

September 2024

Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists

The Practice of Invitation

We begin this new program year by exploring The Practice of Invitation. What could be more appropriate in this moment on the cusp of change – finally emerging from pandemic mindset, a momentous election year, a multitude of societal issues that are crying out for our attention... This is a time to pay attention to what every day has to teach us; to discover where we have agency and take action toward bringing about the world we want to create, together. What is this crucial moment inviting you into? And what are you inviting into your life right now?

We invite you to join us on the journey this month as we explore The Practice of Invitation.



Worship in September

Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: The Practice of Invitation

Join us in-person or via Zoom

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



September 1

Example as Invitation- A Labor Day Challenge

We consider the roots of the Labor Day holiday, and the role our labor might play if humanity were to respect the inherent worth and dignity of every person. How can we live out an invitation to our communities to pursue justice, equity, and compassion in human relations? How can we embody the spiritual definition of love to foster change inside of a society that- at its worst- reveres materialism, celebrates greed, trumpets a desire for power-over politics, and blithely deems poverty inevitable?

Bill Benshoof (he/him), Service Leader

September 8

Ingathering! An Invitation to a Culture of Care

Please join us for our annual celebration of Ingathering! How would you fill in these two sentences:

“This summer I learned ...” Any and all learnings are welcome! Did you learn how to ride a bike, make a magic wand, forgive an old hurt, how to live with grief or illness, how much you love air conditioning? Let’s combine all our wisdom!

“This year at UUCG, I hope we will ...” What are your longings for this community, about how we will be with each other, what we will do, and what experiences we will create for long-timers and newcomers of all ages?

In person, please bring a small amount of water from home so that, before the service, you can add it to our bowls representing North, East, South, and West.

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

September 15

Whole, Holy, and Worthy: A Journey Through Immigrant Stories

This year at UUCG we invite us to explore what a “culture of care” really feels like—in our homes, in our community, in our country, and our world. In this multigenerational service, we dramatize real-life stories of immigrants to this country to see how our faith’s invitation to bring our whole, holy, and worthy selves can become ever more expansive.

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

September 22

We Belong in this World

We invite you to hear about our world on the day where light and dark are balanced. The Autumn Equinox is a personal holy day for most pagans as they reflect on the past of what we need to let go and on the future of what we need to take up. We invite you to see us as we express our most personal beliefs and practices and see that we most certainly do belong.

Bob Patrick (he/him), Service Leader

Candice Carver (she/her), Service Leader

September 29

Invitation to the Climate Justice Revival

In the midst of overlapping climate crises and mounting social injustice, we are in a time of great change and profound anxiety. Taking a note from those who have gone before us, the UUA Climate Justice Revival is meant to be a time to come together and re-commit. This service is a time to re-imagine a way forward for Climate Justice in our congregation as it relates to a changing world.

Bob Patrick (he/him), Service Leader

Sunday Faith Development

Programs for children ages 5-12 will resume in September. This year we will focus on exploration of UU Values and how we interact with each other in ways that live into these values. The schedule will include first and third Sunday sessions that take place during worship, and activities for home on provided on 2nd and 3rd Sundays. We look forward to exploring Unitarian Universalism together.



Sunday Faith Development Schedule Fall 2024

All programming is offered in person unless otherwise specified

Programs for Children

1st Sunday: 12:30pm – Religious Exploration

2nd Sunday: 12:30pm – Spiral Scouts

3rd Sunday: 10:00am – Kid Rainbow Discussion (program developed and facilitated by Alphabet SoUUp)

4th Sunday: 12:30pm – Religious Exploration

Programs for Adults & Teens

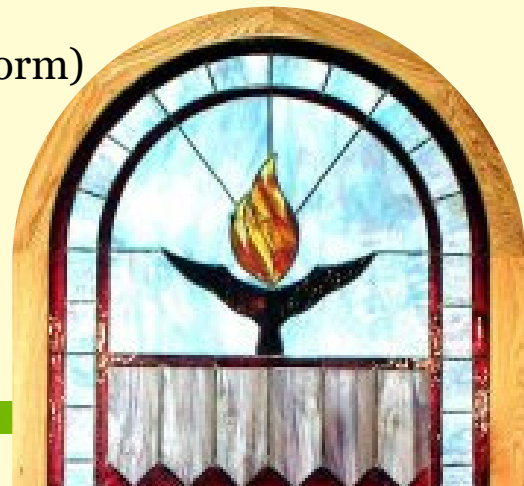
1st Sunday: 12:30pm – Congregational Conversation hosted by the Board of Trustees

2nd Sunday: 12:30pm – Belief Explorers (dual platform)

3rd Sunday: 10:00am – Sunday Tarot

4th Sunday: 12:30pm – “Good Trouble” (dual platform)

5:00pm – Tarot Talk (via Zoom)





First Steps Toward Healing: Being Honest About Our Feelings



~ Reflections on Our July 21 Conversation ~
by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)

On Sunday, July 21, 2024, here at UUCG we held a congregational conversation about how each of us is feeling in the face of uncertainty. Congregants and visitors filled in the blanks on this sentence:

“When I think about the uncertainty in this country, I feel _____ because _____.”

“Scared” showed up most often, with “sad,” “threatened,” “angry,” “terrified,” “frightened,” and “fear” close behind. The word cloud offers a visual representation of the feelings expressed that day. The larger the word, the more often it was chosen.

We’re scared about our own and our loved ones’ survival and well-being. Members of LGBTQ+ communities dread worsening discrimination and the possible need to move. Many fear losing their health care. The happiness of future generations is at risk. The sense of powerlessness drags at people’s spirits.

