



January 2025 Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists

Table of Contents

[Worship In January](#)

[Looking Ahead](#)

[Message From the Minister](#)

[From the Board](#)

[First Quarter GATP](#)

[Radical Welcome](#)

[Green Space](#)

[Spiritual Growth](#)

[Faith Development](#)

[CUUPS](#)

[Connecting Within](#)

[Connecting Beyond](#)

[Save the Date](#)

[January Calendar](#)

[Staff Schedule](#)

Living Love Through The Practice of Story



This month's exploration of The Practice of Story offers us a chance to connect with each other through sharing stories and to use stories as a way of conveying our hopes, joys, and challenges. Because this is how all of us human beings have made sense of our world since the beginning of time. Our lives are built of stories.

Yet, as we hold that commonality, we also know that we all have different stories and a differing experiences with stories. Honoring this diversity, too will be integral to this month's journey.

And so, the hope for this month is that all of us gain a deeper appreciation for how we share a common story and for how each of us has our very own unique stories.

May we find opportunities to re-connect with what a gift it is to be witnesses to each other's unfolding stories. Because this is foundational to Creating a Culture of Care. This is what it means to be in community.

Happy



Year

Worship in Month

Sundays at 11:00am

Theme:

Liberating Love through the Practice of Story

Join us in-person or via Zoom

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



Programs

Sundays at 12:30pm

1st Sunday, 1/5

Congregational Conversation
Potluck

2nd Sunday, 1/12

Belief Explorers
Women's Group
Spiral Scouts (pre-registration required)

3rd Sunday, 1/19

Sunday Tarot

4th Sunday, 1/26

"Good Trouble"

January 5th

**Beginnings, Endings, and Love's Unfolding :
The Stories We Tell Ourselves**

Using a creation story and referencing others, this service is about how viewing the past and future through the lens of unfolding Love changes our stories.

Daniel Bailey (He/Him), Service Leader

January 12th

A Fresh Take on an Old Story

This week, two lifelong students of Story – Rev. Nancy and Bob Patrick – invite us to look at an old story in fresh ways.

Where will you find yourself in the story, and what can we take from the story into our daily lives?

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

January 19th

Shaping Our Story: We Have a Choice

On the eve of the presidential inauguration and of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we pause to ask, What story will we help shape for our country and our community? How do we embody our values as we participate in the work of the world?

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

January 26

Inspiration of the Sacred Flame

Today, we live love through the practice of story, poetry and song, invoking Brigid's sacred flame of inspiration. As we gather, we share the power of words and music, weaving together the poetry, song or stories that flow through us and the stories that unite us.

Come share your story, poetry and songs with us.

Candice Carver (She/Her), Service Leader



WHAT'S YOUR STORY ?





Worship and More

Worship Services
Sundays at 11:00am
January Theme:

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

Added Security Presence on Sunday Mornings

You may have noticed a police car in our parking lot most Sunday mornings. The Board voted to employ an off-duty officer through the election-inauguration season out of an abundance of caution.

Primarily, we wanted to take the pressure off our volunteer security team. We are so thankful for the ongoing dependable support of this group – Rob Kohl, Larry Long, and Dave Averyt. The board revisits this decision month-by-month. When the election dust settles, we expect we will no longer require the added layer of security. In the meantime, say hello to Officer Bautista, and know that your safety is of paramount importance to the UUCG Board.

This unexpected expense was not included in the budget. A handful of generous donors have contributed thus far. If you would like to earmark a donation specifically for this purpose, just make a note of it on your check or in your online donation.

Sunday Morning Safety

Coming up on February 1st

Imbolc Ritual with Sylvan Sanctuary Druids

Join Sylvan Sanctuary for ritual to celebrate Imbolc. Imbolc, also called Saint Brigid's Day, is a Gaelic traditional festival. Imbolc marks the very beginnings of spring and the return of the sun's light to the world. Please come celebrate with the Druid grove in this public ritual. Potluck afterwards.

Sylvan Sanctuary Druids



2025 Congregational Photo Shoot January 12

This year's Congregational Photo will be taken after the Worship Service on Sunday, January 12th. 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.

