY 10

Perfectly Imperfect

Rev. Meg Roberts

In this topsy turvy time, we may be experiencing stress which can strain our relationships. What do we expect of ourselves and each other? How can we embrace being perfectly imperfect and accept that in others? The ancient Greeks developed the concept of perfection but it is often misunderstood. We'll practice some techniques that engage our senses of humour and humility! We will also honour Mother's Day, so if you wish to have a picture of your mother(s) on hand (if they're not in the house with you), please do.

MAY 17

9:30 AM PACIFIC TIME Canadian Unitarian Council's Cross-Canada Sunday Service

Join UUs from across Canada for a unique opportunity to celebrate in a national Sunday Service together. Rev. Norm Horofker from the Universalist Unitarian Church of Halifax, with

his ministerial colleagues, will lead a worship service for Canadians across the country and worldwide. Information will be shared in "Beacon This Week" email about how to connect to this online service—through Zoom, Youtube or Facebook. Please Note: *This will be the service offered for Beaconites to join for this Sunday.*

MAY 24

Forget Your Perfect Offering

Beacon Members: Nancy

Rupert, Judy Villet and David Kristjanson

From *Anthem* by Leonard Cohen:

*Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in
That's how the light gets in.*

Leonard Cohen's lyrics inspire us to look at flaws as opportunities. Let us gather together to celebrate the imperfections of our lives, and the beauty, growth and wisdom that can emerge as a result.

MAY 31

The Cycle of Life

Rev. Meg Roberts

Human beings are mortal—we are born, we live, we die. In times of crisis, we are very aware of this fact and of how interconnected we really are. How can we as Unitarians be prepared and live life to the fullest now? As we sing, "For all life is a gift which we are called to use to build the common good, and make our own days glad."

Musings by Meg

May's theme is **Imperfection**. The other day, I found myself getting impatient. I was tired, I didn't sleep well the night before—too much rumbling around in my head about work, the state of the world, and the earth. In a Zoom meeting, I was feeling irritable and edgy. Less than charitable thoughts were crossing my mind—and then I remembered some advice I read in a novel recently.

I love detective novels. I particularly enjoy Louise Penny's series with Chief Inspector Armand Gamache (set in Quebec). In her latest installment, *A Better Man*, Gamache shares this advice with those working with him: "Before speaking... you might want to ask yourself three questions... Is it true? Is it kind? Does it need to be said?"

So then, in that Zoom meeting, I took a few deep breaths and kept my mouth shut until the uncharitable thoughts passed, and I could find a sense of heart-to-heart connection again.

As the time extends for us to maintain social distancing, we may be in close proximity with a few people (or furry family members)—in the same dwelling, same complex, or even through the phone or other electronic means. How do you deal with other's imperfections (which can be so grating on the nerves)?

Beaconites created a statement to help ourselves remember how we want

to be together in this community. It's called a *Covenant of Right Relations*. It's the promises we make to one another:

We, the members of Beacon Unitarian Congregation, acknowledge that this covenant of Right Relations exists within a spiritual community, based on the Seven Principles of Unitarianism.

We covenant:

- 1. To respect each other, honouring the diversity of opinions in the congregation.*
- 2. To honour both the abilities and disabilities in the congregation.*
- 3. To practice civil communication, which is courteous and considerate.*
- 4. To participate with trust and commitment.*
- 5. To challenge our assumptions and expectations.*
- 6. To bring our goodwill and hear through our hearts.*
- 7. To encourage laughter and the giving of care.*

Recognizing that we are imperfect human beings, we will strive nonetheless to meet the intentions of this covenant. (If the covenant is broken, we turn to the supportive policies on Conflict Resolution and Disruptive Behaviour.)

As imperfect human beings, there will be times we miss the mark on some of these actions. We may need to acknowledge when what we have said or done has had an impact on

others and apologize. We may need to speak up when something doesn't sit well with us. It's up to us to bring compassion and care to each other during this stressful and unpredictable time in our lives and the world. We can remember to use this covenant in our Beacon meetings, to ground us in our values and intentions to respect and honour each other. And if you need to remember even fewer words, remember Gamache's advice: "Before speaking... you might want to ask yourself three questions... Is it true? Is it kind? Does it need to be said?"