A few people mentioned feeling “confident,” “fearless,” or “secure” because of their faith in Jesus. These voices may have come from visitors we had that day, or perhaps some of our own Christian UUs feel that sense of grounding. These responses invite us all to ask: What grounding do we Unitarian Universalists have in common that might offer us a sense of security in hard times? What can we depend on in our faith? What fuels us in uncertain times?

The political landscape has changed since July 21. Still, we know that the November election will not magically transform uncertainty into certainty; no one leader has that power. Our work this year is to find our way to resilience, healing, and liberation for everyone, even in the face of uncertainty. Being honest about our feelings is a first step.

Prentis Hemphill, in *What It Takes to Heal: How Transforming Ourselves Can Change the World*, says that uncertainty is actually an opportunity to reshape and realign ourselves. We can become more alive to our bodies and our emotions. Enlivened bodies increase our capacity to relate to one another and the world around us. Sharing our emotions makes us feel less alone. “Our emotional selves are not inconsequential to liberation; they are foundational,” Hemphill says. Here’s to a year of healing and liberation!





Annual Vision of Ministry

Each year during the Leadership Weekend in July, the leadership of UUCG gathers to formulate the three Open Questions and Annual Vision of Ministry for the Congregation to explore and live into in the year ahead. Based on the congregation's responses to the previous year's Open Questions, the Shared Ministry Council collaborates to create the Annual Vision of Ministry to guide the work of the congregation and set goals for the year ahead.

UUCG Annual Vision of Ministry 2024-25 **Creating a Culture of Care**

Creating an Expansive, All-Inclusive, Anti-Oppressive Congregation

- Creating a safer space for vulnerable communities
- Providing opportunities for education on systems of oppression
- Providing resources for the emotional work involved in recognizing internal biases and colonized mindsets
- Engaging in recognizing and overcoming internal biases and prejudices around gender and sexuality
- Promoting understanding and awareness of cultural biases and ways to overcome them



Promoting Climate Justice

- Participating in the Climate Justice Revival
- Screening Films with an Environmental Justice Focus
- Empowering and Supporting Green Space Leadership
- Offering services centered around our involvement of climate justice
- Engaging in local climate justice activities

Faithing with Intention

- Focusing on fresh ways to serve our children and youth
- Supporting families and parents/caregivers
- Enriching our adult faith development programs
- Expanding our styles of Sunday worship
- Growing our music program to offer broader opportunities for engagement

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Deepening Relationships Within

- Experiential learning with a new structure for Small Group Ministry (Covenant Groups)
- Offering new programs that deepen relationship
- Offering activities and events that incorporate multigenerational involvement
- Exploring 'Action Sundays'
- Promoting engagement with the CUUPS gatherings and rituals

Engaging the Wider Community

- Developing our social media ministries/presence
- Responding to these times of injustice, trauma, and uncertainty
- Deepening our UU identity and developing our abilities to express that UU identity in the world
- Continuing to engage in service projects and opportunities
- Offering events that draw in our surrounding communities



Message from the Board

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW!

By Dan Kelly (he/him)

The UUCG Board of Trustees will be hosting Congregational Conversations on the **first Sunday of each month**, as we have done in the past, with opportunities to explore the important “Open Questions” we have as a congregation this year:

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?

These questions are intended to guide us in our development as a faith community for the years to come, and to help us explore the capacity we have to practice love as the center of all our intent in the world, in our community, in our families, in ourselves.

As a leadership model, this practice of “Open Questions” comes to us from the book *Governance in Ministry* by Dan Hotchkiss, who offers the guidance, “Plans and visions are important; questions are potentially transforming.” The purpose of these Congregational Conversations is to inform our Vision of Ministry, today, tomorrow, ten years from now. In a democratic institution, such as our congregation, we are all the leaders. All of our voices should be heard. These Congregational Conversations remind us of who we are, why we gather, what we strive for in the world. Dan Hotchkiss reminds us, “Don’t be afraid, as leaders, to admit that you don’t have all the answers.” Our Covenant calls us to explore these questions together, and to find meaning in the process.

Please join us on the first Sunday of each month, beginning in October, to explore these questions, and the many possibilities each offers to make our community more Curious, more Courageous, more Compassionate in a world that needs it.

In beloved community,
Dan Kelly
President, Board of Trustees



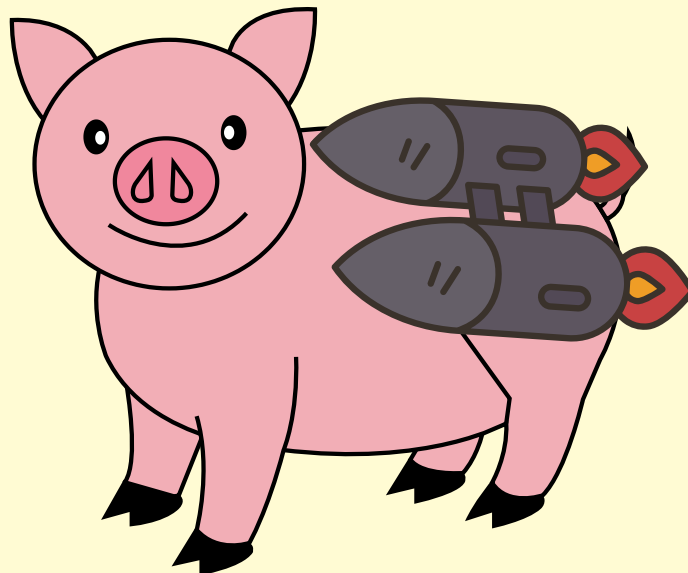
Ministry of Radical Welcome

Message From the Lay Minister for Radical Welcome

By Carol Underwood (she/her)

Sharing the Journey is more than just a simple class to me. I joined STJ after already becoming a member and had a strong urge to feel exactly what it was I was going through. However, I didn't want to feel it alone. This program was the exact thing I needed for where I was in my life. It is a place where I can fully express my faith and articulate our faith path in a small group setting. One thing I love about Sharing the Journey is that I not only get to articulate my journey and share a faith that led me to this congregation, but also I was received with full acceptance and deep listening. Even more, I loved hearing others articulate their faith and how they journeyed their way here. Together we learn about each other and are part of a community working together and plugging in.