Welcome New members!

On Sunday December 8th, five new members signed the book and were celebrated during the Worship Service. Please welcome Catherine Juhan, Talia Juhan, Cammie Key, Boleyn Key, and Nicholas Prakash into membership.

We are so glad you have chosen to share the journey with UUCG!

The Desk of Rev. Nancy



The Power of Story and the New Story That Is Ours to Tell

by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)



From as early as I can remember, I have loved stories, whether they arrive in books or movies, on TV or in the stories told by a friend or stranger. I am so lucky that all my life's vocations—actor, editor, minister, writer—have focused on the power of story.

Stories have changed the way I understand the world and myself. Stories have taught me new pathways in life. Stories have helped me to understand what it means to be human and alive and have helped me figure out which path I want to take.

At the same time, learning how some stories throughout history get privileged while others are minimized or silenced, and then seeking out the stories I haven't yet heard—this has made my life more broken-openhearted, more compassionate and humble, and infinitely richer and more real.

And then, here comes our faith, Unitarian Universalism, which shows us that we can tell a new and liberating story even when society's dominant stories try to limit us. For instance, in the 18th and 19th centuries, when the dominant Protestant story about human beings was that we were "predestined" for heaven or hell no matter what, our religious ancestors told a new story: We humans have more choice than that, they said. We can choose to do good, to do ill, or to be indifferent, in this world. These choices make a difference in whether we create heaven or hell right here on earth—and that matters for all of us, no exceptions!

Hooray for being all bound up together in this complicated project called Life! Hallelujah for the capacity to shape new stories that change our own lives and the world around us!

So as we launch this new year, I wonder: What new stories of possibility, of choice, of connection and commitment are ours to tell? If the dominant story is that there's not enough to go around, and that some people get the resources to survive and thrive while others don't, then how can we, right here at UUCG, not just tell but live a story of practical abundance, of encouragement and care for all we touch?

I can't wait to write this story together! Happy New Year, beloveds!

With Curiosity, Courage, and Compassion,
and always, with Love at the center,

Rev. Nancy



"May you find joy in all your creative processes; even when they lose their oomph and promise, may you find your way back to joy!" Mosaic by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones

Rev. Nancy Recommends...

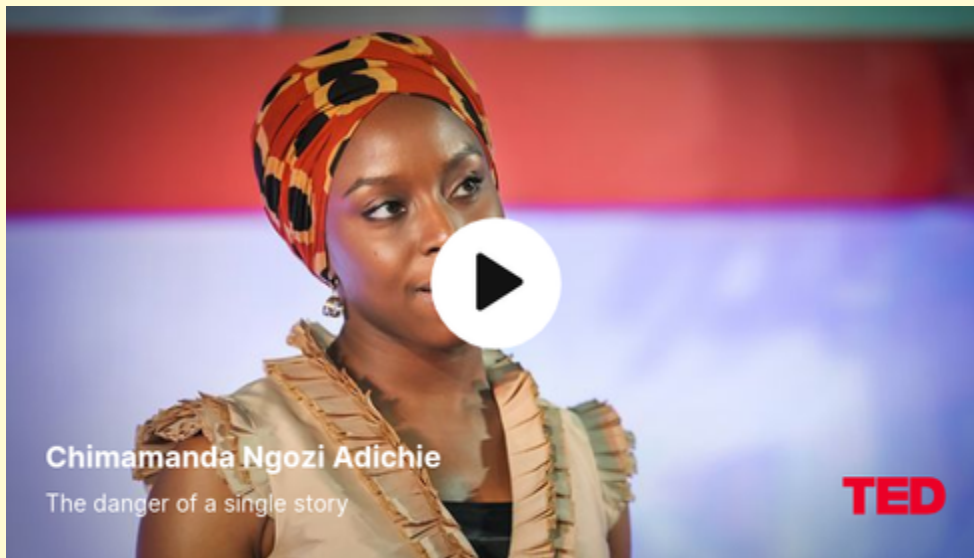


Where Can We Learn More About Story?

