



February 2025 Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists

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Living Love Through The Practice of Inclusion

Welcome to
the Practice of

Inclusion




The word “inclusion” conjures up the hunger to belong; the longing to be let in. No one likes standing outside the circle. From the time we are little, inclusion and belonging is the thing we seek. The promised resting place.

But to belong is only the beginning.

Deep down we know this. We need to be wary of those who welcome us with a “members only” card and a soft couch. They may have let us in, but soon they will enlist us into the work of keeping others out.

Because closed circles keep us small - we only grow when the circle does. Circles that keep others out also keep the air out. Beathing free – singing! – requires drawing the circle ever wider.

The true blessing of inclusion is not that you get to come inside the circle; it’s that you get to participate in expanding it.



Did you Know: gnus and zebras work together to outsmart predators, their practice of inclusion in the web of life is to overcome challenges.

Worship in Month

Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: Liberating Love through the
Practice of Inclusion

Join us in-person or via Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/565460176>



Programs

Sundays at
12:30pm

1st Sunday, 2/2

- Faith in Action: Letters to Legislators
- Potluck Lunch

2nd Sunday, 2/9

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

3rd Sunday, 2/16

- Sunday Tarot

4th Sunday, 2/23

- “Good Trouble”
- The Open Circle (Women’s Group)

February 2nd

What Happens Once We Belong?

Finding a place where we belong—where we feel seen and heard and loved for our full selves—is such a relief! It’s one of our lifesaving missions here at UUCG, something we’re creating moment by moment, mistakes and learnings and growth included. But what happens once we find that sense of belonging? Is it all rest and relaxation? Or does belonging ask us to expand even more?

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (She/Her), Service Leader

February 9th

Blessing of the Plough

This service highlights reflection, renewal, and preparation for the seasons ahead. Bring tools, seeds, soil to fill our planters and symbols of your work, as we honor the land, our labor, and the connections that nourish us. Something transformative awaits.

Candice Carver (She/Her), Service Leader

February 16th

Inhabiting Our Freedom Dreams

This week Sherree and Rev. Nancy share all that they have learned from “30 Days of Love” with Side with Love. There are so many ways to embody Love and to practice the new world that we seek to build. What shall we carry forward into the weeks and months to come?

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (She/Her), Service Leader

February 23rd

The Blessing of Inclusion

Being included is such a great feeling. Being inclusive requires some thought, perhaps some adjustments, and maybe some change. But for Unitarian Universalists it just might be the sanctuary we need to offer the world.

Lydia Patrick (She/Her), Service Leader





Worship and More

Worship Services
Sundays at 11:00am
February Theme:

Living Love through The Practice of Inclusion
Join us in-person or via Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/565460176>

Give Away the Plate



Second Helpings Atlanta

This organization collects unused food from grocery stores and restaurants and redistributes it to those in need. Not only does it help feed hungry people, Second Helpings discourages food waste, benefiting the environment too.

In 2023, Second Helpings' food rescue network diverted over 5.8 million pounds of surplus food from landfills, providing the equivalent of 4.8 million fresh, nutritious meals. A second program, Full Plate Project, provided 400,000 complete meals, donated by Hello Fresh, restaurants and caterers, to partner agencies throughout metro Atlanta.

Second Helpings began in 2004 at Temple Sinai in Atlanta. After continued growth, it became an independent nonprofit in 2012. Currently, the organization serves a 10-county metro Atlanta area. Learn more at secondhelpingsatlanta.org

Looking Ahead

March 22nd

Spring Equinox Ritual

The Druid spring equinox festival is known as Alban Eilir, which means 'The Light of the Earth'. Spring is a time of rebirth - the soils warm, plants emerge, trees leaf out, many animals start giving birth, and crops are sown.

Presented by the Sylvan Sanctuary Druids of the Oak Grove



2025 Congregational Photo Shoot March 2nd

This year's Congregational Photo will be taken after the Worship Service on Sunday, March 2nd. We would love for as many members to be there as possible! If you are able, please plan to be present in person for the picture on this date.

The Desk of Rev. Nancy



Growing Through the Practice of Inclusion: We Are Made for This!

by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)

One afternoon psychologist Robert Kegan is watching his daughter learn to read. “I watch her listening intently to her own announcement of each letter’s sound,” he writes. “‘Sih-ae-h-nih-duh,’ she says, peering over these symbols, sitting still among these sounds which do not yet cohere for her. ‘Saan-duh.’ It is still an alien sound the way she says it, something strange and apart from her. She waits, strenuously. ‘Sand!’ she says, arriving home.”

What a life-changing event it is whenever we learn a new word! Once Kegan’s daughter knows that S, A, N, and D mean “sand,” then every time she reads that word, she will connect it with her own experience of sand in her bathing suit, sand between her toes, sand on snowy roads. The word now has meaning for her—and she can make meaning with it. Her world—and she herself—grow bigger and more complex because of this new word.