Plugging in is an important part of this journey because it allows me to act on the faith I've been pulled into. I loved getting to meet the minister when I did, and Reverend Nancy will also be sharing the journey this September. We will learn more about what it means to be a Unitarian Universalist. We will learn what this crazy JETPIG thing we keep hearing about is, and how we can both apply these lessons within ourselves and push them to the outside world where they can interact with others. Such interactions are what brings us repeatedly into this place. They drive us to want to join some form of community, and the Sharing the Journey program is a great way to jump in feet first. Anyone is welcome to join and share this journey together. You don't have to be a new member or a prospective student. This program can serve as a great refresher into why you joined this community and see what new ways you can plug-in. This is a place for us all to gather and share our journeys with one another .



Ministry of Green Space

Property Beautification

By Gary Kiel (he/him)

Good thing it was not too hot on August 3 to defeat the beautification super team: Xoeys the mower, Steve the weed eater, Karen the eradicator - were Green Stars of the month. Beautification is on the 1st Saturday of each month from 9 to 11ish, with the next time being September 7.

Here is a shy citizen enjoying our nature space.



Ministry of Green Space

Climate Justice Revival

By Gary Kiel (he/him)

Let's talk about climate justice...

We all know how desperate the situation is, and even those of us who have been climate and environmental activists for a long time feel powerless. But there's power in numbers, and thousands of UUs around the world are getting ready to join hands in September for a UU Climate Justice Revival.

For the first time in... ever, the entire UU ecosystem is organizing for climate justice action. These kinds of things don't happen often. Our churches all stand alone and apart. Collaboration is difficult, let alone a decision for every UU congregation to join in creating an event like this at the same time.

Sponsored by the UUA, UUMFE, UUSC, and numerous other UU organizations - as well as our own leaders and thinkers on this subject - this Revival is designed to kick-start our activism and ongoing engagement in climate justice work. It's exciting just on the face of it, and the day itself is looking like a lot of fun. I'll be here and I hope you will be too. Our leaders were trained with other UUs around the country, and when it's over, we'll be part of the national conversation moving our climate work forward.

Sign up to participate in the Climate Revival weekend activities [here](#).

Have questions or want to get in on the planning and facilitation of the event? Reach out to GreenSpace@uucg.org.



Climate Justice Revival
Saturday, September 28 & Sunday, September 29
Multigenerational, Full Congregational Event
at UUCG
Mark Your Calendar!

Ministry of Spiritual Growth

SAVE THE DATE Ingathering and Water Ceremony Sunday, September 8



Please join us for our annual celebration of Ingathering! How would you fill in these two sentences:

1. "This summer I learned ..." Any and all learnings are welcome! Did you learn how to ride a bike, make a magic wand, forgive an old hurt, how to live with grief or illness, how much you love air conditioning? Let's combine all our wisdom!
2. "This year at UUCG, I hope we will ..." What are your longings for this community, about how we will be with each other, what we will do, and what experiences we will create for long-timers and newcomers of all ages?

In person, please bring a small amount of water from home so that, before the service, you can add it to our bowls representing North, East, South, and West.

Ministry of Spiritual Growth

Are you creating art exploring the UU Values? We are getting a gallery wall of congregant's art related to the values to be displayed in the sanctuary. For more information, email aharris@uucg.org

Words Of Wisdom?

Words of Wisdom? is an online collection of daily reflections composed by and for the UUCG community as a way to explore our monthly ministry themes more deeply. The Words of Wisdom? team of writers has (mostly) taken the summer off from composing daily reflections, but we are gearing up to resume in September. If you would like to join the group of folks from UUCG who share reflections on our monthly themes, we would love for you to join us! Please reach out to Bob Patrick or Christiana to express your interest or ask any questions you may have.



The flowers in this design were intentionally chosen:

- a red rose to remind us to center love,
- an orange tulip signifying this renewal of our shared values,
- a yellow dandelion for our resilience in trying times,
- a green carnation for queer identity,
- a blue morning glory representing respect for all living things,
- the violet lavender to signify our own empowerment.

art by Claire Pullen , published here with permission

Ministry of Spiritual Growth

Sept. 7, 2024 @ 6pm

CUUPS Tree Blessing Ritual

Whether we are aware of it or not, trees are magnificent and life giving beings who share this planet with us. They are not optional beings. They actually keep the atmosphere that we need and the ground on which we walk in place and sustain us moment by moment. Trees have been at this for millions of years. At this CUUPS ritual for the blessing of trees, we will offer a blessing to the trees in our grove behind UUCG, and give blessings to trees that are special to each of us who gather.

We invite you to bring a small bit of bread and wine (or grape juice) as offerings to the trees; drums and rattles to help with the ritual, and if you like, a camp chair for sitting in the grove.

September 21st @ 6pm

Autumn Equinox/Alban Elued Ritual

Alban Elued marks the balance of day and night before the darkness overtakes the light. It is also the time of the second harvest, usually of the fruit which has stayed on the trees and plants that have ripened under the summer sun. It is this final harvest which can take the central theme of the Alban Elued ceremony – thanking the Earth, in her full abundance as Mother and Giver, for the great harvest, as Autumn begins, and the balance of the world.