by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)

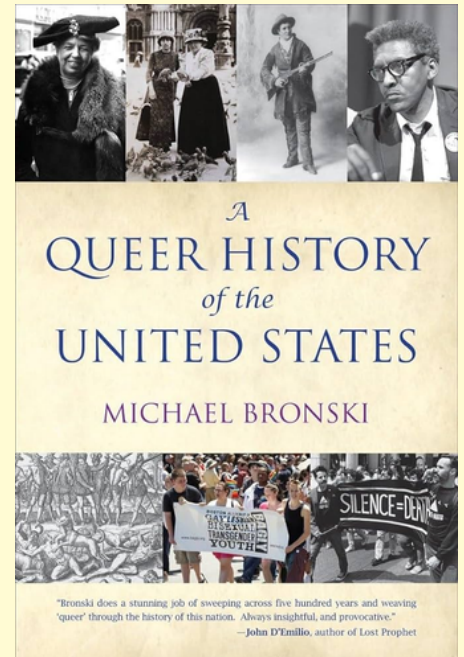
This month I want to share some classic resources—meaning they didn't come out just this past year! These books, podcasts, and speeches have changed the way I think about Living Love Through the Practice of Story, our theme this month.

- If you were to watch, read, or listen to just one resource on our theme this month, I recommend author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 2018 TED Talk, "The Danger of a Single Story." You can find the video below and you can read the [pdf here](#):



- Way back in 1980, historian Howard Zinn first published *A People's History of the United States*, telling the story of our country from the point of view of those whose voices had not been heard. It has been updated since then. And, thanks to the ReVisioning History project of Unitarian Universalism's own major

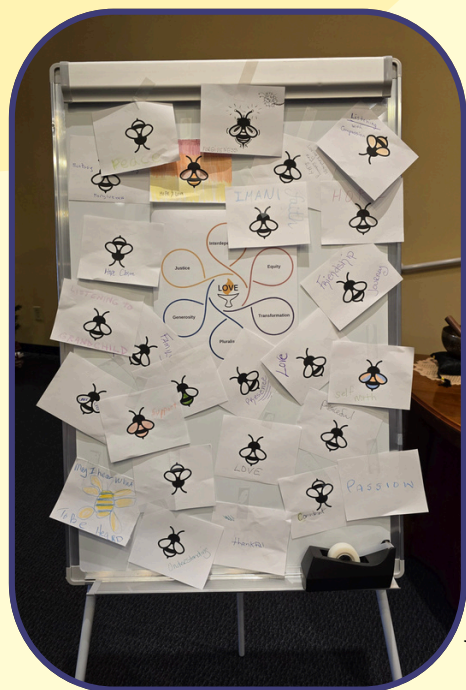
publishing house, Beacon Press, there are now many books that tell the story of this country from the perspective of groups that have been (and often still are) oppressed. *A Disability History of the United States* by Kim E. Nielsen (2013) and *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2015, and the UUA Common Read 2019-20), *A Black Women's History of the United States* by Diana Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross (2020) are just three examples. I confess, I haven't read all of these, but the one I loved listening to and highly recommend is *A Queer History of the United States* by Michael Bronski (2012—always check for more recent editions!). This book gives one of the best explanations of how, when, and why people's stories are recorded, lost, and refound—an explanation that applies not just to queer history. With LGBTQIA+ rights seriously at stake once more, you'll find this book inspiring and instructive about how to live a liberating story even in the face of major obstacles.



Do you know these resources? Let me know what you think, and what you want to add to the list!

Bee-ing Present

On December 29th, the last Sunday of 2024, LaDonna Pacer led the Worship Service and invited the assembled congregation - including those present on Zoom - to reflect on the things in our lives that uplift us. Then we inscribed those words of positivity onto bees and adhered them to the UU Values “flower” graphic, symbolically pollinating our values with positive energy so that the flower will blossom and propagate our values out in the world.



The words offered included:

- Love
- Hope
- Listening
- Peace
- Freedom
- Closure
- Forgiveness

and so many more!