It’s a metaphor but it’s also literally true: Living our Love through the practice of inclusion is like constantly sounding out new words. To become more inclusive, we have to sit still among the new “sounds”—new words, situations, people. This newness doesn’t yet fit into our previous understandings or experience. We have to wait strenuously for our minds and hearts to stretch and make room. Finally, when the new understanding begins to make sense, it feels like coming home to a bigger and more complex world. Often it’s more difficult, too. Still, both we and the world become so much more alive and interesting and full of possibilities!

Can you think of one of your early prejudices that finally began to bump up against new experiences? These new experiences made you question that preconception, made you wonder whether your

understanding was really big enough.

Some of us remember when writers and speakers began to use “he or she” instead of just “he” when they wanted to refer to a general human being. At first, some people protested that “or she” was an unnecessary addition. “Everyone knows that ‘he’ in this instance means ‘human,’ not just ‘male!’” they huffed.

But did “everyone” know that? Or rather, did everyone feel included in “he”?

Slowly, more and more people began to hear these words in new ways. They began to recognize the power of language to include or exclude. The pronouns were a symbol, but an important one. Some of the people who had resisted the change also cared about the people who felt left out. So, out of love, they gradually grew.

We humans don’t always choose to make such changes. We don’t always get the support we need to understand the need for them.

But here at UUCG, let us support each other as we come upon each new word in this ever-expanding practice of inclusion. Let’s open ourselves to change because it feels wonderful to love, and to be loved, and to grow together.

Yours in loving curiosity, courage, and compassion,
Rev. Nancy



Rev. Nancy Reflects...



“To Repair the World, What Is Mine to Do?” Revisiting UUCG’s Responses

by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)

In worship on November 10, fresh from the election results, we used an exercise to help us name we each can do to create a world fueled by a liberating love, a community that honors the beauty and worthiness of all peoples and the Earth itself.

We answered three questions:

1. What does the community need? For today choose just one of the communities you are linked to: UUCG, school, Gwinnett County, the trans community, the queer community, the disabled community ...
2. What brings me joy? What makes your heart sing?
3. What do I have to offer? What are my skills, my trade, my experience, my gifts?

Once we’d brainstormed our answers to those questions, then we tried to come up with a word or phrase that fit in each of the slivers where the questions overlap.



Our answers issue a ringing cry of vitality, courage, and determination! Which of these actions is yours to offer now? Read the list like a poem, and make note of what makes your mind and heart light up.

WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY NEED? I will ...

Welcome, Welcome!

Be respectful... Be curious... Be of service...Connect...

Show up... Volunteer... Support, Support

Resist... Speak our truths ... Persevere... Nurture peace

Fight for freedom... Be a gift

Create community... Offer sanctuary...

Provide safety and hope... Have fun and celebrate!

Embody Love

WHAT BRINGS ME JOY? I love ...

Connecting... Connecting... and more connection!

Volunteering... Providing... Creating opportunities

Offering space... and more space

Acknowledging... Cherishing... Protecting

Being bold... Speaking up... Remaining strong

Being tenacious... Being in attendance

Supporting... Nurturing family

Sharing happiness

Having fun...Laughing

Cherishing joy... Joy!

WHAT DO I HAVE TO OFFER? I can ...

Proclaim... Advocate... Inspire

Inspire again and again

Nurture family and friendships

Use my voice ... Listen and ... use my voice!

Be kind ... Be patient

Create... Create peace...

Bring my presence... Share stories

Offer feedback ... Promote delight

Host games... Create sanctuary

Support... Stay determined

Love!

Engaging Our Spirits:

Mapping the People and Places We Love

On Sunday, January 19th during the Worship Service, Rev. Nancy asked all who were present to think of the places in our country that hold experiences, memories, or people we love. She invited folks to come forward and place a dot on the map on each of those locations. The image below shows the result of that exercise.



If you missed this Service, we invite you to consider now what your contribution would be.

**What places in our nation represent or hold a spark of love for you?
On what location would you add your dot?**

UUCG is Hiring

As we move into 2025, the Congregation will have two positions open.

- The **Office Administrator** handles formatting and distribution of all UUCG publications (including the weekly eNews, monthly GNUUs newsletter, Orders of Service for Worship, and Call to Connection announcement slides), sorts mail, replies to phone messages, and orders supplies. This position requires good communication skills, and understanding of UU Values, and proficiency with the Microsoft Office Suite of programs as well as experience with Google Drive.

This job requires some flexibility of hours & days, including some Sundays, and on-site work time is also required. This is a 15-hour per week position.