In the spirit,

—Rev. Meg Roberts



Rev. Meg Roberts

How to reach me:

Because I'm working half-time from home, here's how best to reach me:

- My regular Beacon days are Wednesdays and Thursdays. To support emotional connection and physical distancing, I'm available for appointments via Zoom or phone.
- I work Fridays and Saturdays of those weekends when I lead the Sunday service—focusing on service preparation those days as well as other work. (This month, that's May 8–9 and May 29–30.)
- Mondays and Tuesdays are my regular days off right now.
- I can be reached via email: minister@BeaconUnitarian.org and on my cell at 778-870-9015. I will respond as soon as I'm able. If it's an emergency, please leave a message on my phone.

I look forward to connecting with you.

Keeping current during the pandemic

To be most responsive to the changing plans and needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will be updating our website as new information about our services and programs becomes available. Visit beaconunitarian.org, or contact our board president: president@beaconunitarian.org. We will also be sending information using our weekly email update, *Beacon This Week*; our Beacon Unitarian Church Facebook Group, and the weekly Religious Explorations email newsletter, currently entitled the *Weekly Quarantine Care Kit*.

Board Bitz

Even with the Covid 19 pandemic, Beacon continues to be a community that **Connects, Inspires and Transforms**. We have been holding Services via Zoom every Sunday and even having Coffee Hour. We have been seeing friends that we haven't seen for a while because they are now able to connect with us over the internet. The few in our congregation, who do not have computers, have been joining our **Sunday Services** over the phone. Joining by phone is a little more challenging than online, but they have been jumping through all those extra hoops just to be with us. We appreciate their dedication and are working hard on making this process a little easier. It seems that we are seeing each other more than ever as we continue to meet over Zoom for all our **Groups and Clubs**. It is all very exciting and has made being stuck at home much more bearable. Please check our website www.beaconunitarian.org and watch for **Beacon This Week** in your email to keep up to date on what is going on.

Many thanks to **Worship Services** and everyone else involved in making our online experience so enjoyable and inspiring. Because they are also a part of our Beacon family, the board voted to keep our pianist **Ming-Xuan Chung**, Sound Technician **Tyler Ewasiuk**, and Choir Director extraordinaire **Sylvia McDonald** working behind the scenes until the end of the church year in order to bring their knowledge and many talents to our Sunday Services. Thank you as well to our Director of Religious Exploration, **Ashley Cole**, who continues to work with families in our congregation during this time of quarantine. She has been indispensable. **Rev. Meg Roberts** has proven to be our rock during these difficult times and has

been working tirelessly with all our committees to make sure that no one in the congregation is being forgotten and that we are all being well taken care of. We are all so very happy that Rev. Meg Roberts and the others will be staying with us for another year. The board will begin over the next few weeks to negotiate their contracts for the 2020/2021 church year.

As we move into May, we welcome **Susan Tarras, Regina Ogmundson, Amalia Mamani, and Rob Warner** to the Beacon Board. We thank you for agreeing to bring your many talents and fresh perspectives to the board. They will be joining **Heather Brown, Karen Greenland**, and myself, **David Kristjanson** for the 2020/2021 church year. Also joining us this year is **Charlotte Moon** who will be bringing a youth perspective to the board.

Leaving the board this year are Janet Pivnick, Elizabeth Campbell, John Hagen, and Donna Hamilton.

While working full time, taking many courses, and being chair of the Worship committee, **Janet Pivnick** still managed to be a dedicated board member and took on the difficult role of Secretary. **Elizabeth Campbell** brought us much knowledge from her many years on committees and boards at other Unitarian Churches. It was always good to hear how other congregations handled situations when we were unsure of what direction to take. **John Hagen**, who has been a Beacon member since 1983, was not only a hard working board member, but also a wealth of knowledge from the many positions he has held at Beacon over the years. John also hosted our board meetings in his home every month for which we are eternally grateful. **Donna Hamilton** is not only leaving the board but is moving all the way across the country to live in New Brunswick

near her children and grandchildren. Donna has also been a Beacon member since 1983 and has held almost every position there is to hold during that time. It was mentioned at one of our workshops in the fall when we were discussing Beacon's history, that we must not forget our Hamiltonian heritage, meaning Donna and David Hamilton. Donna has created most of the fabric artwork that you see at Beacon and at many other congregations. She has been a great influence on all things Beacon and will be sorely missed. Thanks you all for your hard work on the board.