What words would you add?



UUCG will Soon Be 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 January when the positions are ready to be officially posted.

From the Board



A Confusion of GNUUs!

by Dan Kelly, President UUCG Board of Trustees

According to a google search, “A group of gnus, also known as wildebeest, is called a ‘confusion’.”

Therefore, as we move into 2025, the Board of Trustees is excited to share this Confusion with you!

On December 15th, by Congregational Vote, UUCG approved its Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Budget, and the accompanying Resolution to monetize a partial buyout of the cell tower lease to repair the building’s roof and pay off all current debt service. Remaining funds from the sale will be placed in a Capital Expense Reserve Fund. Stay tuned for more information as we go through the process, including the dates for the repair work. We anticipate that the building will be closed during the repairs, and we will need assistance to prepare the building for the work.

Additionally, by Congregational vote, UUCG has conferred the title of Minister Emerita to Reverend Jan Taddeo. This is a tremendous honor for both Reverend Jan and for the Congregation. With Reverend Jan’s permission, we are sharing the beautiful moment in which she was notified, as captured in a Zoom video.

Please rejoice with us here:



The Board is elated to announce that our current minister, Reverend Nancy Palmer Jones, has agreed to accept another one-year part-time contract with UUCG for the next program year, beginning on July 1st, 2025. We are so grateful for the talents and grace that Reverend Nancy brings to the pulpit and to our community! As our congregation continues to grow into an expansive community, living into our shared values as we engage the world beyond our blue boat. We are honored to have Reverend Nancy with us for another year!

In January, we will take a break from our monthly Congregational Conversations. However, we plan to return in February, March and April as we explore the Open Questions that will guide our future planning:

- How can we develop congregational shared leadership and stewardship in covenant with each other?
- How do we as a congregation live into our shared UU values in our daily lives in the larger world?
- How can we create a culture of care at UUCG that invites us to become a more expansive community, living into our shared values?

I hope this “confusion” has been informative as we move into 2025!

On behalf of the UUCG Board of Trustees, I thank you for your continued support as we strive to serve the congregation in faithful covenant. Happy new year!

In beloved community,
Dan Kelly
President, UUCG Board of Trustees

**The Give Away the Plate recipient
for the first quarter of 2025 will be
Second Helpings Atlanta.**



**Give
Away
the
Plate**

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



**UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BALTIMORE • JUNE 18 - 22, 2025**

We are allocated 3 delegates to participate in the UUA General Assembly. If you are a past delegate or interested in being a UUCG delegate please reach out to the Board of Trustees at board@uucg.org.

**Annual Pledge Drive
It is Possible!**

\$138,000



Ministry of Radical Welcome



Effecting Change

by Carol Underwood, Lay Minister for Radical Welcome



This year let it be one of Radical Welcome and a conduit for positive change! I invite you to participate in the [Trans Inclusion Workshop](#). We will gather together every first and third Sunday for three months, starting in February, from 2:30 - 4:30. We will view a video and then engage in a group discussion about the topics presented. These will range from the significance of gender, to welcoming language, to ways to become knowledgeable about obstacles the Trans population faces.

If you are feeling powerless during this time of uncertainty, given all that is ahead in the coming year, this can be a way to become involved in the conversation and gain a deeper understanding of where you have agency to effect change and how you can be present for our Trans siblings and other traditionally marginalized members of our community.

This workshop is multi-platform - you can participate on zoom or in person. The course material is created by the Transforming Hearts Collective; Rev. Mykal Slack & Zr. Alex Kapitan.

**Trans Inclusion
in Congregations**
6 sessions
1st & 3rd Sundays
Beginning in February
Register Today

Transforming Hearts Collective



UU Values graphic by Ginny Andino

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

Ministry of Green Space



Polar Bear Awards

By Gary Kiel, Lay Minister for Green Space



Property Beautification

December 7 started with a frigid low of 27 degrees. Steve and Karen were undaunted and came to work on property beautification, earning them the coveted "Polar Bear" awards.