- The **Facilities Caretaker** will possess the skills to perform light groundskeeping, minimal building maintenance, moving of furniture (folding tables and our upholstered chairs), and cleaning of the building twice weekly on Friday and Sunday nights. This is a 10-hour per week position.

Full job descriptions for both positions will be available by the end of February when the positions are ready to be officially posted.

From the Board



Safety And Security

by Dan Kelly, President UUCG Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees and Reverend Nancy had the great honor of recognizing the work of UUCG's Safety and Security Committee during the January 12th worship service, lifting up the important work that they do each and every week to keep our sanctuary safe and welcoming. On behalf of the congregation, we continue to offer our gratitude for this important work.

Subsequently, the Safety and Security Committee met with the Board during the January 19th Board Meeting to discuss how to serve our community safely and faithfully.



Together, we are planning a Safety Drill. Specifically, at the Committee's suggestion, the Board is instituting a new policy that requires two drills each calendar year. The types of drills that may be practiced include Fire Drills, Tornado or Severe Weather Drills, Medical Emergency Drills and Active Shooter Drills. We held a Fire Drill in the Fall during which we evacuated the building, with great success, and we are now planning an Active Shooter Drill for the Spring. Similar to the Fire Drill, we will discuss the procedures and expectations before performing the drill. Those with sensitivities to such events will have an opportunity to receive the information without participating in the drill itself.

The Committee will continue to discuss best practices with specialists, local law enforcement, and UUA resources. We encourage all congregants to familiarize themselves with the ALICE protocols

recommended by UUA. More information about UUA recommendations for Active Shooter Situations can be found at:

<https://www.uua.org/safe/handbook/building-security/planning-active-shooter-emergencies>

The Committee and the Board also discussed a responsible Gun Policy that meets the needs of our congregation while leaning into the values of our faith community. The official policy that the Board has adopted is:

UUCG Policy regarding Guns on Campus adheres to Georgia State Law (O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127). This statute prohibits firearms "in a place of worship" unless permissions granted by "the governing body or authority of the place of worship." Under Georgia State Law, permission may not be given selectively to individuals.

The Board reserves the exclusive right, and only by unanimous vote, to grant such permission. At this time, permission has not been granted.

For the purposes of this policy, "place of worship" refers to all UUCG grounds, including outdoor spaces. A lawful weapons carrier is permitted to have a firearm securely locked in their vehicle while on UUCG property.

The UUCG Board of Trustees recognizes the challenges of any policy that affects the safety and security of individuals and the congregation. We thank you for your support in implementing policies and procedures that serve all of our community.

In covenant,
Dan Kelly
President, UUCG Board of Trustees

Ministry of Radical Welcome



What Trans Inclusion Means

by Carol Underwood, Lay Minister for Radical Welcome



In preparation for the Trans Inclusion Workshop, Talia Juhan was asked what Trans Inclusion means to them.

“Trans inclusion to me means respecting who and what a person identifies themselves personally as, because it is that, PERSONAL it does not matter if we accept what someone accepts themselves as it is the respect for a fellow being in this game, we call life.

It’s important that we follow this for multiple reasons, but what I would point out is the fact that it helps those who fall under this category. It is a means to help them accept themselves for who they believe to be. I think and wonder on the thought of how many have

been lost simply to the fact that there was no one in their life who showed them the basic human kindness of respect for who they were.”

This workshop is a very important one especially with the new political climate we are in. Let us show up for our community and be present with them.

The workshop begins in February and runs for six sessions. It is from 2:30-4:30pm on the first and third Sundays. Please register to join us.

If you have any questions feel free to email radicalwelcome@uucg.org



Love is the power that holds us together and is at the center of our shared values.

We are accountable to one another for doing the work of living our shared values through the spiritual discipline of Love.

Inseparable from one another, these shared values are:

- Generosity
- Pluralism
- Transformation
- Interdependence
- Justice
- Equity



Design by Ginny Andino
Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Gwinnett

UU Values graphic by Ginny Andino

Ministry of Green Space



January Property Beautification Activities

By Gary Kiel, Lay Minister for Green Space

In January the team tackled some forgotten, underused, and kind of ugly raised beds that were on the Cell Tower side of the building. It is not a good place for plants as there is very little sun when the trees are full of leaves.

The plan was to reposition the white raised bed and decommission the decayed wooden bed.



Those raised beds are now gone! Level ground looking for a new purpose.

A new location for the white vinyl bed. It is in a sunny location next to the keyhole garden. Perhaps flowers in the bed and vegetables in the keyhole bed? Spring will soon be here.



You just can't keep some kids out of the dirt.

Karen loves to play in the dirt. And you can too! Join the Green Team!



Agent Steve on Special Assignment



Steve and his trusty leaf blower rid the parking lot, side walks, and back deck from an invasion of Sweet Gum balls. Thanks Steve for making walking safe again.

