



# GNUUs

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## The Path of Spirituality and Secularism

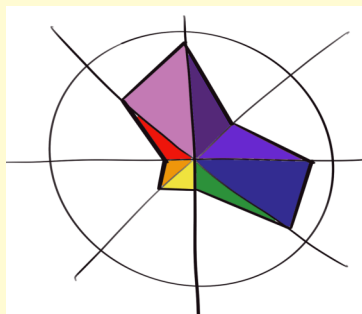


If we have been led to think of a spectrum between secularism and spirituality, what if we instead see the relationship between the two as a **starburst**?

Maybe you see spirituality intricately woven into everything you cook, but doing the laundry has always been a secular activity to you. On your starburst, cooking may be a very prominent point. Or maybe laundry is a spiritual practice for you, but cooking is just a chore. Your starburst may look very different. But both of these starbursts show a level of spirituality as well as a level of secularism.

Think about what the points on your starburst are. What are areas of your life that haven't felt spiritual to you before?

Try switching. What does it feel like to treat your spiritual practice as something secular? What about trying something you've always seen as disconnected from spirituality, but framing it as a spiritual practice?



## Events This Month

- Aug 2...Yarns from the Heart+
- Aug 5.....Property Work Day\*
- Aug 5...Magical Arts & Crafts\*
- Aug 5.....Sylvan Sanctuary \*
- Aug 6...Food Bank Donations\*
- Aug 6.....Green Team Movie\*
- Aug 12...Sewing with Sherree\*
- Aug 13.....Spiral Scouts+
- Aug 13.....Belief Exploration+
- Aug 16...Yarns from the Heart+
- Aug 16.....Board Meeting+
- Aug 17.....CUUPs Discussion+
- Aug 19...Green Team Meeting+
- Aug 23.....Book Group+
- Aug 26.....Property Work Day\*
- Aug 27...Congregational

Conversation+\*

Tuesdays.....Choir Rehearsal\*

1st & 3rd Sundays...In-Person

Tarot \*

2nd & 4th Sundays...Online

Tarot+

\*in person

+via Zoom

For details visit [uucg.org](http://uucg.org)

## Did you Gnow?

- Humans are born with only two innate fears; falling and loud noises. All other fears are learned either from the culture or personal experience.





## Worship in August Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: *The Path of  
Spirituality and Secularism*

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

### August 6, 2023

#### ***I Once Was Found, and Now I'm Lost***

When the belief system that has sustained you for your whole life no longer resonates with your soul, it can be a tumultuous time. Join us in finding the joy and growth that can come out of these times of crisis.

Join us in person and via Zoom  
*Elna Brynestad (she/her), Service Leader*

### August 13, 2023

#### ***Dancing With the Cosmos***

Across many cultures, peoples, language groups and parts of the world, we find our ancestors naming 9 elements that connect them to the cosmos. They found ways to connect personally and as a community with those elements and make meaning from them. Come and discover what these elements are and learn to dance with the cosmos.

Join us in person and via Zoom  
*Bob Patrick (he/him), Service Leader*

### Augusts 20, 2023

#### ***Making It Through the Night***

Join us in person and via Zoom  
*Sherree Bailey (she/her), Service Leader*

### August 27, 2023

#### ***How General Assembly Lives Out the UUA's Purpose— Featuring Our Delegates***

UUCG delegates to this year's General Assembly (Maryjane Stout, Terry Welsher, Ed Miller, and Christiana Mcquain) give their perspectives, including a business resolution, aspects of belonging (including great music), the (un)structured expressions of passion around the issues, and our new President, Sofia Betancourt.

Join us in person and via Zoom  
*Bill Benshoof (he/him), Service Leader*

## After Hour Summer Schedule Sundays at 12:30pm

### 1st Sunday, August 6

- In-Person Tarot
- Green Team Movie:  
*The Biggest Little Farm*

### 2nd Sunday, August 13

- Spiral Scouts (pre-  
registration required)
- Belief Explorers

### 3rd Sunday, August 20

- In-Person Tarot

### 4th Sunday, August 27

- Congregational Conversation



## From the Board

By Candice Carver (she/her) Board President

Happy August, Friends,

We welcomed four new members of the Board of Trustees this year at our annual Leadership Retreat at The Mountain. We gathered with the Lay Ministers to grow our relationships, share in our vision of the congregation's future, and discuss how we can serve the congregation and our community. The work, collaborating with each other, will help bring our congregation into the future and pave the groundwork for the next chapter of our work in the community.