What to Bring To A Ritual

- Offering to Mother Earth
- Canned goods for the Food Drive to Lawrenceville Coop
- Drums and/or other instruments to use during ritual
- A dish to share for potluck
- Your Staff or Wand
- Druid egg to place on the altar
- Other items instructed on Facebook Event

Ministry of Spiritual Growth

Alban Elued The Light of Water

by Dmitri Novak
(he/him)

The Autumn Equinox is known by many names in many traditions around the world, including the Fall or September Equinox, Mabon, Feast of Avalon, and more. For Druids, it is known as Alban Elued (or Elfed) – the Light of the Water.

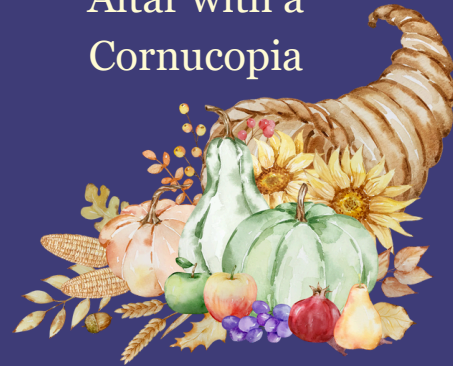
Alban Elued is a special day. As one of the equinoxes, it is one of two times in the year where the amount of day and night are equal, marking a more stark shift between seasons. It is the time to thank and bid farewell to Summer, and begin to turn to prepare and welcome the dark of Winter. Alban Elued is the second harvest festival, and in addition to continuing to dance in the theme of abundance from last month's Lughnasadh, it heralds the themes of gratitude, preparation, and balance.

When one considers balance, one might consider it alongside stillness. But more often than not, balance is not a silent moment in perfect stillness. Balance frequently requires a consistent effort to maintain. When we try to literally balance, we are constantly shifting to keep it going. Slight movements. Big ones. Waving our arms when we might be close to losing balance. When seeking balance in our

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Autumn Equinox Altar

Try Creating an
Autumn Equinox
Flower Arrangement
Altar with a
Cornucopia



Or find different vessels for
your altar to honor the Autumn
Equinox



Customize
your altar to fit
your needs

They can be
used for spell
work and be
decorations for
your house!



Share you Altar with us on FB

#UUGwinnett

IG @UUGwinnett

Ministry of Spiritual Growth

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busy, everyday lives, we shift and adjust, finding balance between obligation or other requirements, and what relaxes us and are activities we do for the joy of it. Work life and home life. When examining balance in our emotional well being, we may find that we are always at work to feel alignment.

Balance could certainly be found in the stillness - that moment of calm or of awe. Balance could also look more like tiny shifts, pivots, or greater - even huge! - waves. A life in motion.

Where might we need to pay attention to balance in our lives? What exactly is balance in our lives?

It has become tradition for our Grove, Sylvan Sanctuary, to enter into a more contemplative ritual for Alban Elued. A large spiral is carefully laid out on the floor with a cauldron, full of water, at the center. Around the spiral will be altars to the directions, and our ritual will be performed in part around this spiral and down in the

grove (weather permitting). As soft drumming sounds, we will spend time in quiet, personal reflection as we walk in and out of the spiral to seek answers to a question.

This ritual will be held on Saturday, September 21st, at 6:00pm. It is a public event and all who wish to join us are invited to participate. Please bring an offering to Mother Earth, canned goods for The Lawrenceville Co-Op, and a potluck dish to share after the ritual.

DANIEL BAILEY

OCTOBER 5TH

*Working with
Spirits of the Land*

2PM-4PM

*Bring a
snack and
a journal*



CUUPS
at UUCG



Autumn Photo Challenge!

From now till Samhain see if you can find and photograph these things!

- A leaf turning
- An acorn
- A selfie in the woods or surrounded by trees on September 21st
- A bushel of apples
- Some mushrooms
- An orange candle
- Leaves arranged in a spiral
- A spider web
- A stream in the woods
- Corn on a stalk
- A fire or bonfire
- A fall centerpiece
- Wild animals in or near the woods
- A sunrise or sunset
- A hot drink
- A pumpkin or pumpkin patch
- Something baked
- A reflection
- Flowers in bloom
- A book you are reading
- The sun through the trees
- A garden
- A Halloween decoration
- A selfie on October 26th at UUCG Trunk or Treat

#UUCGwinnett or post in the Facebook group



Why Tarot? *by Sherree Lynn Bailey (she/her)*

A Tarot Deck is a tiny art gallery filled with 78 images that can be used in many ways. Just flipping through a deck can be a calming, meditative act. The images evoke feelings and thoughts, spark ideas, recall the past, and offer a tantalizing view to possible paths and journeys.. Carl Jung, the Swiss founder of analytical psychology said, “...man (has) always felt the need of finding an access through the unconscious to the meaning of an actual condition, because there is a sort of correspondence or a likeness between the prevailing condition and the condition of the collective unconscious.” As another mystical psychologist, Alejandro Jodorowsky, puts it, “the Tarot will teach you how to create a soul.”

Do you ever wonder what goes on in the UUCG’S Tarot offerings?

1. Creating connections through the sharing of experiences
2. Exploring universal Archetypes in order to recognize the commonalities of all humans
3. Improving focus for setting Intentions
4. Finding Inspiration for Journal writing & art expression
5. Guided Meditations
6. Shadow Work: Integrating all your parts into a harmonious whole
7. Using Tarot for Altars and Spell work
8. Gaining insight into recurring life themes, unresolved conflicts, and hidden motivations
9. Accessing intuition, in order guide decision-making and align actions with a compassionate heart

You don’t need to own a deck or know anything about tarot to attend. Decks will always be available. You do not need to attend every offering. Listen to your heart and come when the day is perfect for you.

Magical Arts & Crafts!

There are SOOO MANY things to do at the start of Autumn, so here are a few Magical things to do!

Leaf Art

As the leaves fall from the trees we have a great opportunity to make some art!

