



GNUUs

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The Gift of Interdependence

Talk of interdependence immediately calls up the work of saving the planet, rightly so. But what if the first step toward saving the planet is learning to speak to it? And hear it? Could our collective failure to confront the climate crisis be rooted in our lost ability to listen? What if the quickly-going-extinct creatures don't want our sympathy, but our ear? What if the fraying of the web isn't just about us failing to act, but also us having forgotten who we are. And what if nature itself is the only one who can help us remember?

Join us this month as we explore The Gift of Interdependence.

Events This Month

- Apr 3.....Yarns from the Heart+
- Apr 6.....Property Work Day*
- Apr 6.....CUUPs Gathering*
- Apr 7.....Flower Ceremony**
- Apr 7.....Food Bank Donations*
- Apr 7.....Congregational Conversation*+
- Apr 14.....Town Hall Meeting*+
- Apr 14.....Spiral Scouts+
- Apr 17...Yarns from the Heart+
- Apr 17.....Board Meeting+
- Apr 20...Green Team Meeting+
- Apr 21.....Sunday Tarot*
- Apr 24.....Book Group+
- Apr 27.....Auction*+
- Apr 28.....Good Trouble*+

Tuesdays.....Choir Rehearsal*

Thursdays.....Music Night*

*in person

+via Zoom

For details visit uucg.org

Did you Gnow?

- Pound for pound, spider silk is stronger than steel and tougher than Kevlar.





Worship in April Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: *The Gift of
Interdependence*

Join us via Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/565460176>

April 7

Every Being Is a Blessing: Flower Ceremony!

Please bring a flower or flowers with you to worship this Sunday. Homegrown blooms are encouraged, AND every blossom is a blessing! We hear the story of the first Flower Communion in a fresh way and celebrate how much we need each other.

Join us in person and via Zoom

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her), Service Leader

April 14

Brushing with Baking Soda

As a child I was afraid of things with wings that flew and things that crawled and crackled and slithered. But now these are the things I think about protecting and so I brush my teeth with baking soda and compost our leftovers every day. Let's talk about how we can approach life on Mother Earth differently, one small change at a time.

Join us in person and via Zoom

Lydia Patrick (she/her), Service Leader

April 21

Listen to the Earth

With this Earth Day service, we'll listen deeply to hear Mother Earth's voice joining us in the sanctuary. What might she tell us about what she needs in order to heal? How can we see our lives from Gaia's point of view?

Join us in person and via Zoom

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her), Service Leader

April 28

Beltane Fires Calling You Home

We are celebrating our interdependence with nature as the sun returns, the wheel turns and we are called home to the blessings of Mother Nature!

Join us in person and via Zoom

Candice Carver (she/her), Service Leader

Faith Formation Hour Schedule Sundays at 12:30pm

1st Sunday, April 7

- Congregational Conversation
- Potluck

2nd Sunday, April 14

- Spiral Scouts
(pre-registration required)
- Town Hall Meeting

3rd Sunday, April 21

- Sunday Tarot

4th Sunday, April 28

- Good Trouble





Y'All Means All! The Gift of Interdependence by Reverend Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)

Just a few weeks ago, I walk into Eco-Friendly Crafts in downtown Lawrenceville for the first time. I'm immediately struck by all the color and texture around me, rows and rows of yarn that draw my eyes and fingers even though yarn isn't a medium I usually work with. Then I round a corner and am stopped in my tracks: Over the couch in the sitting area hangs a huge rainbow flag with "Y'ALL MEANS ALL" printed over a white triangle in the middle of it.

Home! My body relaxes; my smile expands. I'm so pleased to find this unexpected welcome that I almost miss the fenced-in area with the two rabbits, the biggest I've ever seen, more like furry armadillos than the cuddly creatures I'm used to. The rabbits seem less happy to see me than I am to see them, but I can understand that. They are on display in all their uniqueness all day almost every day. It must be wearying to draw all this attention just because they are "different."

As we enter into this month of April when our theme is "**The Gift of Interdependence**," I'm holding in my heart both the welcome embrace of "**Y'All Means All**" and the complexity of diversity that sometimes makes us—in groups and individually—feel disconnected from each other and from the great web of existence to which we all belong. How do we start to re-member our place in the web of life, and then let that homecoming guide our actions?