— David Kristjanson, President



David Kristjanson

Need some support?

Beacon's Pastoral Support Team encourages members and friends to reach out and let us know if you, or someone you know, has a specific need. For example: wanting emotional or physical support of some kind; illness at home or in hospital; in self-isolation and needing help with errands. We can do our best to be of use and will be asking other Beaconites to assist in ways that meet recommendations around social contact from BC's Provincial Health Officer. **Likewise, our team is looking for help** in case getting groceries, doing errands, or other kinds of assistance as requested. Thank you for helping Beacon be the caring community it wants to be.

—Rev. Meg Roberts (778-870-9015),
Laura Redmond and Judy Villett
pastoralcare@beaconunitarian.org

Let's Connect with the Beacon Book Club

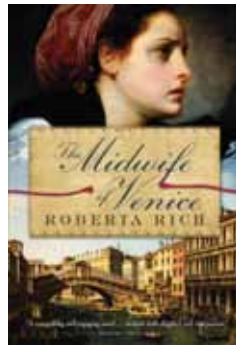
Anyone is welcome to join. We meet from 7 to 9 pm on the fourth Thursday of the month, year round. We previously met in a member's home (usually at John Hagen's place as the photo shows) where we drank tea, had snacks and discussed the monthly choice for an hour or so. We now meet via Zoom. The discussion is led by the person who nominated that month's book selection. Generally, we nominate and vote on upcoming selections twice a year. Current and upcoming book selections are posted on the Beacon website.

10 Reasons for Belonging to the Beacon Book Club (in no particular order):

- Snacks and tea (by the fireside in winter when we get back together)
- Friendship, fun and laughter
- A time for sharing with longtime Beacon friends as well as newcomers to Beacon
- Encouragement to read outside our comfort zone and experience the world differently

- Broad range of titles to read: memoir, fiction, fantasy, humour, non-fiction, classics, Canadiana, international and more
- Democratic selection of books
- Thoughtful, articulate discussion
- Freedom to share our thoughts and ideas in a welcoming group
- Intellectual stimulation
- New understandings and perspectives

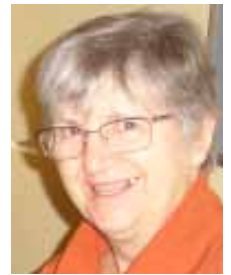
The next meeting of The Beacon Book Club is May 28th via Zoom. The discussion leader is Karen Hamilton and we'll be sharing our thoughts about *The Midwife of Venice* by Roberta Rich (Random House, Inc.), "a gripping historical page-turner, enthralling readers with its suspenseful action and vivid depiction of life in sixteenth-century Venice". See box on page 7 for more details.



February meeting of the Book Club.

Settlement 2 Update

I have no doubt that this is a difficult time for our refugee family, however, Raneem reports that they are managing. Any



Peggy Lunderville

medical appointments are being taken care of by phone. The exception may be an urgent dental visit. April is the start of Ramadan, ending with 'Id al-Fitr on May 25. This would normally be a time of hosting friends and family for a major celebration and dinner. Raneem will turn 17 years of age on April 28 and we wish her a happy birthday, although an isolated one.

—Peggy Lunderville

Celebrating New Life!

Rev. Meg Roberts took over Beacon's card and gift to congratulate the AlRbaai family on their newest addition to the family: Wissam AlRbaai. They were touched and grateful. Here's a lovely photo of baby Wissam (thanks to Heba, his mother). We hope Alaa and Heba are getting some more sleep, as well as the rest of the AlRbaai family. Best wishes of good health and happiness to you all!