You can use the leaf like a stamp and paint the back side and then press it down on paper, canvas or wood.

You can make scenery, borders, still-life's and more using this technique.



check out more crafts for kids at www.meaningfulmama.com

Another fun thing is to use the leaves as the art without paint!

Gather an abundant amount of freshly fallen leaves of all shapes and sizes.

Use these leaves and other art materials like newspapers, construction paper, markers and etc. to make a picture. Start with a self portrait!



Share your artwork with us online by using #UUGwinnett

IG @UUGwinnett or by sending a photo to admin@UUCG.org to be published in the next GNUUS!

Let us know what you think of the content!
Send feed back to admin@uucg.org!

Protection Spell Jar

The fall is upon us and with that the sun creeps ever closer to edge we find the desire for more spiritual protection. This spell jar is intended to give you overall feeling of protection.

Ingredients:

- jar any size
- dried sage
- dried rosemary
- 6 dried star anise
- 9 dried juniper berries
- 3 acorns
- sea salt
- a small piece of tourmaline or another protection crystal
- a piece of silver wire or chain from a silver necklace
- choose other protection herbs if you want
- a small mirror
- white candle
- lighter or matches
- a permanent marker

Use the permanent marker to add a protection symbol of your choosing to the bottom of the jar.

Layer the bottom of the jar with salt, tourmaline or other crystal, the small mirror (if small enough), rosemary, acorns, sage, juniper berries, and the optional other protection herb, the star anise, and another layer of salt.

Close the lid tightly and wrap the silver wire or chain around the jar, however feels right to you. Light your candle, if your mirror was too large attach it to the lid or base with candle wax.

Attach the candle to the lid using wax.

Take 5 deep breaths. Open your eyes and focus on the candle flame. Focus on a feeling of protection. Think of a time when you felt absolutely calm and safe. Once you've entered this feeling focus that energy on the jar, imagine the feelings of protection as a bright light and direct that into the jar. Once the jar is filled to the brim with this protective light say: "I call on the herbs and crystals to imbue this jar with protective magick. Salt shield me, mirror aid me in defense, candle transform negativity around me and protect me and all that dwell within the vicinity."

Let the candle burn out or down and blow out and set in the central area of your home.



Ministry of Connecting Within

Connecting Within *By Lisa Kiel (she/her)*

There are changes all around us. It's September, and the Fall season with its lower temperatures and colorful foliage remind us that our world is full of beginnings and endings. Fall here at UUCG is a busy time. It's the start of our new program year, and after the long days of summer, suddenly our calendars become crowded. How do we pick and choose where we spend our "free" time? What feels most "inviting" to us?

I have thought a lot about this lately. We are living in a post pandemic society now, and whether we like it or not, our lives have all been changed. We have moved from social restrictions back into a society of what may at times seem like endless invitations. Truth is many of us not only adapted to a slower, more insulated life, we grew to value our time at home more. And yet, we also need to nourish that social side of ourselves.

With all this in mind, changes were made to Covenant Groups. This year we are meeting once a month, not twice a month, for a year long journey together from September to June. We are offering both in person and online groups. Our enrollment is open all year long allowing us to welcome newcomers on a monthly basis. If you are familiar with Covenant Groups, you may be surprised to see monthly handouts that look different. That's because we're exploring new ways to inspire sharing among group members. I invite you to consider spending 2 hours a month in a Covenant Group this year.

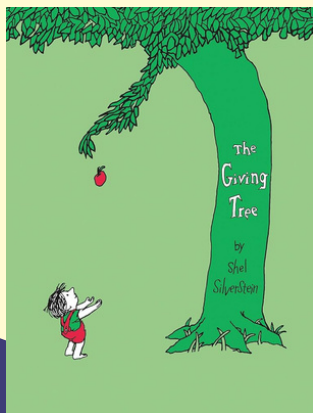
The Wi\$dom Path offered online by Ian Sice on the following Monday nights: Aug 19, Sept 2, Sept 16, Sept 30, Oct 14, Nov 4, Nov 18, Dec 2, Dec 16, Jan 6, Jan 20, and Feb 3. Ian has extended an open invitation to participate in all the sessions your calendar permits or even just the sessions that cover topics you want to explore. You are always welcome to join in at any time.

Music Night, every Thursday from 6:30 - 8:00 pm, is open to absolutely everyone who wants to drop in at UUCG and make some music! Similarly, the Men's Group every 2nd Saturday starting at 9 am, is an inclusive group open to anyone wanting to join in a discussion of topics usually considered "men's issues." Just drop in! Book Club, 4th Wednesdays at 7 - 9 pm online, welcomes everyone to join in their discussions. Again, an open invitation to be part of a group. No registration required!

These are all invitations to: Come, come, whoever you are,
wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving.
Ours is no caravan of despair.
Come, yet again come.
Hymn #188

So, please, simply come!
With joy, Lisa

Ministry of Connecting Within



Book Group September 25 7pm

Book Group Zoom link: [https://
zoom.us/j/144736833](https://zoom.us/j/144736833)

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

From Shel Silverstein, New York Times bestselling author of *Where the Sidewalk Ends* and *A Light in the Attic*, comes a poignant picture book about love and acceptance, cherished for over fifty years. This classic is perfect for both young readers and lifelong fans. We are reading a banned book every other month during 2024. This book was selected from a banned book list.

Covenant Groups

Join us for a reimagination of covenant groups as a year long program.

There are opening left in these two programs:

- 2nd Mondays (via Zoom)
- 2nd Wednesdays (in-person)

In this year long model, you will only need to register once for the entire program year.

Register Here



Sharing the Journey



SEPT 15, 29

OCT 13, 27

Sharing the Journey is a 4-session program for both newcomers and long-time members to experience “deep listening and sharing practices” in a small group setting, while reconnecting with your UU faith and values.