Lifting up our Unitarian Universalist belief and value in the interdependence of all things can be painful. Since we are all kindred, how can we live with the level of suffering happening in Gaza right now? Since we humans are, in the deepest sense, one with the

Earth and all its elements and living things, how do we fight the numbness of "climate apathy" and continue to engage in healing and repair for Gaia, our Mother Earth?

In such times, it's more important than ever to lean into the rituals and practices that give us a gut sense of connection to each other and to all that is. In worship with UUCG this month, in our Words of Wisdom, and more, we'll explore some of these practices.

For instance, please join us for our Flower Ceremony on April 7! Please bring a flower or flowers with you to worship, or have them nearby if you are joining us by Zoom. Homegrown blooms are encouraged; at the same time, every blossom is a blessing! As we hear the story of the first Flower Communion in a fresh way, we celebrate how much we need all our diverse gifts and quirks, and how it's only when we bring ourselves into Y'All Means All community that we have the strength and hope to meet today's challenges.

I so hope you will dive into this month of reconnecting with our Interdependence, beginning **Sunday, April 7, with our Flower Ceremony!**

With Love at the center,

Rev. Nancy



SOUUL Summit

Recently, UUCG sent a cohort of folx (not all pictured here) to UU Congregation of Atlanta for their SOUUL Summit conference. It was a weekend filled with exciting new ideas and connections with other UUs.



Upcoming changes to Announcements

One of the ideas to come out of our congregation's attendance at SOUUL Summit is around how we do our announcements. There are plans to greatly reduce the announcements within the sacred container of our worship services moving forward. We will be expanding the weekly eNews to make sure essential information is still communicated.

If you are not signed up for the weekly eNews and monthly newsletter, please email admin@uucg.org.

Stewardship Opportunities

Click each link for more information

[Give Time](#)

[Give Money](#)

[Give Materials](#)

We are especially in need of

- Zoom Managers
- Faith Development Facilitators
- Auction Attendees



Building Facts

Did you know that there are two pails for refuse in almost every room of the church building? The one with a plastic liner is for regular trash, and the one without a liner is for paper recycling!

Please be mindful where you place your trash. And if it contains food residue, please only dispose of it in the kitchen trash can. We are working to keep our building critter-free, and this is one way you can help. Thank you!

Message from the Board

It's so hard to believe that April is here, where has it gone? Our Board of Trustees is preparing to pass the torch from the current board to the new. We are busy with training and meeting to pass on our information.

We have worked hard this year to not only gather your thoughts on the three questions that lead the Lay Ministers in their working but also to build our community, bring guidance and structure to the safety of our congregation, and to improve our building and grounds. I know we all want progress and sometimes our progress is slow, but we all have worked very hard to move forward at a great pace this year.

We have three more Congregation Conversations left for this program year. **The next Conversation is on April 7th**, led by Dan Kelly. We will be discussing the question, "What does a financially healthy congregation look like to you?" Please join us for this discussion so that we will be able to plan this coming program year with programs and events that are meaningful to you.

This year we are so happy to have a full slate of candidates for the congregation to vote on in May. These candidates will be announced on April 14th during the Town Hall Meeting, and voting will occur on May 19th at the Congregational Business Meeting. Please mark your calendars for these two very important dates as we will not only be voting on the BOT but also changes made to the Bylaws.

The May and June Congregational Conversations will be a bit more relaxed, with the May Conversation being organized by Christiana and myself, and June being dedicated to the UUA General Assembly Delegates: Terry Welsher, Bob Patrick and Candice Carver, to present the issues to the congregation for discussion.

I will say it has been a great pleasure serving as your president, and I look forward to serving the congregation moving forward in other positions on the Shared Ministry Council and Worship Team.

Candice C. Carver
Board President



Why I Serve

by Chris Shull (he/him), Board Treasurer

At first glance, the title of Treasurer may evoke images of number crunching and financial reports. While these aspects certainly play a significant part, the role encompasses much more than that. It's a journey of stewardship, connection, and service to our beloved community.

One of the most rewarding aspects of being the Treasurer is the opportunity to actively participate in the financial health and decision-making processes of our congregation. Whether it's developing budgets, analyzing expenses, or strategizing for future financial initiatives, every task undertaken serves a larger purpose – to support our mission and values.