Steve takes an action shot of Karen at work. The magnitude of the effort is visible in the photo.



I found a concrete pad in front of the shed! Still needs cleaning, perhaps some paint.

The project for the month was to clean out the tool shed (lower shed by the playground) and fix the doors that were damaged by a break-in following decades of use.

About those Doors

Gary removed the doors to clean the tracks. Tons of dirt in the bottom track prevented the doors from sliding. While the doors were out, they were hammered back to flat and square. Not pretty but they work well.



Why is my forehead glowing?

I have on a head light. It is dark in the shed, especially when contrasted with the daylight.

Ministry of Green Space



Success!

Karen is modeling our tool selection in the clean, organized shed.

Green Space in 2025

What are we doing?

What does the new year bring for us Greenies? I don't know. That is why we will be having a planning meeting on January 18th to lay plans for the year. Movies, special projects, etc., will be discussed. Have an idea, come to the planning meeting and share.

Make your resolution to join the Green Team and attend as able.

"Being green and clean is not just an aspiration but an action." Christine Pelroy

Upcoming Events

Jan 4, 2025

9:30AM to 12 (Noon)
Property Beautification.



UUCG Circa 1990-1991

30 Years later!



UUCG 2019

Jan 18, 2025

9:30AM to 11AM
Team zoom meeting to
outline activities for
the year.

Join the discussion here:
<https://zoom.us/j/92617830455>

Ministry of Spiritual Growth



Shared Ministry

by Lydia Patrick, Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth

I am Lydia Patrick and I am the 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 finish out 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 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.

- 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 this spring. We are looking for the next person to fill this role. If you are interested please reach out to admin@uucg.org and someone will be in touch! I am excited for new eyes and fresh inspiration to support our Beloved Community moving forward!



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.

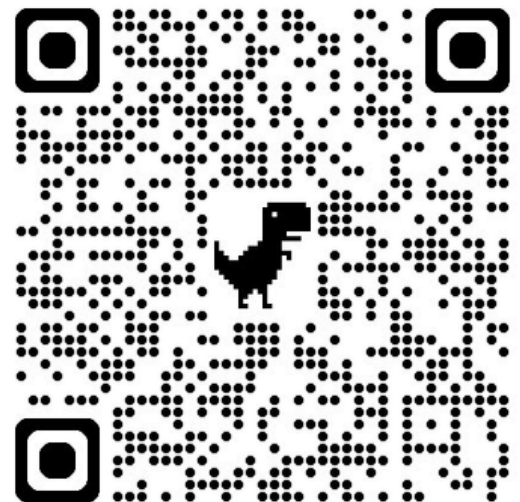
Spiritual Growth

- 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!



Faith Development

Tending the Flame

by Christiana McQuain, Coordinator of Family Ministries

As we welcome in this New Year I find myself surprised that I am filled with hope. Even with all of the uncertainty ahead, I look at the young people among us and I breathe easier knowing that they are the present and the future of our community and our faith.

The stories we tell about our circumstances influence the way our children see the world. What is the tint on the lens we are offering them through which to view it? Are we writing our own stories with intention, or are we allowing them to write us?

Even as my own story continues to be authored or to unfold I wonder, what are the stories they will write for themselves? Will they understand the power of their individual stories to shape the world into the reflection of the Beloved Community ideal that we all envision? Will they find joy in the journey?

During this month of Story I invite you to wonder with me. Knowing that we have an impact - large or small - on every person we encounter, I invite you to imagine how the story you are telling can serve to as a prologue to the stories of the next generation of world-changers. Is there hope in your story?