REGISTER HERE

Ministry of Connecting Within

Photos from Auction Events!



Ministry of Connecting Within



Ongoing Connecting Within Opportunities

Ongoing Connecting Within Opportunities: For more info, check out the CW bulletin board located beside the Library entrance!

Alphabet SoUUp - In Person: 1st Monday at 6:30

Chalice Circle - monthly meeting set by members

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

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

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

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

Inclusive Men's Group - In Person 2nd Saturdays in person at 9 am

Wi\$dom Path - Online Mondays: Aug 19, Sept 2, Sept 16, Sept 30, Oct 14, Nov 4, Nov 18, Dec 2, Dec 16, Jan 6, Jan 20, and Feb 3, <https://zoom.us/j/97595388772>

Covenant Groups - Registration is OPEN!

2nd Monday online 7-9 pm

2nd Wednesday in person at UUCG 7-9 pm



**On September 8th, UUCG will host its own REN FAIRE!
– or VOLUNTEEREN' FAIRE!**



We invite all UUCG Groups, Teams, Committees, Task Forces, and Rebel Forces to host a table after worship in a VOLUNTEEREN' FAIRE that boosts enthusiasm and participation for all our activities. Fill your table with the symbols and information that describes your group's ministries. Share your Mission all our congregants and friends! Let's make visible the rich tapestry of opportunities to engage in Curiosity, Courage and Compassion that UUC celebrates every time we reach out to the community within and beyond this beautiful blue boat that we call home.

This is scheduled during our regular monthly potluck, so folks can fill their plate and then fill their hearts with Love at the Center!

If you would like to host a table that allows new congregants and UU-curious folks to explore the multifaceted opportunities for engagement at UUCG, please sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0A4EAAAE2EA0FA7-50780839-volunteeren>

See you at the (volunteer)REN FAIRE! Huzzah!

Ministry of Connecting Within



We Need You to Register!

We need every single household to register for the upcoming programming year.

This information is vital to keeping our database and directory accurate, and also our demographic reports to the UUA accurate.

Email cfm@uucg.org if you have any questions.

[Register here](#)



Wi\$dom Path

Join Ian Van Sice, MS Financial Planning, for a twelve-session program in which we discuss more than just financial literacy; we will delve into our relationship with money, money in society, and how faith and money are connected.

The Wi\$dom Path comprises twelve 90-minute workshops, arranged around three themes: Money and Self; Money and Society; and Money, Spirit, and Life. Participants build awareness of their own “money story” and explore their own attitudes and experiences with money. You will explore the ways in which money connects us with others, including issues of classism and economic justice as well as money issues in congregational life, then delve into ways to align faith, values, and a sense of a life calling with our financial ways of being.

This offering of The Wi\$dom Path is a drop-in program. Plan to attend all 12 sessions or any among them that interest you. No registration is required. Gatherings will start at 7 pm and meet for 90-minutes on the following Monday evenings:

Sept 2, Sept 16, Sept 30, Oct 14, Nov 4, Nov 18, Dec 2, Dec 16, Jan 6, Jan 20, Feb 3

This program is open to all members and friends of UUCG and your own friends and family! Please invite folks close to you who you think will be interested in this content to attend with you or on their own by sharing the Zoom link with them.



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

An Invitation to Connect Beyond

By Candice Carver (she/her)

The practice of invitation and connecting beyond our congregation is both a profound spiritual



responsibility and an opportunity for growth. At its core, this practice reflects the universal call to extend Love, compassion, and understanding beyond our immediate community. It requires us to move past the comfort of our home and step outside of our normal day, where diverse experiences, perspectives, and needs await us.

An invitation to someone is more than just extending an open door to our congregation; it is an intentional act of reaching out, welcoming others into a space of shared values and mutual respect. This practice challenges us to engage in our new shared values of Generosity, Pluralism and Transformation. We must ensure that our community is not a silo of cultures, but a dynamic, evolving community that grows with a variety of diverse interactions.

Connecting beyond our congregation involves recognizing and responding to the needs and challenges of the broader society. We encourage the engagement of social justice issues, environmental concerns, and the many forms of human injustices that exist outside our immediate circles. Through these connections, we are



reminded that our spiritual journey is deeply intertwined with the well-being of others and that our values call us to act in ways that promote Justice, and Equity.

Engaging in these practices allow for personal growth. By opening ourself to the world beyond our congregation, we encounter new ideas, cultures, and ways of being that can enrich our own spiritual lives. We start to see the divine in all people and places, challenging us to expand our understanding of community and deepen our commitment to the world around us. In this way, the practice of invitation and connecting becomes a vital aspect of living out our values in a complex and Interdependent world.

Here are the many ways for you to connect beyond our congregation,

- work with Barbara and contribute to the efforts towards becoming a Good Trouble Congregation
- committing time to get involved with UU The Vote
- join the Give Away The Plate Committee
- help take donations for the Lawrenceville Co-Op food drive once a month
- help with the organization of Trunk or Treat
- help with the organization of the Holiday Bazaar fundraiser

If you're interested in more ways to connect beyond you can email me at connectingbeyond@uucg.org. There are other ways we connect with our community,

keep an eye out in the GNUUS and eNews for local social justice events and volunteer opportunities beyond our walls.



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Create Some Good Trouble and Reclaim the Power of Love

By Barbara Stahnke (she/her)

Power, as defined by Alica Garza one of my personal heroes, “is the ability to impact and affect the conditions of your own life and the lives of others.”

How do we create non-hierarchical power structures to most positively influence our community? We are in a sea of hierarchies. Not just the corporations and government but most of our organizations. We are in a sea of people who have wealth, resources and goods. We are in a sea of advertising for seeking the same wealth, resources and goods. We are in a sea of people trying to get their pieces of the wealth, resources and goods. At the same time, we see the inequities from amassed power without accountability. I believe that we can use people power to organize for people and with purpose to impact our own lives and each other's lives.