During my tenure as Treasurer, I experienced firsthand the unwavering camaraderie and support of my fellow Board members, especially during times when I had to step back due to the joyful arrival of my daughter and as I adjusted to the rigors of fatherhood. Their understanding and willingness to step in and lend a helping hand underscored the essence of community and solidarity not only amongst our Board members but within our entire congregation, reaffirming the importance of shared values and mutual support.

Being a member of the Board has been a rewarding journey of fulfillment, connection, and growth. I am proud to have become a member of UUCG, and I am even more proud to have had a small hand in its leadership for the past two years.

Give Away the Plate



The Give Away the Plate recipient for the second quarter of 2024 will be the **Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth (UUMFE)**.

The Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a seedbed for spiritual grounding and education that inspires deep practices of Earth care, justice and flourishing for all. The envision and work toward a world in which reverence, gratitude, and care for each other and for the living Earth are central to the lives of all people.

On their website, the UUMFE lists their values:

- *"We are grounded in faith and spirituality.* We affirm and promote the seven principles of Unitarian Universalism as well as the proposed 8th principle of Unitarian Universalism, and we understand climate justice to be a moral imperative.
- *We are grounded in environmental justice.* We affirm and promote the framework of race- and class-informed environmental justice and strive to center the leadership and needs of frontline communities.
- *We are grounded in partnership and collective action.* We know that individual consumption choices are not enough; it is only through partnership and collective action that we can save our biosphere.

[Learn more about UUMFE on their website, here.](#)



Our House in Full Bloom Auction

By Candice Carver (she/her)



I can't stop talking about the auction this year. We are SOOOO EXCITED to be bringing it back as one of our largest fundraisers for the year. As many people know the Annual Auction has been a family fun auction-style party where the entire family can participate in our live auction using play money. This year they are "Daisy Dollars."

For those that are unfamiliar with this process, we do a live auction using play money. When you arrive at the church

on Saturday, April 27th at 3pm for the "Our House In Full Bloom" auction, you will be given an opportunity to make a donation, and this year you'll have the option of using a credit card by scanning one of our QR Codes or through Square. Your donation will get you an envelope of Daisy Dollars that you can use during the live auction to bid on items like paintings, dinner parties, household goods, jewelry, food and anything that is auctioned off in the live auction.

In addition there will also be a silent auction for special items chosen by the auction team which people can bid on with actual dollars via our online fundraising platform, BetterWorld. These items will be pictured online and displayed in the hallway at UUCG. Bidding will be available for those both on site and at home by scanning a QR code and bidding online with a credit card. This method allows everyone an opportunity to participate in the fundraiser, even if they are unable to attend the auction in person.

This year's Auction Team has been collaborating to bring some fun games, a plant walk (like a cake walk but with plants), delicious mocktails, and an all around great time for the garden party!

We hope that those who can attend, do and those who are not able to attend will participate on BetterWorld. We have many wonderful sponsors this year and hope that we can add to this list! Thank you everyone for your continued support of our community! If you have any questions please feel free to contact the auction team at auction@uucg.org.

We appreciate our Sponsors! Thank you for all you do for our community!



