





GNUUs


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Opening to Joy

Capture at least one image of joy every day for a week!

If you don't have a camera, you could instead keep a notebook (a "joy journal") with you and write down what the image is, describing it in enough detail that it will pull you back to the joy you experienced when you read it later.

When the week is over, take some time to reflect on the images you've captured. Is there a common thread? What do the images say about your experience of delight?

Is color key? Surprise? Silliness? Beauty? People? Nature?

And after reflecting, consider taking it further by doing something creative with your images and insights. For instance, turn your pictures into a slideshow with music behind it. Or maybe do a final entry in your notebook/"joy journal" that sums up your insights. Or maybe write a thank letter or love letter to your images/experiences of joy. Some may want to create a collage. Others may want to print out a picture or two and frame them for a wall in your home.

You can also share them with our community on our UUCG Facebook group.



Events This Month

Dec 1...Yarns from the Heart+
Dec 2.....Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance+
Dec 5.....Little Free Library Opening and Food Bank Donations*
Dec 12.....Congregational Meeting+*
Dec 12.....Spiral Scouts+
Dec 12.....Belief Exploration+
Dec 15..Yarns from the Heart+
Dec 15.....Book Group+
Dec 18.....Magical Arts and Crafts+
Dec 18.....Winter Solstice+*
Dec 19.....Blue Christmas +*
Dec 21.....Board Meeting+
Dec 22...Cookie Baking Party+
Dec 24.....Christmas Eve +*
Dec 29.....Vision Journal+
Tuesdays.....Covenant Choir*
Sundays.....Tarot Sunday+*
*onsite
+online
For details visit uucg.org





Worship in December

Theme: Opening to Joy

Join us via Zoom <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/565460176>

December 5: Onsite and online

An Earth Full of Joy : The pleasures of giving attention to Our Body the Earth!

Joy is an emotion and state of mind that depends on what we notice and focus on. This service will celebrate through reflection, poetry, movement, song, prayer and meditation this kind of awareness and action!

Daniel Bailey (he/him), Service Leader

December 12: Onsite and online

Joy in the Morning: Being the Light in the Darkness

Sherree Bailey (she/her), Service Leader

December 19: Onsite and online

With Joy You Will Draw Water

Brené Brown argues that “joy is probably the most difficult emotion to really feel...In a culture of deep scarcity—of never feeling safe, certain, and sure enough—joy can feel like a setup.” Where do you find joy? How can you cultivate an openness to joy?

David Morgen (he/him), Service Leader

December 19: Onsite and online 4pm

A Blue Christmas

For any number of reasons, the Christmas season is not a joyful time of year for every person. This year may be especially challenging as the pandemic continues to wax and wane. This is a service to honor the complex emotions that many feel during this time.

Sherree Bailey (she/her), Service Leader

December 24: Onsite and online 7pm

Christmas Eve

Every night a child is born is a holy night. On this holy night we explore our profound interconnectedness through story and song.

David Morgen (he/him), Service Leader

December 26: Onsite and online

Joy is What the Earth Gives Us Daily and We Must Return the Gift

Because the relationship between self and the world is reciprocal, it is not a question of first getting enlightened or saved and then acting. As we work to heal the earth, the earth heals us.

David Morgen (he/him), Service Leader

Upcoming Holiday Events

Click each entry for more information

Hanukkah Celebration hosted by the Community of Grace in coordination with Temple Beth David

December 5 5pm

Card Making or Writing Gathering online

December 7 6pm

Winter Solstice Ritual

December 18 6pm

Blue Christmas Service

December 19 4pm

Cookie Baking or Decorating Party online

December 22 6pm

Christmas Eve Service

December 24 7pm

Kwanzaa: A Regeneration Celebration

Presented by the Apollo Theatre Digital Stage



Please remember to RSVP for an onsite seat for Worship

[Click here to RSVP](#)



Gadding About

Sabbatical Update *by Reverend Jan Taddeo*



I began this sabbatical time with a solo spiritual retreat in Jacksonville Beach, Florida where I rented a small “beach bungalow” for two weeks. While there, I began a new daily prayer practice, meditated several times a day, did Qi Gong, walked on the beach for 2 or 3 hours a day, and engaged in some creative practices. I even woke up at 5:30 one morning so I could watch the first light emerge and the sun rise. It was worth the effort!