January
2025

Please note the change
in dates

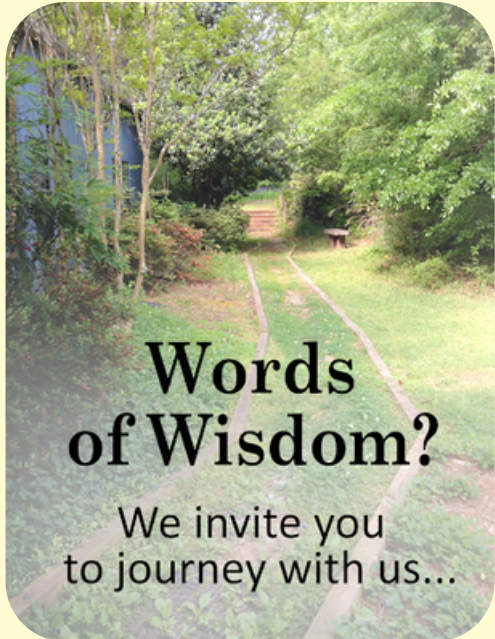
- **Sunday, 1/5**
No program today
- **Sunday, 1/12**
during Worship:
The Story of You
12:30pm:
Spiral Scouts
- **Sunday, 1/19**
10:00am
Gender Justice
- **Sunday, 1/26**
during Worship:
Your UU Story

Children's Schedule

Resources for exploring The Practice of Story

Faith Development
resources
for exploring
The Practice of Story

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



Brigid *By Bob Patrick*

I arise today through a mighty strength,
The strength of the Lady Brigid:
Lady of Grief, who brings us healing.
Lady of Power, who brings us creativity.
Lady of Wisdom, who brings us guidance.


I come with passion to create with Her,
My cauldron of Warming in life.
I come with offering to honor Her,
My cauldron of Vocation in service.
I come with seeking to learn from Her,
My cauldron of Wisdom in learning.

Lady of healing, I call your name.
You bring forth new life, and I call your name.
You help the dying pass over, and I call your name.
You restore the sick, and I call your name.
Midwife, Mediator, Mother,
I call your name and ask for your healing help.

Lady of great works, I call your name.
You stir within inspiration, and I call your name.
You shape the new from the old, and I call your name.
You bring forth gifts from our work, and I call your name.
Creator, Inspirer, Renewer,
I call your name and ask for your working within me.

Lady of powerful words, I call your name.
You craft words and works of magic, and I call your name.
You craft words of justice and truth, and I call your name.
You craft words of wisdom and guidance, and I call your name.
Spell-worker, Justice-worker, Wisdom-worker
I call your name and ask for your Word in my mouth.

I arise today through a mighty strength,
The strength of the Lady Brigid.
Let the fire of life burn brightly.
Let the works of life abound.
Let the river of wisdom flow.



Nanabozho (Anishinaabe): A trickster spirit is a spirit in Anishinaabe aadizookaan, particularly among the Ojibwe. he is also cultural hero, Nanabozho is tied to storytelling, wisdom, and resilience. Winter is a traditional time for storytelling, and his tales are often shared during this season.



MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOP
OAK GROVE CUUPS at UUGG
GATHERING
JANUARY 4TH
12PM-3PM
PAINT, CANVAS, BRUSHES AND MORE PROVIDED.
BRING A LUNCH OR LIGHT SNACK.
12 BETHESDA CHURCH ROAD
LAWRENCEVILLE, GA 30044

Magical Crafting Corner

Missed the CUUPS Mixed Media Class? Here's Your Chance to Try It Out!

Explore the magic of mixed art and poetry from home. It's easy to get started—just gather a variety of materials (paper, pens, paints, markers, yarn, magazines, beads, wood shapes, etc.), a "canvas" (wood board, journal, or painting canvas), and some glue or adhesive. A digital format is fun too! Let your imagination guide you as you arrange your materials into a unique creation. Add words for poetry, or write and paint your poetry directly onto your piece. Mixed media art is a beautiful way to express yourself, tell a story, or honor a moment of inspiration. Give it a try and discover your creative spark!