Salon Nine Seven
Donation Sponsor



Live Arts Theatre
Donation Sponsor



Harris Ventures
DBA Staff Zone
Merchandise



La Cazuela
Mexican Restaurant
Donation Sponsor



Nancy's Candy & Spice
Donation Sponsor



Starving Kitten Creations
Donation Sponsor



Unexpected Atlanta
Donation Sponsor



The Albino Kitty
Merchandise



LT's Little Nook
Merchandise



Glided Moon Arts
Merchandise





April 27th
3pm - 7pm

UU Congregation of Gwinnett
12 Bethesda Church Road
Lawrenceville, GA 30044

**Our House
In Full**

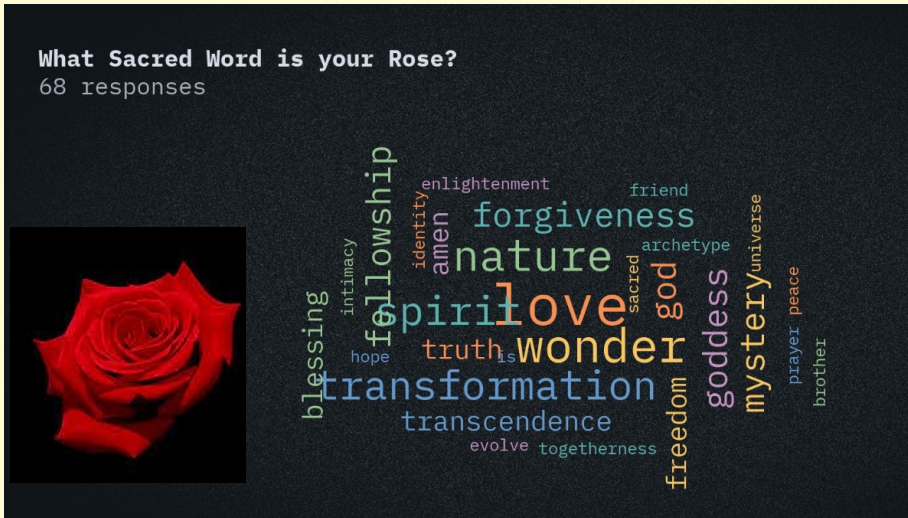
Bloom

**All-Inclusive Auction
Silent Auction
Plant Walk
Garden Games
Mocktails and More!**

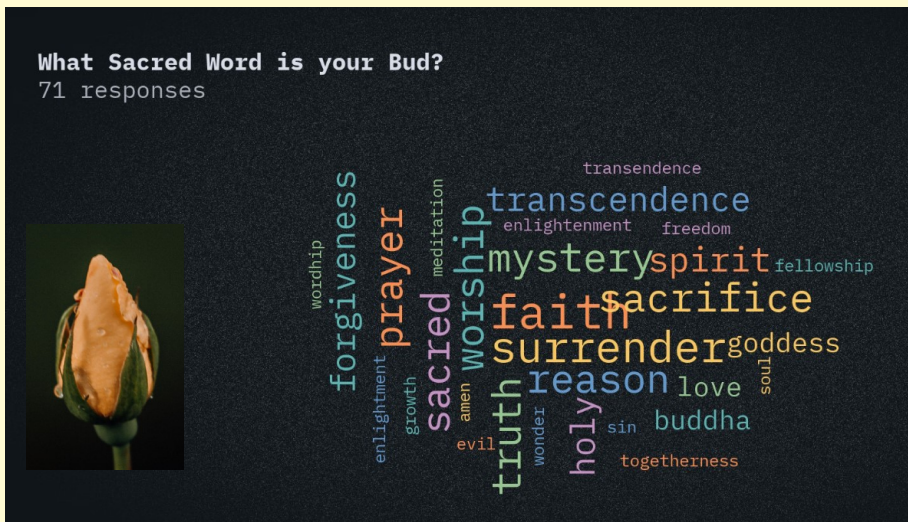


"Roses," "Buds," and "Thorns" in Our Many Sacred Languages at UUCG

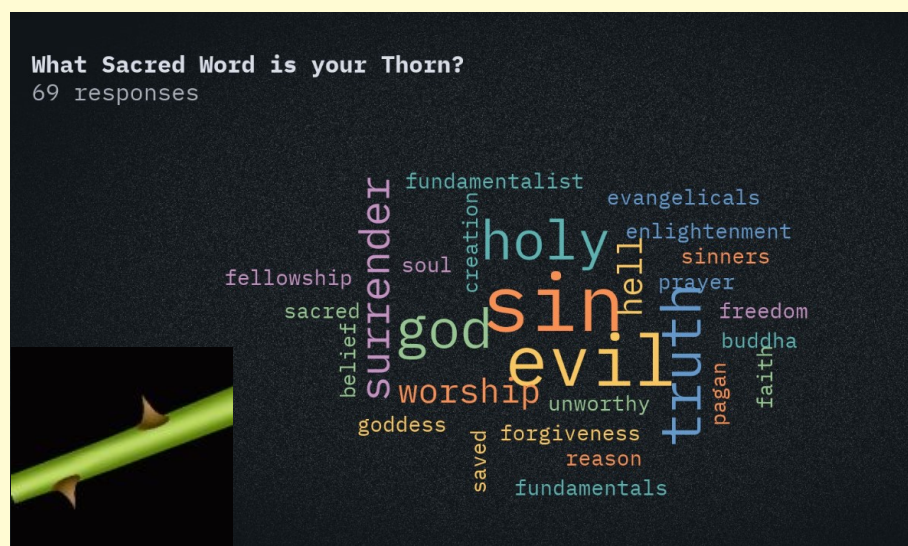
By Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)