Ministry of Green Space

Positively Green

*Wintertime is here,
But Spring is drawing near.
My mailman brings me catalogs
Full of seeds and gardening gear!
(Apologies to Vince Guaraldi. And Charlie Brown)*

As odd as it may seem, Winter is the time to plan your garden for Spring. Whether it is a vegetable garden full of annuals or a pollinator garden full of native plants, now is the time to decide what you would like to plant and where to put it. The UUCG Green Team would like to encourage you to include some milkweed in your garden for monarch butterflies and others.

The monarch butterfly, *Danaus plexippus*, was put on the federal list of endangered species as a threatened species in 2024. Their numbers have been declining for years for a variety of reasons, principal among them is loss of habitat. Creating more habitats for these butterflies is something we can all do whether in the ground or in flowerpots.

Monarchs Across Georgia is a non-profit group dedicated to educating folks about the ways of the monarch butterfly. It recommends four species of milkweed to host the butterfly larva; it is these leaves that matter to the caterpillars. Milkweeds are in the genus *Asclepias*, and all have a milky sap that is toxic to caterpillar predators. Be sure to handle all the plants with gloves and wash thoroughly when finished. Protect any little helpers you may have as well:

- *Asclepias verticillata*—Whorled milkweed. Small white flowers in sun.
- *Asclepias tuberosa*—Butterfly weed. Bright orange flowers, sandy soil.
- *Asclepias incarnata*—Swamp milkweed. Pink flowers in a wet spot. Sun.
- *Asclepias perennis*—Red-ring, or White, milkweed. Shade tolerant.

Seeds of these plants are commercially available. The plants themselves will be available as Spring arrives from nurseries. Or the garden of a friend. Keep in mind that while the caterpillars eat the leaves to grow, the adult butterflies will need nectar to feed. Monarch Watch recommends planting 6-8 nectar plants for every milkweed host plant. (Yay! More plants!)

The Georgia Native Plant Societies has a list of nurseries where milkweed is available. It will also list the dates of the spring plant sales held by its local chapters.

<https://gnps.org/georgias-native-plants/sources-nativeplants/>.

Happy Gardening!



*The Gulf fritillary, *Agraulis vanillae* (Linnaeus), or Passion butterfly.
Photo By Candice Carver*

Ministry of Green Space

Upcoming Events

**How many
birds can
you find?**

28th Annual Great
Backyard Bird Count

February 14-17, 2025

birdcount.org



Spotted Towhee/*Pipilo maculatus*.
Photo: Jim Merritt/Macaulay Library

March 1st!

9:30am-Noon

Green Sanctuary

**BEAUTIFICATION
DAY**

Spring into action to
see the campus
bloom



Green Team
invites you to our

**Brainstorming
Breakfast**

**Saturday,
February 15
9:30 to Noon**

Enjoy coffee and breakfast fare as we plan out what we want accomplished at UUCG for the upcoming year, part of our commitment to the **UU Climate Justice Revival.**

Ministry of Spiritual Growth



Shared Ministry

by Lydia Patrick, Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth

I am Lydia Patrick, Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth. I have been involved with the Worship Associates team since 2014. I was asked to take on the role of Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth in 2021, as we were coming out of the pandemic, when the person then holding the role was unable to complete their term. I was not sure exactly what I would be doing, as the job description offered to me was more of a conversation than a spreadsheet. I have since that time learned so much about our beloved community, holding space, and building containers for worship and faith development in a variety of ways. This job is a catch all at times, because, if we are honest, everything we do in our community is about spiritual growth - but the Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth position has several distinct gifts to offer to our beloved community.



Join Us!



UUCG Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Thank you for your interest in serving in this essential capacity at UUCG. We hope you find a niche here and are excited to work with you. Here is a list of opportunities to serve with regard to Spiritual Growth at UUCG.

Spiritual Growth

- Beacons, Worship Associates, Service Leaders, Covenant Choir, Sweet MUUsic, and Faith Development Programs

Please fill out the form below to indicate your area of interest and you will be contacted by a Lay Minister who can share information and answer any questions you may have.

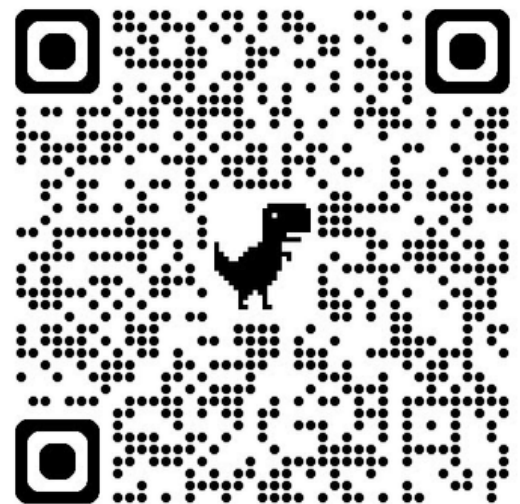
Training for all of these service opportunities will be provided on a date and time yet to be determined.