Religious Exploration (RE) for May

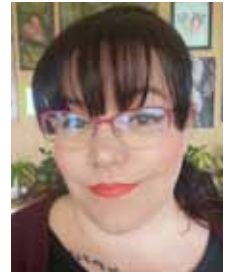
Hello everyone and welcome to May. Can you believe where we have come in a month? When I began writing last month's newsletter we weren't even sure if our events would be cancelled or not, and now it seems like it's been forever that we have been shut in. I know we find ourselves in uncertain and unusual times but I wanted to take a moment to affirm that the Beacon community is resilient and has proven so even through this pandemic. I have been inspired by all those who have adapted to these new times and have gone outside of their technological comfort zones to learn how to be socially connected even as we remain physically distant.

So what are we doing for families during these times? Well, Beacon continues to host online Sunday

services and all ages are always welcome. Each week I have been doing a special welcome to families and have been including a google doc full of printable colouring sheets with Unitarian and service specific themes. I have also repurposed the weekly religious education update email to a "Quarantine Care Kit" that contains plenty of resources. If you receive this and know of someone who could benefit from it feel free to forward it on. If you would like to receive it and currently don't, send me a note and I can add you. Also the religious exploration committee is hard at work brainstorming ways for us to support families and we will share more information on plans and activities through the weekly emails, Sunday service updates and on our facebook group.

Finally, I want to simply affirm that we are here for you and will continue to be here for you in whatever ways are needed and meaningful. Our approach may adapt with the changing times and with the needs of families, but at our core the thing that roots us is our primary goal of creating community. My hope for you this month is that you feel connected and know that you are loved and seen, and that we are all struggling through this together.

Sending lots of love to each of you,
—Ashley Cole (*she/her pronouns*),
Director of Religious Exploration,
dre@beaconunitarian.org



Ashley Cole

Plastics: Two answers, an enzyme, a question and a fact

Two answers

We (New West Environmental Partners) recently asked the New West Solid Waste & Recycling Branch about 'biodegradable' plastic bags and take-out coffee cups:

- **No**, New West doesn't accept 'biodegradable' plastic bags. They are not compatible with the composting system used.
- **Yes**, take-out coffee cups should be recycled in the Container recycle stream.

An enzyme

And from the *Guardian* newspaper: A mutant bacterial **enzyme** that breaks down plastic bottles for recycling in hours has been created by scientists. The enzyme, originally discovered in a compost heap of leaves, reduced the

bottles to chemical building blocks that were then used to make high-quality new bottles. Existing recycling technologies usually produce plastic only good enough for clothing and carpets.

A Question: What is Canada doing about plastic pollution?

The federal government has committed to

- Ban some single use plastics in 2021, perhaps including plastic bags, straws, cutlery, plates, and stir sticks. There hasn't been any recent development in this area (COVID19 dominates everything...!)
- Work with provinces and territories to introduce standards and targets for companies that manufacture plastic products or sell items with

plastic packaging, so they become responsible for their plastic waste. (BC is contemplating similar strategies.)



Teresa Morton

One plastic fact that gets forgotten:

Every year, 640,000 tons of abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear enters our oceans.

—Teresa Morton
Living with Less Plastic New West
Teresa.a.morton@gmail.com

Beacon Programs

We invite you to explore these great ways to connect to the Beacon community and yourself!

The Humanist Discussion Group (Online) meets the last Sunday of the month at 7:30 pm, now via Zoom, to discuss a wide range of topics. For **May 31st** the topic will be *Canadian Values: What are they? How are they realized or not realized?* – presented by Marilyn Medén. For further information about the Humanist Group, and for Zoom meeting details, please contact Marilyn Medén m.j.meden@telus.net (604 469 6797) for more details.

Theology Pub (Online)

In May, we shall discuss **our 5th UU source: Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.** Our May 17th meeting will probably be via Zoom and may be later than the usual 12:30—stay tuned. Check *Beacon This Week* for current information. If you'd like to be added to our email list, let me know. Invite others who may be interested. Look up our Principles and Sources. Carry them in your wallet? For more information contact Franci

Louann, email: francilouann@gmail.com or 604-837-7613.

NEW: Online knitting & crafting circle. This idea came in via Janet Pivnik. This isn't a class, it is suggested as an online weekly point of contact with a random group who like to knit or do crafts. We can share our projects, knit together, and chat. Email Laura Redmond (lauraredmond2@telus.net) if this is of interest to you. We will then sort out the best time to meet online.