On Sunday, March 3, Candice Carver and Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones opened up a Congregational Conversation entitled "Sacred Languages, Sacred Translation: Words as One Way to Spiritual Depth." Candice and Rev. Nancy invited each of us to explore the religious or spiritual words that you love (your **Roses**), the religious or spiritual words that you hate (your **Thorns**), and the words that fall somewhere in between (your **Buds**), including words you might be curious about or want to explore more.



In Unitarian Universalism, our different sacred words and languages help shine a light on our diversity. When we can understand each other, and translate each other's languages, we can all get to greater spiritual depth. As a community, we can have a richer life together.



Here are the Word Clouds we created that day for Roses, Buds, and Thorns. Notice how one person's **Rose** ("I love to use and to hear this word in conversations about spiritual depth") is another person's **Thorn** ("I hate hearing this word and never use it when I'm talking about what's deepest and truest for me"), and yet another person's **Bud** ("I don't use this word or understand it, but I'd be curious to explore it more and see if it adds to my experiences and beliefs").

How can we learn to understand and translate each other's spiritual, religious, or philosophical languages so that our explorations can go deeper still?



Meet Your General Assembly Delegates



Terry Welsher

I have been a UUCG Member since 2012. I am a past Board of Trustee member and have served as Lay Minister of Green Space. I have served on the Green Team since 2014. In this role I have cultivated relationships with the Gwinnett Sierra Club, Gwinnett Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) and Georgia Interfaith Power and Light (GIPL). I have attended every UU General Assembly since 2014 and look forward to attending this year as a Delegate. In addition to voting in the Business Sessions, I will be interacting with the UU Ministry for Earth, Side With Love's Create Climate Justice Group and assisting in the UU/CCL Booth.

Bob Patrick



I have been a part of the UUCG community since 2005. Over that time, I've been very active with the worship team (worship committee chair, worship association, service leader). I was a co-founder of the UUCG CUUPS (Covenant of UU Pagans) group as well as Sylvan Sanctuary Druid grove. I was on the first Lay Ministry Team as the Minister for Spiritual Growth and served in that role for 3 years. The workings of General Assembly have always been important to me as a way that our many communities come together and work our principles for good in the world. I am looking forward to being a part of that this year.



Candice Carver

I've been a member of UUCG since 2019 and have served on many Teams and most recently I am serving my last term as President of the Board Of Trustees. I became interested in being a delegate this January when Ed Miller presented during the Congregation Conversation. I feel my experience as president will help me make decisions at General Assembly that align with our congregation. I hope that I will come back from GA enlightened and renewed to serve the congregation to my fullest abilities and with a better understanding of the work the UUA and how it brings us together.



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
VIRTUAL GA • JUNE 20 - 23, 2024

Did you know we TerraCycle?



What is TerraCycle?

TerraCycle is a recycling company that helps people to dispose of hard to recycle materials using zero-waste boxes that reduce the amount of trash in our landfills.

Why use TerraCycle?

TerraCycle is a simple way for the congregation to reduce waste while earning points for UUCG to donate to select causes.

Where is it?

The collection boxes are located on the bottom shelf in the back corner of the Ready Room.

How to deposit?

You don't need to clean the packaging but please remove as much of the remaining product as possible before depositing.

Which items are accepted?

- All brands of used or empty toothpaste tubes and caps, toothbrushes, toothpaste cartons, toothbrush outer packaging, and floss containers, mouthwash bottles and caps, deodorant containers and caps, soap packaging
- All brands of used, clean socks.
- Bimbo Bakeries (includes: Sara Lee, Arnold, Ball Park buns, Thomas') flexible plastic packaging
- Burt's Bees products packaging (tubes, compacts, film wraps)
- Kroger Our Brands (includes: Simple Truth, Private Selection, Kroger Brand, Comforts, Pet Pride, Luvsome, Abound) plastic packaging
- Late July Snacks packaging

New Dungeons and Dragons Group

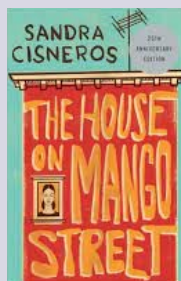
Registration for a new QUUest D&D group will be opening in the near future. Meetings will be held in-person at UUCG on 4th Fridays from 6-10 pm. Interested? Speak with Jason Pfeffer or email admin@uucg.org!