We look forward to serving alongside you!

- Be an active participant in the Shared Ministry Council at UUCG
 - Represent Spiritual Growth at UUCG for newcomers and visitors who want to get involved
 - Gather with other UUCG Leaders at the annual Leadership Retreat
 - Share what's new in your ministry each month with the congregation & Board
 - You get your own Bulletin Board!
- Be an active participant on the Worship Associates team at UUCG
 - Serve as a Worship Associate and/or Service Leader at UUCG, providing guidance and support for the Team as needed
 - Collaborate with Minister and Music staff to plan anthems and supporting music for services
 - Provide leadership & support for Beacons each Sunday or as needed

I will be finishing my time as Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth in June. **We are seeking the next person who will fill this role, bringing a new perspective and fresh inspiration. Is it you?**

If you are interested to learn more, please reach out to SpiritualGrowth@uucg.org!



Faith Development

Questions for the Journey...

Christiana McQuain, Coordinator of Family Ministries

This list of questions is an aid for deep reflection, and perhaps a new way of thinking about Inclusion. How you answer them is often less important than the journey they take you on.

- If you could go back and change a moment of being excluded or excluding someone else, what would it be?
- What aspect of your personality do you need to do a better job of embracing and welcoming in? Your judgmental self? Your lazy self? Your vulnerable self? Your bitter self? Your easily frightened self? Your quick-to-anger self? Your jealous self? Your petty self? Your selfish self?
- What aspect of your life partner, child, or close friend do you need to do a better job of embracing and welcoming in?
- What excluded and painful memory of yours wants to be welcomed back in and better understood?
- How is the pain and struggle of those less fortunate than you included in your life?

Exploring Inclusion

Faith Development resources for exploring The Practice of Inclusion



Check out The Practice of Inclusion- Soul Matters February Play list on [YouTube](#) or [Spotify](#).



Worship Music at UUCG

**Do you like to sing?
Do you play an instrument?**



Join us at UUCG and share your gifts! The UUCG Covenant Choir rehearses Tuesday nights at 7:00PM and Sunday mornings at 9:30AM. The UUCG Sweet MUUSIC Band rehearses Thursday nights at 8:00PM. Come when you can and hang out with us - all voices and players are welcome!

We can't wait to meet you! Not only do we sing during most services, but there are opportunities to go out into the community with our music as well.

We invite you to join us!

Embracing your Inner Light

Spell by Candice Carver

Materials:

- A small mirror
- A pink candle (for self-love and compassion)
- Rose petals or a small handful of dried lavender (for calming and nurturing energy)
- A small bowl of water (for cleansing)
- Your favorite crystal (rose quartz is ideal, but any crystal that feels special to you works)
- A journal and pen



Preparation:

1. Find a quiet space where you won't be disturbed.
2. Cleanse the space with a ritual you enjoy (e.g., lighting incense or sprinkling salt water).

Ritual:

1. **Set Your Space:** Place the mirror in front of you, with the candle in the center and the bowl of water and crystal nearby. Scatter the rose petals or lavender around the candle to create a circle of loving energy.
2. **Light the Candle:** As you light the pink candle, say: "I call upon the flame of love and compassion to guide me. Let this light shine within me, warming my heart and filling me with kindness for myself."
3. **Hold the Crystal:** Pick up your crystal, close your eyes, and take three deep breaths. Imagine the crystal radiating gentle energy, filling you with love and strength.
4. **Mirror Affirmations:** Look into the mirror. Hold your gaze and say these words aloud or in your heart: "I see myself as I truly am. I am worthy, I am enough, I am love." Repeat three times, or as many times as you feel called.
5. **Water Blessing:** Dip your fingers into the bowl of water and gently touch your forehead, heart, and wrists, saying: "I cleanse away doubt, fear, and pain. I welcome love, peace, and strength into my being."
6. **Journal Reflection:** Write in your journal about what you love about yourself and what you want to nurture in your life. Let the candle burn safely while you write.
7. **Close the Spell:** When ready, thank the energy you've summoned: "I honor the love within me. May it grow brighter with each passing day. So it is." Blow out the candle and carry the crystal with you as a reminder of your self-love.



Building a Spiritual Practice

MARCH 1ST @ UUCG
4PM - 6PM



Shamash, Light of Justice

Shamash, you who see all under the sun,
bring your light to the shadows of our time.

For the torn families, for the silenced voices,
for those cast aside by greed and fear—
shine on them.

Reveal the truth hidden beneath power,
cut through the lies that bind us.
Your light sees what others refuse to witness.

Stand with the broken,
stand with the forgotten,
stand with those who dare to hope.