Our UU Congregationalist structure allows for less hierarchy. We are not controlled by the UUA, but we follow their guidance. They have the power of the message and the power of purpose, and it is a message and purpose that is influenced by each of us. We have a leader, but she does not put edicts out; she provides ministerial and organizational guidance. Her power comes from living the Universalist messages of relational accountability and universal grace and love. Her power comes from us as we elected her to this guidance role. Our Regional Office does not have power over us, but we grant them power to provide guidance and support to us. We elect our board to administer our funds and mission to best live into our UU values and history. We accept our Lay Ministers to accountably provide us guidance and support. The power they do have over us is granted

through policies and democratic processes. They have power of the people; the people of UUCG – members and friends who are committed to live and worship in covenant with each other. Our leaders are sometimes seen in the same way we see government and corporate leaders. We expect them to act that way because that is what we see in the world all around us. Sometimes they act that way because that is what they see in the world all around us. We are challenged in UUism to be accountable in our relationship with each other, with our leaders, and with our larger UU community to remain accountable because the power we hold has the potential to really impact lives; our own and others.

We can organize our UU people power into voting power through influence power. Voting to live out Equity, Justice, and Pluralism to Transform our community into the beloved community. We must vote with our compassion. Living out our Generosity and knowledge of our Interdependence to create Climate Justice through our vote. The work to create the power of influence takes time and relationship building. That means Love must remain at the core of every effort we make. This is the kind of Trouble – Good Trouble that will change our community and with the help of our UU the Vote Allies and Southern Region experts – each of us can make some Good Trouble. We must be accountable with each other that we are remaining true to our values and doing what each of us can (and maybe push ourselves a little bit more) to make that Good Trouble. If we don't remain accountable, we will lose our power of influence. Let our values be our guide as we do the work to become designated a Good

Continued on next page...

Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Continued from previous page...

Trouble Congregation for 2024. Some things to do in the next two months:

Participate in relationship building efforts like:

- Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance Panel – September 8th (see Ad)
- Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance Peace Festival – September 21st at the Guru Nanak Mission Society of Atlanta in Norcross
- UU Climate Justice Revival on September 28th and 29th at UUCG

Participate in Voter Engagement efforts like:

- Vote Forward – Write Now Send Later Now Write your beautiful Story and share them with us!
- Postcards for Voters with Center for Common Ground – Coming Soon - Now Write your beautiful Story and share them with us!
- UU the Vote Events and Activities Now Write your beautiful Story and share them with us!

Please let Barbara, bstahnke@comcast.net, know if you have questions or would like to know more about our relational and accountable actions toward Voter Engagement. Let Barbara know of your participation and actions in any of these areas as they also help with our activities towards achieving our Good Trouble Now Write your beautiful Story and share them with us! designation with the UUA.

The United States requires “advanced citizenship” (Adam Sorkin); let us live into that requirement.



"No One Is Safe Unless Everyone Is Safe!"
The Alarming Increase in Hateful Acts and
Intolerance & How We Should Respond



INTERFAITH PANEL:

Imam Hammad Ahmad Baitul Ata Mosque
Surinder/Neeru Singh - Guru Nanak Mission
Reverend Mimi Guerra - Hispanic Missioner Atlanta
Episcopal Diocese
Rabbi Mike Rothbaum - Bet Haverim
Pastor Jennie Shankey - Pleasant Hill Presbyterian
Church

Join Us
5 -6:30 PM | Sunday September, 8th
Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church
3700 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth

Please RSVP:
<https://tinyurl.com/nohateinterfaith>

Gwinnett
Interfaith
Alliance



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

From the UUA!

Meeting the Moment: An Ingathering Message Dr. Sofia Betancourt



Beloveds,

It is my joy to bring you greetings, celebration, and welcome as we lean into a new congregational year. We are in a time of

great transition and great need in the world, and this can put immense pressures on all of us. The work that lies before us is a long journey work and how we are with one another, how we support each other, will have everything to do with how we meet the moment.

In this [video message](#), recorded for all our congregations and communities to share at this time of ingathering and renewal, I offer a review of all we have accomplished together in this past year and some of my deepest hopes for meeting the moment in the coming year. Please share it widely in your community and beyond....

[Read Rev. Dr. Betancourt's full message here.](#)

Now seeking Applications!



The application process for UUA Moderator is now open. Qualified applicants are welcome to apply. The UUA Board of Trustees has appointed the Moderator Search Committee (MSC) to bring to the Board well-qualified individuals or teams of individuals for their review and potential nomination.



Application deadline: September 15, 2024

Do you wonder how, as UU's, we can continue to advocate for disability rights and make spaces more accessible for everyone? In this conversation in [#UUWorld](#) magazine, UUA Disability Justice Associate Rev. Amanda Schuber shares her insights on progress being made, challenges that still need to be overcome, and ongoing UUA disability justice priorities.

Read the whole story and watch a video interview with Rev. Schuber from UU World: <https://bit.ly/3YSgI9O>



We're looking at how to put a disability lens on social justice work as a whole, because we recognize that within every identity group, there are people with disabilities... Disability justice centers that disabled people are whole people, just as they are.



Rev. Amanda Schuber
UUA Disability
Justice Associate

Support the UUA Disaster Relief Fund

Your gifts at any time during the year allow us to respond flexibly to current disaster needs, as well as to new emergencies as they arise.



Scan the QR code or visit
giving.uua.org/disaster-relief



Text DISASTER to 51555



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

PRODUCE DISTRIBUTION

September 12th
4PM

Volunteers Needed!