In the November GNUUS, I promised I would share my reading list:

Vimalakirti and the Awakened Heart: A Commentary on The Sutra That Vimalakirti Speaks, Joan Sutherland Roshi. This is a timeless meditation on developing a peaceful and generous heart in a world of sorrows, and on how the awakening of each of us is an inextricable part of the awakening of the world.

Simplicity: The Freedom of Letting Go, Richard Rohr. Simplicity explores St. Francis’s ancient call to the simple life, where joy, not dry theology, helps us build relationships and find peace in ourselves.

Widening the Circle of Concern: Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change I’ve read most of the chapters for various workshops and programs I’ve been involved with, and will read it in full during my time away.

Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor, Layla F. Saad and the official companion book, *A Guided Journal*. Structured as a 28-day guide targeted at white readers, the book aims to aid readers in identifying the impact of white privilege and white supremacy over their lives.

Defund Fear: Safety Without Policing, Prisons and Punishment, Zach Norris. This is the UUA Common Read for 2022. I plan to lead a discussion on

this book at SUUSI in July 2022, and hopefully a discussion will be offered at UUCG as well.

White Supremacy Culture: Still Here, Tema Okun, May 2021 (an updated version of the original article written in 1999)

The Time is Now: A Call to Uncommon Courage, Joan Chittister. Benedictine nun and activist Chittister offers a pulpit-thumping call to assume a stance and voice of prophetic spirituality to resist oppression and injustice.

My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies, Resmaa Menakem. The consequences of racism can be found in our bodies - in skin and sinew, in bone and blood. Therapist Resmaa Menakem examines the damage, the physical consequences of discrimination, from the perspective of body-centered psychology.

Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy, IFLAS Occasional Paper 2, Professor Jem Bendell BA (Hons) PhD, Revised 2nd Edition released July 27, 2020

Dinosaur Dreaming: Our Climate Moment, Gail Collins-Ranadive. The author describes our global threat with clarity, calm and efficiency. She moves on to explore the various forms of our response, political, public, personal.

Immoderate Greatness: Why Civilizations Fail, William Ophuls explains how a civilization’s very magnitude conspires against it to cause downfall. Civilizations are hard-wired for self-destruction.

Salsa, Soul, and Spirit: Leadership for a Multicultural Age; New Approaches to Leadership from Latino, Black and American Indian Communities, Juana Bordas. This book has been on my reading stack for several years, and I am looking forward to finishing it as our congregation continues to deepen our journey in being a radically welcoming sanctuary.

I miss you all dearly, hold you all on my heart and in my prayers, and I am so very grateful for this precious time to rest and renew. Please take good care of each other.

In our shared faith...

Reverend Jan

Volunteer Opportunities

We are looking for volunteer for a variety of positions. Please read through this list and consider how you may be able to help us as we help you.

Worship – greeters, ushers, tech team

Fundraising – Auction Chair; Yardsale Chair

For Green Space – members for green team (long range planning); help with outdoor workdays

For Spiritual Growth – members of worship committee; Faith Development committee members (planning) and facilitators (doing)

For Connecting Within – Starting Point facilitators (esp. tech); Covenant Group leaders; goodie bag help

For Connecting Beyond – Art Gallery

For Radical Welcome – members & leader for Study Hall

Please contact admin@uucg.org

2022 Budget

Please review the proposed budget for next year in preparation of the vote on December 15th.