May your warmth awaken compassion,
may your flame ignite the courage to act.

Shamash, guide us toward justice.
Let your light lead the way.

Ministry of Connecting Within



Let's All Dance

by Lisa Kiel, Lay Minister for Connecting Within

“Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.”

~ *Verna Myers*

I have a deep desire for everyone who comes to UUCG to feel included in every aspect of congregational life. So, are you, as Myers suggests, being asked to dance? It's not enough to be invited, we all need to participate in the creation of our community. Inclusion is not about magnanimously allowing others to attend our dance. It's about joining with others to create a dance that contains all of our styles and talents. Inclusion embraces a welcoming willingness to change.

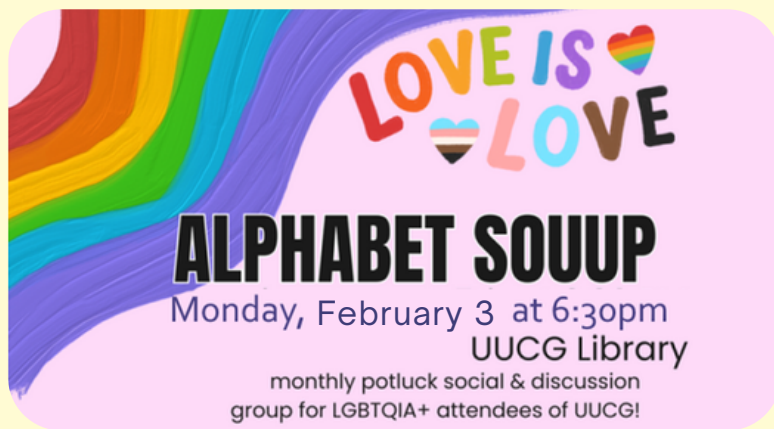
There are many opportunities here at UUCG to engage with others to create new experiences together. One of our newest groups, the Open Circle will offer a caring space for participants to share their thoughts, feelings and stories with one another. If you would like to be part of the Open Circle, please plan to attend its first meeting on February 23rd after our Sunday service. All who identify as women are welcome.

Are you feeling a little let down after the holidays? Don't forget that UUCG is now offering a Game Night on the 1st Friday evenings of the month starting at 6:30 pm. All ages are welcome! Games are provided, but you may bring any family friendly games of your own. Come have fun, relax and make new friends!

Finally, for all our LGBTQ+ folx, Alphabet SoUUp continues to meet the first Monday night of the month starting at 6:30 pm. This LGBTQ+ caucus group is a safe space for folx to come together, share a meal and offer each other support and care. Everyone attending is invited to bring a potluck dish to share.

May your February be filled with love, joy and dancing.

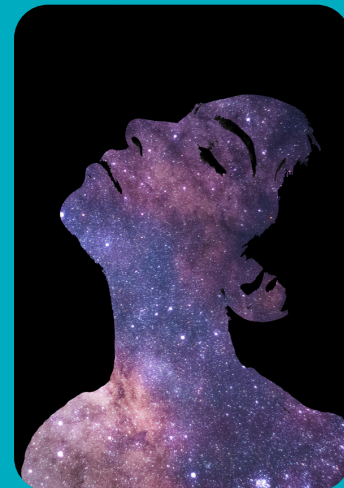
~ Lisa



Practicing Inclusion

“To be free, you must embrace the breadth of your own existence without apology... But to *actually* be free, you must know and you must fight for the entire Universes inside of everyone else.”

~ *Rev. Julián Jamaica Soto*



Ministry of Connecting Within



**GAME
NIGHT**

**Friends,
Family,
Fun!**
Friday, February 7
at 6:30pm
in the Sanctuary
at UUCG

Covenant Groups

Deeper exploration of
our monthly themes
in a small group setting

Learn more &
register here

The Open Circle


Women's Group


February 23rd at 12:30 PM



ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

 **Alphabet SoUUp** - In Person: 1st Monday
at 6:30, potluck served


 **Book Club** - Online : 4th Wednesday at 7-9 pm
<https://zoom.us/j/144736833>


 **Covenant Groups** - 2nd Monday online 7-9 pm **Registration ongoing**

 **Men's Group** - In Person 2nd Saturdays at 9 am

 **Music Night** - In Person every Thursday night starting at 6:30

 **QUUest** - Adults: In Person: 4th Friday at 6pm Online: 3rd Friday at 7 pm
QUUest Jr. - Youth: In Person: 2nd Friday at 7pm

 **Spiral Scouts** - In Person 2nd Sunday following Sunday service

 **Walkers** - 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 11 am, for location information, email admin@uucg.org

 **Women's Group** - 4th Sundays at 12:30pm

 **Yarns from the Heart** - Online 1st and 3rd Wednesday, for Zoom link: email admin@uucg.org

CHECK OUT THE CONNECTING WITHIN BULLETIN BOARD

Ministry of Connecting Beyond



Honoring the Inherent Worth of Everyone

by Candice Carver (she/her), Lay Minister for Connecting Beyond

The practice of inclusion calls us to honor the inherent worth of every person, extending compassion and action to those marginalized by systemic injustice. Here at UUCG we strive to embody this practice by fostering initiatives that confront inequities, build bridges, and create a world where everyone can thrive.