UUCG Book Group Selection

The House on Mango Street

by Sandra Cisneros

Book Group Meeting
April 24th at 7pm



A deeply moving coming-of-age story told in bite-sized pieces, *The House on Mango Street*

is full of all the feels. It meaningfully engages in themes of identity and self-expression. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll be inspired to be a better person. There's a reason it's so widely adored." [Learn More...](#)

Ministry: Connecting Within

Message from your Lay Minister of Connecting Within

By Lisa Kiel (she/her)

“Only by restoring the broken connections can we be healed. Connection is health.” - Wendell Berry

During the pandemic, human connections were broken. We lived in isolated circumstances, with minimal contact, wearing masks that obscured our faces. Mental health concerns increased, people in abusive relationships were trapped, and children's education suffered. It became apparent to anyone paying attention that humans are social creatures. We need one another for inspiration, companionship and growth. Few of us are well suited to living as hermits, 24/7/365 days a year. Turns out Unitarian Universalists are right: we are interdependent.

We come together in groups because we have an innate need to connect to others. We need to talk about ourselves, and we need to hear how others are doing. We are not living in a bubble. Instead, our lives continually overlap with the lives of others, both those near and dear to us, and strangers we meet for brief moments. We learn from their responses to us. We are challenged by ideas outside the echo chamber of our own thoughts.

In our community here at UUCG, we have many groups that span a wide range of interests, identities and gifts. These groups can be enjoyable, educational and thought provoking. They can also be a healing balm to the hurt caused by the deep loneliness of a shared pandemic. As Wendell Berry says, “Connection is health.” Come, join in, bring your healing presence and be healed in return.

With Joy,
Lisa

Ongoing Connecting Within Opportunities:

Chalice Circle - monthly meeting set by members

Book Club - meets online every 4th Wednesday from 7-9 pm

Yarns from the Heart - meets every 1st and 3rd Wednesday online at 10 am

Spiral Scouts - meets every 2nd Sunday in person following Sunday service

Music Night - meets every Thursday night in person at 6:30

We Did It!

By Barbara Stahnke (she/her)

Members and Friends of UUCG Gathered together to plan, prepare, and PRODUCE a produce distribution at UUCG on March 28th in collaboration with Volunteer Gwinnett. This was a most successful event (despite some misses on my part). We initially were scheduled to receive 80 boxes of produce. When picking up the produce, we were offered an additional 50 boxes - ACCEPTED. In 2.5 hours, we distributed 120 boxes, with 10 boxes for members and friends. Smiling, happy, people from our local community within our walls and beyond.

The list below includes all the people who did the planning, preparing, and producing to make.

Any missing names – I apologize in advance.

Karen Smith

Gretchen Cuthbert

Art Cuthbert

Carol Pinto

Lorena Griffin

Peggy Averyt

Dave Averyt

Lydia Patrick

Bob Patrick

Jen Garrison

Becky Ferguson

Cait Smith

Xoey Kelly

Rita Romero

Diane Smithson

Sue-Ann Soloway

Jennifer Time

Larry Long

Ian Van Sice

Bruce Leonard

Tory Wengert

Denise Benshoof

Jason Pfeffer

Staff:

Aline Harris – Linchpin

Christiana McQuain

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones



Ministry Connections



Trans Day of Visibility 2024

Tuesday, April 2nd @ 5pm PT/ 8pm ET

Led by Rev. Julián Jamaica Soto

REGISTER: bit.ly/upliftTDOV2024



Earth Day Celebration! on the full moon

April 23, 2024/ 7:00-8:00 pm ET



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
MINISTRY FOR EARTH
Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.