Book Club meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month at 7 pm and are now online. For Zoom details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@telus.net. **Thurs. May 28: *The The Midwife of Venice* by Roberta Rich.** Facilitator: Karen Hamilton. See box on page 7 for more information.

Settlement 2 Task Force is responsible for the settlement of four refugees who arrived as permanent residents of Canada in July 2019. Those wishing to help as volunteers and/or donate to the settlement fund, please contact Peggy Lunderville, prlunder@gmail.com.

Join the Beacon Choir for musical fun and skill development. Contact choirdirector@beaconunitarian.org for more info. *Note: Choir practices have been suspended until further notice.*

'Getting to Know U'

Attend a 'Getting to Know U' session on Saturday, May 9, 2–3:30 pm



Meet other newcomers and deepen your knowledge of how Beacon functions and what Unitarianism is.

Facilitated by Rev. Meg Roberts with support from our Connecting and Membership Committee.

Please contact Joyce Gudaitis (joyceg@asrsoft.com) or if you don't have computer access, phone Meg (778-870-9015) if you are interested in attending this online gathering by computer or phone.

Please RSVP by May 5 so we can send you information on how to access the meeting on Zoom.

Lunch Bunch meets every Thursday at noon, year-round. Bring your own lunch and share in lively and topical conversation. Contact Anne MacLeod at 604-524-2434. *Note: Meetings have been cancelled until further notice.*

Soul Matters Sharing Circles (Online)

Sharing Deeply, Being Heard

At this time, we meet once a month online using the Zoom platform to deepen our exploration of Beacon's monthly theme, using the theme packet sent out via email at the beginning of each month, or available on our website: <http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/service-descriptions-upcoming-and-recent/>.

The packet includes a couple of options for a spiritual exercise as well as some questions—you choose one exercise to try out that month and one question to ponder.

Led by Rev. Meg Roberts, the next session is planned for Wednesday, May 6 on *Evolution and Change* (April's theme)—we have two groups: 1:00–3:00 pm, or 6:30–8:30 pm.

If you could like to come and try it out, please contact Rev. Meg Roberts for Zoom access information and Soul Matters participant info packet (minister@beaconunitarian.org, 778-870-9015). You can join via computer/smart phone/tablet or via regular phone. All are welcome.



Online Beacon Film Club

The intention for this group is to replace a fun night out at the theatre while we're all cooped up at home.

Similar to the book club, the procedure is to view the film in advance, and then come to a Zoom meeting to chat about it.

The films selected are all available from YouTube for a rental fee (free up to \$6.99). They may also be available for streaming from other internet sources, so if you have a subscription to a streaming service, do check there first. To rent a film from YouTube, just search for the title in YouTube and look for the video that has a blue "Buy or Rent" box next to it.

We will meet to talk about the film at 7 pm on Friday evenings via Zoom. Please email Nancy Rupert (nancy.rupert@gmail.com) for Zoom meeting details. Each week a new person will "host" a film they've chosen. Past films discussed include *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* and *Just Mercy*. Bring your popcorn and your opinions.

May Line-up

- May 1 Michael hosts *Ford Vs. Ferrari*
- May 8 John hosts *The Post*
- May 15 Donna hosts *Cold War*
- May 22 Janene hosts *The Hundred Foot Journey*
- May 29 Marilyn hosts *The Remains of the Day*

Beacon Book Club Thurs. May 28, 7 pm (Online)

Facilitator: Karen Hamilton
The The Midwife of Venice by
Roberta Rich

Roberta Rich has created a wonderful heroine in Hannah Levi, a lioness who will fight for the survival of the man she loves, and the women and babies she is duty-bound to protect, carrying with her the best of humanity's compassion and courage. More info at: <http://beaconunitarian.org/index.php/book-club/>.

For Zoom meeting details contact John Hagen, ajhagen@telus.net.



Dismantling Racism: Assessing Where We Are We need your Input!

Despite all the disruptions to 'normalcy', the CUC's Dismantling Racism Study Group remains committed to our tasks, the first of which is to assess the racial justice work we're already doing.

We want to know...What actions and efforts are you and your congregation taking to tackle the important task of racial justice? What has been your personal experience of racism and racial justice work within Unitarian Universalism?