Example of Digital Mixed Media by Candice Carver

Ministry of Connecting Within



Safe Spaces

by Lisa Kiel, Lay Minister for Connecting Within

**“Remember, you don’t fear people
whose stories you know.”**

~ Margaret Wheatley

I have served as the Lay Minister for Connecting Within since 2022. When I took this position, I had little knowledge of what the ministry entailed, only a hazy notion that I would oversee some of the groups here at UUCG, including Covenant Groups. As our building reopened, I quickly learned that this ministry would be changing and growing while adapting to the needs of our congregants living in a post-pandemic world. Every Lay Minister who serves this community brings their own passion and inspiration to their ministry. Each is committed to both our UU values and to working in collaboration with other members of the Shared Ministry Council. For me, Connecting Within is about offering safe spaces where we can share our stories and hear the stories of others. Meeting together in groups, serving on teams, we learn more about one another. We learn that differences don’t need to divide us, and that we have more in common with one another than we might have imagined.

Right now in our outside culture there is a great deal of fear and uncertainty. We have limited control over the events of the outside world, but here within UUCG we are nurturing a community of care for one another. We are feeding this culture with love and inclusion. There are safe spaces here at UUCG for all. Come be welcomed within.

With Joy,
Lisa



Book Group

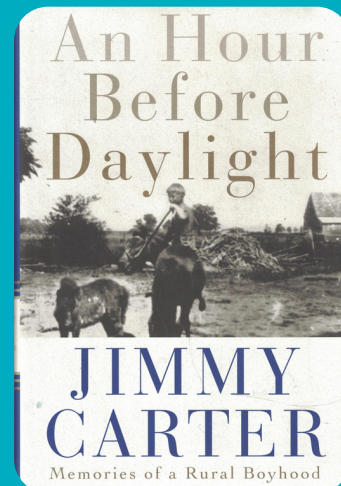
January

An Hour Before Daylight
by Jimmy Carter

In *An Hour Before Daylight*, Jimmy Carter, bestselling author of *Living Faith* and *Sources of Strength*, recreates his Depression-era boyhood on a Georgia farm before the civil rights movement forever changed it and the country.

[Learn more...](#)

**Wednesday,
January 22
at 7:00pm
online via Zoom**



Ministry of Connecting Within

Join Us in the Circle

By Nancy Malone & Kim Pfeffer

Over 30 years ago the concept for an “open circle,” to allow members to speak from their hearts and share without fear of judgement, was initiated at UUCG. Nancy Malone and her spouse at the time, also a congregant, helped to convene this group, which was successful until they departed. It was from the “open circle” that the Covenant Groups emerged.

Fast forward to today - Nancy has jumped back into the congregation and is participating in our various activities like Covenant Groups and Tarot Programs. It was at Tarot that she met Kim Pfeffer, a newer member of the congregation.

At one of the initial meetings of this fall’s second-Saturday Tarot class, not one moment of Tarot took place. For no reason in particular, on that day, the group of women gathered were simply speaking from their hearts and their minds. It was then that Nancy and Kim realized that this was an unmet need at UUCG.

We have a Men’s Group and realized that Women needed a dedicated space as well. As women, we have so many things going on in our lives, and the greater world, that we are left feeling disconnected. So often when we are asked how we are, we respond with fine, okay, or good . . . but *are* we? This group will give us an opportunity to come together for a dedicated time, in a safe space, to share, connect and develop deeper connections.


When we meet we will pass the heart stone - a tangible reminder to stay centered, tell our story, and then pass along to another member of the group so that everyone feels heard and connected.


The first meeting of **The Open Circle**, following service on Sunday, January 12, 2025, will allow us to further outline plans for the group and the potential to grow our connections with outings and off-site activities. Regular meetings will be held on the fourth Sunday of each month, following the Service, beginning Sunday, February 23, 2025.

All who identify as women are welcome.


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

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

 **Women’s Group** - planning meeting Sunday, January 12th 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



Rhonda's Story

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

Rhonda was a force of nature, a woman who poured her heart into everything she touched. Life wasn't easy—she bore the scars of three abusive husbands and the weight of raising two daughters with little money. But Rhonda never let hardship define her. Instead, she turned her energy outward, weaving a life of love, service, and connection to her community.

In 1988, while juggling work and motherhood, she became a whirlwind of civic action. Her front yard transformed into a bustling hub of democracy, with a massive bulletin board supporting the Dukakis campaign towering above the grass and giant oak and ash trees around it. Neighbors gathered, to rally or wave signs along the major highway in front of the driveway. It was an unforgettable moment in her children's lives.