Contact Barbara 4 More Info



**WE NEED
YOUR HELP**

JOIN THE



Planning Party

EMAIL CONNECTINGBEYOND@UUCG.ORG

Help plan the annual trunk or treat event. We need ideas for food, games, parking lot safety, music, and more!

Get Involved with

UU^{the}VOTE



September Weekly Phone Bank Events

September 3, 2024

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM ET

September 10, 2024

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM ET

September 17, 2024

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM ET

September 28, 2024

4:00 PM - 7:00 PM ET

UU^{the}VOTE

[Fall Mobilizations]



September 28:

Athens, GA

www.uuthevote.org



Ministry of Connecting Beyond



LAWRENCEVILLE CO-OP
COMMUNITY FOOD BANK MINISTRY

COLLECTING ON THE 1ST AND THE 8TH

Most Needed Food Items

Our food source has been out of food for several days. All non-perishable items are needed but these are the most critical items:

- Canned tuna
- Canned fruit
- Canned chicken
- Dry pasta
- Cereal

We need EGG CARTONS

Most Needed Personal Care Item

*If purchasing, please prioritize food items above.

- Size 3 and up diapers
- Feminine pads
- Adult diapers Size S-XL



PEACE

Peace Festival
September 21st

More information to come



**INTERFAITH
ALLIANCE**
ACHIEVING DEMOCRACY TOGETHER

el refugio

presents

An evening with
Prof. Rebecca A. Sharpless

Author of the AWARD-WINNING NEW
RELEASE: **SHACKLED: 92 Refugees
Imprisoned on ICE Air**

Wednesday, Sept. 11
6 p.m.

Kilpatrick Townsend &
Stockton LLP in Midtown

Tickets: \$100, includes book,
delicious food, and beverages

<https://donorbox.org/events/652681>



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

JOIN THE GATP COMMITTEE!

In September 2010, the UUCG Board of Trustees launched the "Give Away the Plate" (GATP) ministry as a means for the congregation to further its UU principles, demonstrate generosity, and engage with good works in the community.

Currently, half of each Sunday's plate collection is given away. Every three months, a new recipient is selected from recommendations made by members of UUCG.

Become an integral part of our community by joining the GATP committee to select the next recipient of UUCG's plate collection. Email



Give
Away
the
Plate

SAVE THE DATE

OR TRUNK
Treat

OCTOBER 26, 2024

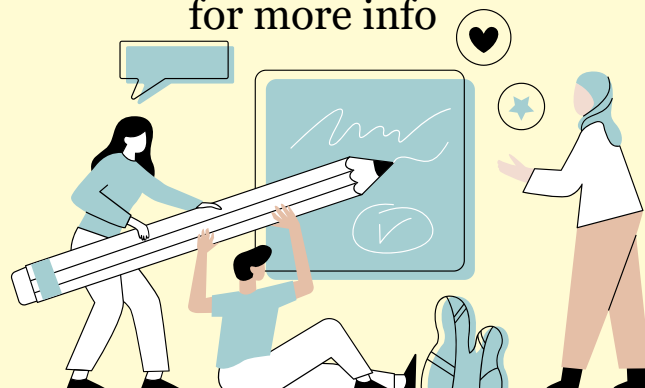
12 BETHESDA CHURCH ROAD,
LAWRENCEVILLE, GA 30044

STARTS AT 4PM

Join the PLANNING TEAM

Our goal is to plan special events for UUCG to increase our presence in the community

Email
connectingbeyond@uucg
for more info



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

campaign for
size ● ● ●
freedom



Because every body deserves the freedom to thrive.

Sign the Petition



**DIFFERENT
BODIES
SAME
RIGHTS**

Height and weight
discrimination is illegal
in New York City.
**Make it illegal
everywhere!**



**TELL SOUTHWEST
TO PRIORITIZE
ACCESSIBILITY
FOR ALL BODIES**



SUPPORT CUSTOMERS OF SIZE
SUPPORT DISABLED PASSENGERS
SIGN THE PETITION



NAAFA.ORG/SOUTHWEST



34th Annual

Indian Spring Native Peoples
Festival & Powwow

**September
7th & 8th 2024
9AM-5PM**



Indian Springs Museum
1807 Hwy. 42 South
Flovilla, GA 30216



**AIDS
WALK**
Atlanta

**MUSIC FESTIVAL & 5K RUN
2024**

SEPTEMBER 28, 2024



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Let's celebrate love,
inclusion, and
community
together!

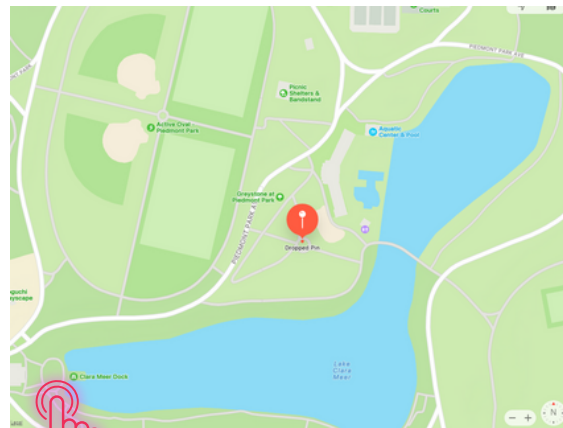


UNITED WITH PRIDE

ATLANTA PRIDE 2024

October 13th at 11AM

Join UU's from all over at Atlanta Pride! Wear your Side with Love attire or PRIDE attire. Connect with others at Piedmont Park near the pinned location below.



Do you need SWL Merch?



**SIDE WITH
LOVE**

See Candice on September 8th at the Connecting Beyond table during the VolunteerREN Fair to place an order or email connectingbeyond@uucg.org.

You can find Merch here: www.uuabookstore.org/Side-with-Love-C1401.aspx