The goals developed at the leadership retreat will engage, restore, and reimagine the Projecting Our Vision into the Future work that was done in 2019 and 2020 to create the document Projecting Our Vision. Our gratitude goes out to all those that served on the Board of Trustees and Lay Ministers these past years; your commitment to the congregation has deepened our work and helped us become more efficient for the congregation and the community.

When we started this new governance model in 2020, the Board of Trustees worked hard to provide us with all the tools necessary to develop the open questions that are so important to create during the leadership retreat. And so, we gathered together, shared our vision, and developed the three questions that will strengthen our congregation and community in the coming years. After planning and discussion we settled on these three open questions to help determine the programming and direction for the 2024-2025 program year:

- How do we envision the future of our ministry?
- How will we expand and strengthen our multicultural/multigenerational inclusivity and engagement?
- What does a financially healthy congregation look like to you?

Over the next year we will engage these questions in various ways during Congregational Conversations on the first Sunday of the Month, with a few Conversations devoted to the UU General Assembly to discuss the proposal for the revisions to Article II of the UUA Bylaws. We have discussed a plan to present these questions, to have deep and fruitful conversations with everyone on multiple platforms. This work is so important for the congregation to

engage in, everyone's feedback helps us to consider a new and creative way to carve and restore the path we were gifted so long ago.

Bruce Anderson of the Core Gift Institute said, *"The courage to participate with others in reciprocal gift exchange is at the core of hope, both in individuals and in our collective lives together. The hope that we will not simply survive, but thrive, if we believe that all of us have gifts worthy of leading with. There is abundance all around us all the time."*

Now is the time to engage our gifts, restore our vision and reimagine our future.

With Love and Gratitude

Candice C Carver (She/Her)

President, UUCG Board of Trustees

## Stewardship Opportunities

Click each link for more information

[Give Time](#)

[Give Money](#)

[Give Materials](#)

We are especially in need of hospitality volunteers, greeters, beacons, and worship associates. [Use this form to sign up for upcoming training.](#)

## This Quarter's Give Away the Plate Recipient

[Georgians for a Healthy Future](#)

# Report From General Assembly

Submitted by UUCG's GA Delegates: Ed, Maryjane, Terry, Christiana

This year's dual-platform General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, in Pittsburgh/via Zoom, was held over four days in June and attended by 4,000+ UUs, over half of whom were delegates. UUCG's delegates attended all the General (business) Sessions, and we split up to attend workshops. Most of us also attended most of the five worship services.

## GA Business

We elected a new UUA president for a six-year term. Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt is the first out queer individual and the first woman of color elected to the role. She says, "Unitarian Universalism has a vital, liberating message for our time. Our nation and denomination are experiencing challenges in a time of significant division, change, and radicalization. But together...we can serve one another, organize for justice, widen the circle of concern, collectively imagine new ways forward in community, and grow spiritually."

Article II of the UUA Bylaws houses the principles and sources of Unitarian Universalism.

Updating it is a collaborative effort, with many surveys, discussion groups, and three GA discussions held. This year (the second of a three-year cycle), 13 amendments to a proposed revised Article II were voted on; five passed. The Principles and Sources you know aren't just being tweaked or lightly edited – the sections on Values and Covenant, Inspirations, Inclusion, and Freedom of Belief are all-new, while being grounded in familiar language and sentiment. We'll share the latest version and invite comments at a Congregational Conversation in the fall.

A Business Resolution requiring UUA's Endowment Fund to divest from fossil fuel companies and issue reparations did not pass. Objections to the resolution focused on the ways in which the divestment was to take place and the linking to reparations – not on the goals themselves. (UUA's Board has since issued a statement reaffirming its commitment to climate justice and finding a way forward on reparations.) A contingent of young adults was particularly disappointed that the resolution did not pass and interrupted the proceedings with banners and chants – an act of civil disobedience not unlike those that Boomers will remember, but that was allowed to play out with patience and compassion.