[The budget proposal can be found here.](#)

From the Board

Budget time! And we need your input. During our town hall meeting, there was some question about our donation to the national Unitarian Universalist Association. I promised we would have further discussion before the budget vote on December 12. After consideration, I think the best time to draw the maximum number of people to this conversation is to hold it just before the vote. And so...we will hold discussion on the budget (all aspects of the budget) immediately following service on the 12th, and then we will vote.

A few things to note.

* There are changes afoot at the UUA. There is an effort underway to update the organizational bylaws, including our seven principles. This is a healthy thing for any organization to do periodically (we are updating the UUCG bylaws as we speak). The UUCG board has been planning for a while now to hold a congregational conversation about these changes sometime in late January. Congregations across the country will discuss these at General Assembly this summer. There will be further discussion throughout next year, and then there will be a vote at GA in 2023. Please know we will have plenty of discussion around this topic, but probably not before the budget vote.

* The UUA is the national organization for all Unitarian Universalist congregations. As in any denomination, the national organization provides curriculum, training, support, and guidance for member congregations. To divorce ourselves from the UUA is to cease to be UU. I appreciated very much the comments of Terry Welsher at our town hall meeting. He pointed out that there is a difference between supporting the concept of belonging to a national organization and supporting every decision that organization makes. When we disagree, we voice our opinion, but remain members.

* I recognize that no one suggested we not remain members. The issue concerns giving money to the UUA

when we're struggling to cover our own ministry. When the slides were presented, we included the current year's budget for comparison to the upcoming year's budget. When you compare our budgeted contribution to UUA from 2021 to 2022, it appears as if there is a huge increase. What those numbers did NOT show was that the request for 2021 was \$10,918. We budgeted for less (\$9000) but have been able to meet the full request. In 2020, the request was \$11,265, which we met. We have met the requested donation amount every one of our 40 years except for three. In 2022, the ask is for \$11,950. These numbers are calculated annually, based on the overall expenses of the congregation and the number of members. I promised to contact the UUA to see if they will reconsider our dues. I have reached out but have not heard back yet, most likely because of the holidays. I expect to have this answer before the budget vote.

* In the meantime, the biggest need of our congregation is for you to turn in your pledge for next year. Not everyone can give top dollar, but everyone can give something, and that something will help. No one enjoys talking/hearing about pledging, but it allows us to create a meaningful plan for the coming year.

Some people voiced the opinion that they aren't being heard. As your board president, I feel strongly that all voices be heard. Please feel free to contact me with any issues or attend a board meeting on the third Tuesday of each month. (It helps if you let us know you plan to speak at a board meeting, so that we can include it in our agenda).

I know I am thankful for UUCG and for all the moving parts that make it work.

Much love to you all. —Lorena Griffin, for the UUCG Board of Trustees

How We Will Gather:

Guidelines for Reconvening

We are overjoyed to welcome the congregation back into our shared space for Sunday Morning Worship services again beginning on Sunday, December 5th! Below you will find the answers to some Frequently Asked Questions about the guidelines for regathering. These guidelines have been carefully considered, with our shared values of safety, inclusivity, and community at the center.

Can I just show up at the church on Sunday Morning?

Well, you can, but we strongly encourage you to register your intent to attend in person. Seating is limited due to safe gathering guidelines, and it really helps us to know in advance how many people to expect.

Will I have to wear a mask?

Yes, everyone above the age of 2 who enters the building will be required to be masked. The only exception may be Service Leaders who may opt to remove their masks when they speak from the pulpit. We will have disposable masks available at the front door for anyone who arrives without one.

Can I sit wherever I want in the Sanctuary?

The beacons will be acting as ushers, and will show you to a seat when you arrive, based on availability and on (as best they can) whatever preferences you express regarding where you'd like to sit.

I'm looking forward to hugging all my friends... can I do that?

Some people may not be comfortable with that just yet. As always, hugging and other forms of touch should be consensual – ask first!

What about singing?