Make plans to Join GIPL and Chattahoochee Riverkeeper's founding director, Sally Bethea, for a two-week study on her recent book, *Keeping the Chattahoochee*. *Betha was one of the first women in America to become a "riverkeeper"—a vocal defender of a specific waterway who holds polluters accountable. She tells stories that range from joyous and funny to frustrating—even alarming—to illustrate what it takes to save an endangered river. The study group will meet via Zoom on April 23 and 30 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.*

[LEARN MORE AND REGISTER HERE](#)

Save the Date

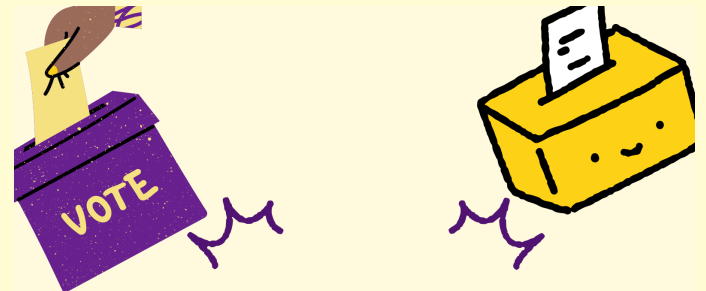


If you are interested in becoming a member of UUCG or have questions about the path to membership, please reach out to Lay Ministers Bill Benshoof (Radical Welcome@uucg.org) or Lisa Kiel (Connecting Within@uucg.org).

Or send an email to info@uucg.org and staff will get your message where it needs to go.



Join us on Sunday, May 5 for our annual Founders' Day Service in celebration of the founding of our congregation and of Unitarian Universalism!



CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

MAY 19



















MEMBERS WILL BE VOTING ON THE PROPOSED BOARD SLATE



Nurturing Connections

	Covenant Choir	Choir gathers to rehearse for performance on Sunday mornings during Worship Services.	Every Tuesday 7:00pm	In-Person
	Yarns from the Heart	Knitters and crocheters gather to create prayer shawls and baby blankets for members and friends and the wider community. This group is open to all fiber artists.	1st and 3rd Wednesdays 10:00am	Online Email admin@uucg.org For access
	Music Night	Bring your instrument and join us! All are welcome to jam or listen.	Every Thursday 6:30pm	In-Person
	Property Beautification Day	Monthly projects to benefit the building and grounds. All skills and abilities are welcome.	1st Saturday 10:00am	In-Person
	CUUPS	The Oak Grove Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) of UUCG is open to anyone in the UUCG community.	April 6th 12:00pm	As scheduled
	Food Bank Dropoff	We gather donations for the Lawrenceville Co-op food bank.	1st Sundays	In-Person
	Congregational Conversations	Discussions centered around Unitarian universalism and our specific congregation. All are welcome.	1st Sunday 12:30pm	In-Person and Online Zoom: 565-460-176
	Town Hall Meeting	Presentation of the proposed board up for election on May 19th	April 14th 12:30pm	In-Person and Online Zoom: 565-460-176
	Spiral Scouts	An all-gender scouting group that focuses on nature-based learning and activities. We are open to children ages 3-12.	2nd Sundays 12:30pm	In-Person
	Board Meeting	Open to the congregation at large. If you have something to discuss that you would like added to the agenda, please email board@uucg.org at least three weeks ahead of time.	3rd Wednesdays 7:00pm	Online Zoom: 956-757-31773
	Tarot	Join us In-Person after the service for the monthly In-Person Tarot Bring your decks, thoughts, and questions.	3rd Sunday 12:30pm	In-Person
	Green Team Meeting	All who are interested in environmental issues are welcome.	3rd Saturday 9:30am	Online Zoom: 926-178-30455
	Book Group	All are welcome	4th Wednesdays 7:00pm	Online Zoom: 144-736-833
	Auction	Our House, In Full Bloom Fundraising Auction	April 27th 3:00pm	In-Person and online : https://uucg.betterworld.org/
	Good Trouble	We invite you into discussion about an issue that we (community, society, world) are facing currently, and specific ways that you can get involved in working for change.	4th Sundays 12:30pm	In-Person and Online Zoom: 145-984-149

April 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
	1	2	3 	4 	5	6 
7 	8	9 	10	11 	12	13
14 	15	16 	17 	18 	19	20 
21 	22	23 	24 	25 	26	27 
28 	29	30 