The delegates at GA voted for three **Actions of Immediate Witness**, social justice resolutions that support:

- ending the planned Cop City in Atlanta
- protecting the rights of DACA Dreamers
- health equity

## Workshops

We split up and individually attended sessions on:

- Conflict Resolution in Congregations
- The UUA's Finances
- The Gray Panthers
- Racial Justice Resources
- The Future of Faith Development
- Empowering Young Leaders
- A Trauma Toolkit for Leaders
- Mental Health Peer Support in Congregations
- UU Ministry for the Earth, Create Climate Justice events

## Worship Services We Attended

At the Synergy Bridging Worship, youth are honored as they cross the bridge into young adulthood.

At the **Service of the Living Tradition: Toward Our Metamorphosis into Who Knows What**, we honored ministers and UU leaders who have died, recognized those who completed professional service (including our own Rev. Jan Taddeo!), and welcomed newly fellowshiped, credentialed ministers.

At Deeper than The Skin, we heard a musical presentation on Race in America. Two friends...one Black, one White...born three days apart into completely different narratives, used the power of story and song to move us from emotion to action.

Visit [www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org) or ask one of us for more information on any of these topics.

## GNUUs Glossary

UUs enjoy our abbreviations and jargon in a way that could be unwelcoming to those outside of our congregation. Here's a brief glossary of some commonly used terms and abbreviations.

**Blue Christmas:** service acknowledging how difficult the winter holidays can be for some

**Bridging:** ceremony acknowledging when someone has graduated in some aspect of their lives. From the age group of under 5 to the 5-7 age group, to the 8-12 age group, to teens, to adulthood, as well as any milestones in an individual's life

**Child Dedications:** dedicating the education of a child to the congregation. A ritual similar to baptism

**Covenant:** agreement that all parties have agreed to

**CUUPs:** Covenant of Unitarian Universalists Pagans

**GNUUs:** Gwinnett news for Unitarian Universalists (monthly newsletter)

**Luminescence:** UU holiday celebrating all aspects of light

**Nine Waves Blessing:** Druid based ritual that is used in many other rituals

**Singing the Journey:** the paperback, newer teal hymnal

**Singing the Living Tradition:** the hardback, older grey hymnal

**Spirit Stones:** ritual honoring those lost in mass shootings

**Sylvan Sanctuary:** Our Druid grove that hosts 8 public rituals per year.

**UU:** Unitarian Universalist

**UUA:** Unitarian Universalist Association (national organization of UU congregations)

**UUCG:** Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett (our congregation)

What other terms need definition? [Email here to request an addition.](#)



## Fox(y) News

### Submitted by the UUCG Green Team

Perhaps you have already seen the fox family that has established a home on our UUCG property. They will be with us for a little while longer, until the kits are able to live on their own.

Here is some info and advice from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources about living with foxes:

“Valued as one of the classic representatives of the wild canid family, foxes are found throughout the state in both rural and urban landscapes. In Georgia, there are two species of fox - the gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) and the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). The Gray is grizzled gray in color with patches of reddish fur on the neck, flanks, legs and underside of the tail, gray foxes weigh between 8-12 pounds, are 34-40 inches in total length. A black stripe runs along their back down to the tail tip. Sexual maturity occurs at approximately one year of age and the mating season runs from January through April. Following a 53-day gestation period, females give birth to 2-7 pups. Considered monogamous, both male and female gray foxes work together to raise pups until the pups become independent after about 3 months of age.

Because of the adaptability of both gray and red foxes to urban and suburban environments, as well as the abundant food and shelter associated with these areas, foxes are quite common in cities, towns, subdivisions, and even near rural home sites as well as in their natural habitat. Although foxes are primarily nocturnal hunters, it is not uncommon to see a fox during the day. If you see a fox during the day in either the woods or in your yard, the best advice is to simply leave it alone. You may want to remove any bird feeders that may be attracting mice and birds to your yard, which in turn attracts foxes. Other prey items for foxes include domestic fowl like chickens, guineas, and ducks. To alleviate domestic depredation issues, building exclusionary pens is the best solution. Both red and gray foxes can carry diseases and parasites such as rabies, distemper, roundworms, fleas, and mange mites.”

Let's be good neighbors and be patient: leave them alone, while at the same time appreciating this closeness to one of Nature's wild creatures.