Rhonda's passion extended far beyond politics. She was a cornerstone of the local theater group, where she wasn't just an actress but a hostess who baked treats for intermissions and threw unforgettable parties. At Christmastime, she helped create costumes for the kids choir, though her young children were not always thrilled to participate, as the costumes were often satirical, such as the elves' "Bell Bottoms," which consisted of a picture of bells glued to the bottoms of their pants.

A favorite memory of her youngest daughter is the Annual World Champion Hopkins County Stew Contest. While her children explored the festival's 150 cast-iron kettles, Rhonda tended the fire, stirred the huge pot of stew that she made, alongside her boss. Her company would donate any proceeds to this event to children in need in the community. She put her love in every ingredient. Although they never won, it was amazing just to be involved and for her daughters to witness this triumph act of service.

Now, as an adult I see Rhonda's story - my mom's story - as a compass guiding my own life. I honor her by living love through service—

volunteering, helping with Congregation and community events, and showing others the same resilience and generosity she modeled for us. Mom's life taught me that no matter how little we have, there is always something to give. Her story reminds me daily that love is a practice, and in telling her story, I become part of the love she gave to the world.



My sister, Mandy, and Rhonda on a picnic in our front yard, 1989. These were often with many people in our community, from neighbors, family, & friends or people from the theater. I'm fond of pot-lucks and BBQs because of my mother's involvement in putting these together.

Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Join Us in 2025:

Faith, Action, and Climate Justice at UUCG

We're inviting you to be part of a transformation as we embark on a new initiative: Good Trouble 2025 – Faith Development and Climate Justice happening on the fourth Sunday. Join us as we gather to reflect, learn, and act on the next steps of our shared commitment to climate justice.

Food Distribution

Gwinnett

Starting at 3:00PM
while supplies last.

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

January 14th

RHODES JORDAN PARK
100 E Crogan St. Lawrenceville

January 28th

BEST FRIEND PARK
6224 Jimmy Carter Blvd. Norcross

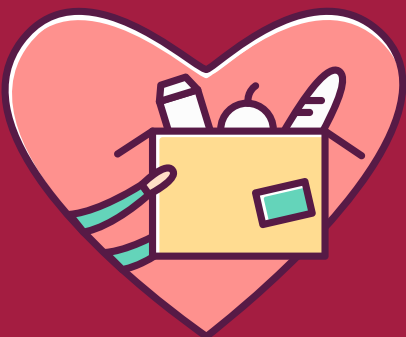
February 11th

LENORA PARK
4515 Lenora Church Rd., Snellville

February 25th

BRYSON PARK
5075 Lawrenceville HWY, Lilburn

For more information, visit
GwinnettCounty.com/FoodResources



What's Next?

Good Trouble 2025

Together let's build our
interconnected future

January 26th,
12:30PM



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

**ANNUAL
MLK PARADE
2025**

THEME: "DON'T GIVE UP ON THE DREAM!"

**Sign up to Sing, March
or Ride with UUCG**

SCAN ME



Registration Not Required But Appreciated



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Opportunities to Connect in Our Community



Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, January 7th

Location: Temple Beth David, Snellville
And on Zoom

Meeting 7:30PM-8:00PM

Speaker 8:00PM-9:00PM

Faith Tradition Presentation:
Rev. Dia - Exploring Earth Centered Spirituality



LAWRENCEVILLE CO-OP COMMUNITY FOOD BANK MINISTRY



COLLECTING ON JANUARY 5TH

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



Save
THE
Date

30 DAYS OF LOVE 2025

Monday, January 20 through Friday, February 14

Save the Date

Mark your Calendar



SAVE THE DATE

BLESSING OF THE PLOW

February 9, 2025

Bring your tools, seeds, soil, plants and gardening items to be blessed.



Luminescence

Sunday, March 2, 2025

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

January 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	29	30	31	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 Sunday	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
	QUUEST & QUUEST Jr.	D&D campaigns, registration required	In-Person

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