We are surveying individuals, not groups/congregations, and really want **your** frank and honest feedback. [Click here](#) to do the survey right now! The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. Read on for some background.

Recently, there has been discussion at the Unitarian Universalist Association's General Assembly of adding an 8th principal to our Unitarian Universalist guiding principles, calling for our congregations to accountably dismantle racism in our institutions and within ourselves. This precipitated the 2019 CUC resolution which created our Dismantling Racism Study Group.

No matter your thoughts, we need your **personal** responses to this survey. We want to understand where we are in order to lay out a path to where we want to be. The survey is entirely anonymous unless you choose to provide your contact information.

Your participation in this survey



is a testament to your commitment to racial justice work.

We hope you can take the time to complete it by **April 30**. Please encourage others to do the same!

Thank you.

—The CUC's Dismantling Racism Study Group
Beverly Horton and Rev. Julie Stoneberg, co-chairs; Douglas Ennenberg, Charmaine Ferworn Ashlyn Noble, Pamela Smith-Loeters, Catherine Strickland, Tamiko Suzuki, dismantling-racism@cuc.ca



National Conference Update: Riding the Waves of Change Together

When we named our 2020 national conference *Making Waves*, we had no idea that we'd be navigating what has felt like a tsunami as we head into May. After making the difficult decision to cancel the in-person conference for this year, the Conference team in Halifax and the CUC staff team have been shifting gears in order to present a modified online experience. And we are taking Halifax up on their very generous offer to host the in-person conference in 2021. We will have more to share in the coming days.

One of the things I love about the conference is the opportunity for intergenerational activities on a grander scale. Our CanUdle and Chorus events are still running with online versions and we are inviting our Youth and Young Adults to join in on the virtual conference events as well.

The conference also provides us with an opportunity to celebrate the successes of congregations across the country by honouring our *Shining Lights* nominees. This year the process is slightly different as we are inviting you to a Zoom event Saturday, May 9, 10 am to 12 pm PT, to meet the nominees and hear about their initiatives. You don't need to be a member of the participating congregation, or on the leadership team for your congregation. Our goal here is simply to share some inspiration and encouragement for all our congregations to make

their own waves in their community.

It turns out the theme of Making Waves might have been more appropriate than we could have known. As John Kabat-Zinn says "You can't stop the waves but you can learn to surf." I am personally inviting all of you to join us at our upcoming online Coffeehouse, roundtables, at our Shining Lights events and at our conference so we can support and celebrate as we learn how to ride these waves together.

—Be well, friends, Vyda Ng

Young Adults Virtual Events May 15–17, 2020

There will be three young adult specific events happening over the weekend. On Friday afternoon you may join for an Opening Gathering that will include personal reflection, community building, and time for worship and meditation. On Saturday evening there is a combination of a "Goofball Games" session as well as the Youth and Young Adult Bridging Ceremony. Lastly, on Sunday afternoon you may join for our Closing Gathering which will include worship, further community conversation, and personal reflection.

Register for Ensemble by filling out [this simple form](#) which will be open from April 15–May 5th. A low sliding scale fee is offered. If you have any questions or are interested in helping make this experiment a

success please contact chorus@cuc.ca. Together, we share love!

—Carter Mahoney

Update on CUC COVID-19 response

We continue to develop resources and programs to support and engage congregations during this challenging time. Please visit our [Resources for Congregations During Covid-19](#) Google folder for [Virtual Meeting Resources \(including Zoom\)](#), and an [online calendar for gatherings](#) across the country.

Erin Horvath, Social Justice Lead will be hosting a discussion group focused on Activism and Social Justice in a time of Physical and Social Distancing. What does social justice work look like now? How can we be most effective during this time? Join Erin on Thursday, April 30 4:30–6:00 PT.

While congregations and organizations like the CUC have adapted very quickly to a new online reality, it's important to remember that these changes in the way we connect can be both a welcomed tool but also overwhelming at times. This article "[Zoom Exhaustion is Real](#)" from [mindful.org](#) offers six ways to stay connected and maintain balance while using Zoom.



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Amalia Mamani,
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Deadline for article submissions is the 15th of the month, for inclusion in the following month's newsletter.