On the cusp of this new administration and its harmful agenda, our work becomes even more urgent. Policies that threaten marginalized communities demand a bold response grounded in love and justice. Familias Juntas, a partnership between UUCG and The Nett Church, helps people impacted by unfair immigration rules, especially families being separated. Immigrants bring so much to our country, from hard work to important contributions to the economy. They deserve support and respect, not fear and separation.

As UUs we are committed to racial justice and living at the heart of inclusion. Systemic racism continues to harm individuals and communities, creating barriers to education, employment, housing, and safety. By confronting these injustices, we seek to dismantle oppressive structures and build pathways for equity and opportunity. Working toward racial justice is not only about addressing the past—it is about shaping a future where everyone can thrive, free from prejudice and fear.

We fight to protect the inherent worth and dignity of LGBTQIA+ and their rights, because everyone deserves to live their truth without fear of being persecuted and ostracized. LGBTQIA+ people add so much creativity and value to our culture, they deserve to be celebrated and supported! Inclusion means ensuring their lives and livelihoods are protected.

Our Climate Justice Revival we held last fall didn't stop with one event, we are focusing on bringing the climate crisis to the program "Good

Trouble" because the climate crisis adversely impacts *everyone*! Especially people already suffering other forms of injustice. Taking care of the Earth isn't just about the environment—it's about protecting people's homes, health, and lives.

We know there are so many other issues that need attention, but we only have so much time and energy. Still, we do everything we can with the resources we have to make a difference, because even small actions can create big change.

As these harmful policies continue to hurt people, standing together and supporting one another is more important than ever. Living love through inclusion means showing up, speaking out, and making the world a safer, kinder place for everyone.

Come join us and be part of this important work!



Ministry of Connecting Beyond Familias Juntas (Families Together)

By Lorena Griffin

Familias Juntas is a new initiative of UUCG and The Nett Church (United Methodist). The focus is on assisting immigrants in danger of or affected by family separation, due to inhumane immigration policies. We will hold an organizational meeting in February with members from both congregations. Right now, at the recommendation of the Latin American Association, we are helping people make family plans and custody arrangements for those left behind if they are detained or deported. Later, after separations have taken place, the aim will be to help those families in other ways.

We will hold "document clinics" in March and April, with lawyers and notaries to help make documents legally binding.

If you are interested in helping with this or if you have questions, let us know at familiasjuntas2025@gmail.com. In the meantime, please visit and like/follow our Facebook page (QR code below) and share with people you know. You can also learn more at www.familiasjuntas.org

Food Distribution



Gwinnett
Starting at 3:00PM
while supplies last.

- Fresh & Shelf-stable foods
- No ID required
- Drive through distribution

February 11th

LENORA PARK
4515 Lenora Church Rd., Snellville

February 25th

BRYSON PARK
5075 Lawrenceville HWY, Lilburn

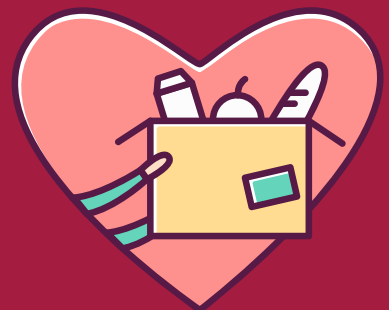
March 11th

ROCK SPRINGS PARK
550 Rock Springs Road, Lawrenceville

March 25th

SHORTY HOWELL PARK
2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth

For more information, visit
GwinnettCounty.com/FoodResources



**familias
juntas**

**Organizational
meeting**

**Tuesday February 4th
7:00PM-8:30PM
in the UUCG Library**



What's Next?

Good Trouble 2025

Together let's build our
interconnected future
**February 26th,
12:30PM**



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Opportunities to Connect in Our Community

el refugio

**Day visit to El Refugio and
Stewart Detention Center
March 1st, 2025.**



El Refugio supports families who are visiting their loved ones at Stewart Detention Center while awaiting deportation or release. The visit will include an orientation, a tour of the house, and a visit to the detention center.

Please attend the online Zoom orientation on February 20th, link posted in the Facebook group, and connect with JoAnn Weiss by email to sign up to attend.