## Property Beautification Days



### (Two this Month!)

In addition to the Property Beautification Day on **Saturday, August 5 from 10:00am-3:00pm**, there will be one on August 26. Instead of holding Property Beautification Day on Labor Day weekend, we're moving it to the prior Saturday (August 26). This not only allows everyone to have a long weekend, it spruces up our property just prior to Candice's and Tim's handfasting. Please bring your lawnmowing, weedeating, and beautification tools. Consider it a love offering of your time and talent to Candice, who does so much for this congregation and its programs. **Saturday, August 26 from 10:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m.** Be sure to bring a water bottle to refill often and snacks and a lunch as needed.

Ministry: Spiritual Growth



# UUCG CUUPS

## MAGICAL ARTS & CRAFTS!

JOIN US TO MAKE BELL BRANCHES, SUPPLIES WILL BE PROVIDED OR YOU CAN  
BRING A BRANCH AND SOME BELLS

# AUGUST 5TH

3:00 PM TO 5:00 PM

# LUGHNASADH RITUAL AUGUST 5TH

5:00 PM TO 9:00 PM

THE FIRST OF THREE FALL HARVESTS  
AND THE BRINGING IN OF AUTUMN!

CELEBRATE WITH US WITH A RITUAL AND POT LUCK AFTERWARDS  
BRING OFFERINGS OF HERBS FOR THE GROVE  
AND OFFERINGS TO MOTHER EARTH  
BRING NON PERISHABLE ITEMS FOR FOOD DRIVE

The program year will begin in September.  
More information will be published soon.



## Big Fish Story

By Gwydian Kelly (he/him)

When the Spiral Scouts went fishing a few weeks ago none of us had ever done it before. We had help from Gary Kiel and Rowan's grandfather. I learned how to use a fishing rod and a minnow trap. I almost got a huge fish on my line but it spit out the hook! I did catch lots of tiny fish with a net. One day I'm gonna get that big fish!



### UUCG Book Group Selection

## Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See



**Book Group Meeting August 23rd  
7pm**

The latest historical novel from New York Times bestselling author Lisa See, inspired by the true story of a woman physician from 15th-century China—perfect for fans of See's classic *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* and *The Island of Sea Women*.

From a young age, Yunxian learns about women's illnesses, many of which relate to childbearing, alongside a young midwife-in-training, Meiling. The two girls find fast friendship and a mutual purpose—despite the prohibition that a doctor should never touch blood while a midwife comes in frequent contact with it—and they vow to be forever friends, sharing in each other's joys and struggles. No mud, no lotus, they tell themselves: from adversity beauty can bloom.

[\[See more\]](#)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY RITA!

## TACO-BOUT A PARTY!

Join us to celebrate Rita Romero's 59th birthday.  
**August 20th at 12:30pm**  
Mexican feast with vegan options





## Combating Fascism

By **Barbara Stahnke (she/her) Lay Minister for Connecting Beyond**

I recently attended a webinar with prework on the issue of combatting fascism. It was both erudite and inspirational. The prework was to listen to the [2023 Berry Street Essay by the Rev. Cecilia Kingman](#) (“The Berry Street Essay was established by Rev. William Ellery Channing in 1820 for the Ministerial Conference in Berry Street. It is thought to be the longest-running lecture series in the United States and is now traditionally offered at the conclusion of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association’s Ministry Days conference, which coincides with the General Assembly.”) This essay was entitled “My Little Pony was right: Reflections on Fascisms Without and Within”.

I then attended the first of two webinar sessions on July 17th ([the second webinar](#) is still open for registration – the second webinar is on the concrete actions we can take to combat fascism). My biggest learning for myself is how I tend to “obey in advance”; I consider all the risks before acting. This may be a trauma response and is something I need to explore more in myself. This is the kind of stuff that happens in a Side with Love Webinar.

I encourage you to register for emails and participate in a webinar, join the Action Squad, or read some of the resources available for organizers and churches. These resources include and are not limited to:

[Courage Risk and Safety: Preparing for Right Wing Threats against Congregations](#) taped webinar and resources.

[Why We Proclaim "Abortion is a Blessing": Context, History, Theology](#) - essay with resources.

[The Body Politic: Faithful UUs Showing Up for Trans Justice](#) - webinar recording with resources.