**Gwinnett Interfaith
Alliance Monthly
Meeting**

Monday, February 3rd

Location: Harrington Center
701 S. Columbia Dr.,

Decatur, GA
Business Meeting 7:30PM-8:00PM

Speaker 8:00PM-9:00PM

Speaker: Ayesha Abid, Program
Coordinator Georgia Interfaith
Power and Light.

Topic: "One Planet to Protect But
many Faiths

**gwinnettinterfaithalliance
@gmail.com**



LAWRENCEVILLE CO-OP
COMMUNITY FOOD BANK MINISTRY



COLLECTING ON FEBRUARY 2ND

Most Needed Food Items

- Snacks – Protein bars, granola bars, Cheese and crackers, Peanut butter and crackers
- Canned beans
- Rice
- Mac & cheese
- Pasta and pasta sauce
- Canned pasta
- Canned tuna and chicken
- Peanut butter & jelly
- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Canned soup
- Cereal

Most Needed Non-Food Items

- Size 3 and up diapers
- Feminine pads
- Adult diapers Size S-XL
- Laundry pods
- Toiletry items



30 DAYS OF LOVE 2025

Monday, January 20 through Friday, February 14

<https://sidewithlove.org/30daysoflove2025>

Save the Date

Luminescence

Sunday, March 2, 2025



Oak Grove
Sylvan Sanctuary Druids
CUUPS at UUCG

Alban Eiler

SPRING EQUINOX
Ritual
MARCH 22ND

SOUUL SUMMIT 2025

FEED YOUR SOUUL

Thursday, March 27 to Sunday, March 30
at UUCA in Atlanta, GA

SOUUL Summit is a Unitarian Universalist Conference designed to empower and inspire congregational lay leadership.

From June 18–22, 2025, the 64th UUA General Assembly participants will gather to worship, witness, learn, connect, and make policy decisions for the Association through a democratic process. GA will be a multi-platform event, with the main stage hosted at the Baltimore Convention Center in Baltimore, Maryland and hundreds more joining online.

[Click here to learn more about participating and engaging with the business of our UUA.](#)



UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BALTIMORE • JUNE 18 - 22, 2025

February 2025



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	1

	Food Bank Donations Days	Food collection for our members in need and the Lawrenceville Co-op	In-Person
	Potluck Lunch	Sign up to volunteer; bring a dish to share; come break bread together	In-Person
	Board Of Trustees	Congregational Conversation, Board Meeting, or Business Meeting. All members and friends of UUCG are invited to attend	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Alphabet SoUUp	Discussion group for Queer-identified folx	In-Person
	Choir	Rehearsal for performance during Worship Services	In-Person
	Yarns from the Heart	Creates prayer shawls and baby blankets for members and friends	Online via Zoom
	Music Night	Musicians of all skill levels gather to play together	In-Person
	Property Beautification	Monthly indoor/outdoor workday. All skills and abilities are welcome	In-Person
	Oak Grove UUCG CUUPs	Oak Grove UUCG Covenant of UU Pagans Gathering, all are welcome	In-Person
	Belief Explorers	Explorers of world philosophies, faith traditions & religions	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Spiral Scouts	All-gender scouting group for ages 3-12	In-Person
	Covenant Groups	Small Group Ministry. Registration Required	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Men's Group (inclusive)	Male-identified people gather for discussion	In-Person
	Tarot Classes	A learning space for all who are interested in the tarot	In-Person
	Green Team Meeting	Environmental Justice-focused group, all are welcome	Online via Zoom
	Sylvan Sanctuary	Oak Grove Sylvan Sanctuary Druid Ritual celebrating the Sabbats	In-Person
	Book Group	Monthly book discussion (contact administrator for link to join)	Online via Zoom
	Walkers	UUCGers who walk together (Contact administrator to join their email list)	In Person
	Worship Services	Sunday Morning Worship Services at 11:00am weekly	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Family Game Night	Board and card games in community - all ages welcome	In-Person
	QUEST & QUEST Jr.	D&D campaigns, registration required	In-Person
	Good Trouble	Sunday After Service at 12:30PM	In Person
	Women's Group		

Staff Schedules

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones
Minister

revnpj@uucg.org | 678-558-4834

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays:
10:00 am. - 4:00 pm

First and Third Saturdays: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Christiana McQuain
Coordinator of Family Ministries

cmcquain@uucg.org

Tuesdays (remote), 9:00 am-4:00 pm;

Fridays (on-site), 9:00 am-2:00 pm;

most Sundays (on-site) 8:30 am-2:30 pm

Michael Parker
Choir Director

choirdirector@uucg.org

Tuesdays (on-site), 1:00 pm-6:00 pm

Becca Parker
Choir Director

choirdirector@uucg.org

Sunday mornings (On-site), 9:00 am-12:00 pm

LaTreisha McKay
Bookkeeper

lmckay@uucg.org

Monday (remote), 5:00 pm-8:00 pm