You can sign up for emails and always know what is coming up at Side with Love. Please share with other faiths and friends who are seeking justice with Love.

## Side With Love

By **Barbara Stahnke (she/her) Lay Minister for Connecting Beyond**

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) sponsors a public advocacy campaign that seeks to harness love’s power to stop oppression. This campaign is the Side with Love campaign. All are welcome to join – whether Unitarian Universalist (UU) or not UU, whether member, friend, or visitor of a UU fellowship or congregation, or whether a UU, another faith, no faith, or unnamed faith. The focus is on love as the foundation of justice work in the world; the Side with Love campaign strives to be of service to our communities and advocate for change in our local, state, national, and international environs. You can learn more about the Side with Love campaign [here](#).

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett (UUCG) was lucky enough to host a Side with Love Voter Engagement Effort with Emma’s Revolution last September. The organizing efforts of the Side with Love campaign ensured an exciting and well-coordinated effort. When UUs show up at events in our famous yellow shirts, people know that love is in the air as well as folks who support immigration reform, racial justice, equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, and religious freedom.




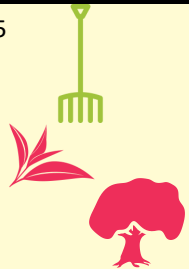








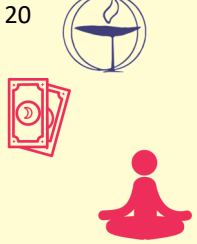



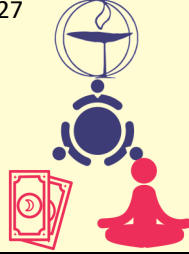



**[GET YOUR OWN SIDE WITH LOVE T-SHIRT – Children’s Sizes too! Order here](#)**

# 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 7:00pm	Online Email admin@uucg.org
	Property Beautification Day	Monthly projects to benefit the building and grounds. All skills and abilities are welcome.	1st Saturday 10:00am	In-Person
	CUUPs Magical Arts and Crafts	The Oak Grove Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) of UUCG is open to anyone in the UUCG community.	August 5th 3:00pm	In-Person
	Sylvan Sanctuary	Sylvan Sanctuary is the Mother Grove of the Druid Order of the Three Realms, a community of Druids walking personal paths. All are welcome.	August 5th 6:00pm	In-Person
	Food Bank Dropoff	We gather donations for the Lawrenceville Co-op food bank.	1st Sunday 10:00am	In-Person
	Potluck	Monthly Potluck. Please bring a dish to share as you are able.	1st Sunday 12:30pm	In-Person
	Tarot Sundays In-Person	A discussion about all things Tarot and a Guided Meditation inspired by the weekly topic.	1st and 3rd Sundays 12:30pm	In-Person
	Green Team Movie	Showing of 'The Biggest Little Farm'. All are welcome.	August 6th 1:00pm	In-Person
	Mindfulness and Meditation	Two Hands Sangha is a Buddhist Meditation Community All are welcome.	Every Sunday 6:00pm	In-Person and online via Facebook
	Sewing with Sherree	Join us for easy sewing projects and fun! Bring your fabric and machine if you got one! All skill levels are welcome.	2nd Saturdays 10:00am	In-Person
	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
	Belief Explorers	A group of Unitarian Universalists and others who are interested in exploring the sources of world faith traditions. All are welcome.	2nd Sundays 12:30pm	In-Person and Online Zoom: 896-987-304
	Tarot Sundays	A discussion about all things Tarot and a Guided Meditation inspired by the weekly topic.	2nd and 4th Sundays 5:00pm	Online Zoom: 978-9585-2363
	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
	CUUPs	The Oak Grove Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) of UUCG is open to anyone in the UUCG community.	August 17th 7:30pm	Online Zoom: 400-036-556
	Green Team Meeting	All who are interested in environmental issues are welcome.	3rd Saturday 9:30am	Online Zoom: 926-1783-0455
	Book Group	All who have read the book are invited to attend.	4th Wednesdays 7:00pm	Online Zoom: 144-736-833
	Property Beautification Day	Monthly projects to benefit the building and grounds. All skills and abilities are welcome.	August 26th 10:00am	In-Person
	Congregational	Discussions centered around Unitarian universalism and	August 27th	In-Person and

# August 2023

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	31		