The Choir will be singing, wearing masks and with separated seating. The congregation will not be singing at this time.

What about coffee???

You are invited to bring your own coffee (or other preferred soft beverage), but none will be prepared or served on-site. The kitchen is closed for food prep and service for the time being. One person at a time may utilize the sink for hand washing and access to water.

The water fountain in the hall is also closed, and there will be no potluck dining until further notice.

Will there be Faith Development?

Yes! Adult Faith Development will resume on-site on December 5th. We will be convening on-site at 10:00am, as before. These sessions will also be accessible via Zoom for anyone wishing to participate from home.

Will childcare be available?

Not at present. We are inviting all families to sit together in the sanctuary during the worship service. Space will be provided in the Nursery rooms for parents who need a quiet moment with their child(ren), but there will be no childcare provider on duty.

Parents/caregivers are required to remain with their children at all times while in the building or on the grounds.

What about Children's RE?

In-person RE will not be convening in groups. There will be a "lesson" and activities available every week beginning in December that families who come in person may wish to engage in together while they are here, or take home with them. This same session plan will be provided via weekly email to families who opt to stay at home. If you would like physical materials sent to your home, please make sure you are registered for Faith Development, and reach out to Christiana to request a weekly packet.

What about the playground?

Children may use the playground, wearing masks and mindful of safe distancing. There must be two adults present anytime children are on the playground.

What if my family and I are not ready to come back yet in person?

Sunday morning Worship Services and many other UUCG events will remain accessible via Zoom. We look forward to welcoming you back to the building when you are comfortable returning. In the meantime, please continue to participate in congregational life online.

Please remember to RSVP for an onsite seat for Worship

[Click here to RSVP](#)

Lay Ministry: Connecting Beyond

Corley Gift Card Drive

The drive for gift cards is being extended through Sunday, December 19, 2021. For the convenience of the students' parents, Corley counselors are requesting gift cards from Walmart and Aldi. We suggest a \$10, \$15, \$20 or \$25 Walmart or Aldi card. BUT, funds of any amount can be pooled and UUCG will purchase the cards.

Ways to send your donation:

- Drop off cards at UUCG when the office is open.
- Send cards to the church or send a check to the church with Corley in the memo line.
- Use Venmo or PayPal to send funds and put Corley in the memo area - <https://www.uucg.org/connection/donate/>

Questions or Suggestions? Email info@uucg.org

Thank you from the Corley Committee!

Don't Miss the Grand Opening of Our Little Free Library!

On Sunday, Dec. 5, UUCG's Little Free Library will make its debut in front of our building near the sidewalk along Bethesda Church Rd.

Please stop by between the hours of 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. to celebrate this Grand Opening with us, and to drop off any book donations you want to make to this Library. You can drop off your food donations for the Lawrenceville Food Co-op at the same time.

We are looking for gently used children's books, teens' and tweens' books, and adult books, especially if they are multicultural and affirming of all kinds of people. The Little Free Library's mission is to be a catalyst for building community, inspiring readers, and expanding book access for all through a global network of volunteer-led Little Free Libraries. Our book-sharing box will be added to the Little Free Library world map.

Thanks to Katrina Yurko and Erin Averyt, who painted the design on our book-box and post, and to Dan Kelly, who installed it along our sidewalk.

-Peggy Averyt



Lay Ministry: Connecting Beyond

Give Away the Plate

Hope Thru Soap



During the January-thru-March quarter, Hope Thru Soap will receive one half of all Sunday morning plate donations. This remarkable organization was started by one concerned individual in Atlanta who provided free showers to homeless people. They now have a small staff and three mobile shower trailers. They also provide haircuts, hot meals, and clothes. Because of the COVID epidemic, they began providing masks, hand sanitizer, and information about the virus, to keep those living in the streets safe. As the organization grew, it also expanded to some extent into North Fulton, Forsyth, and Gwinnett counties.

Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance

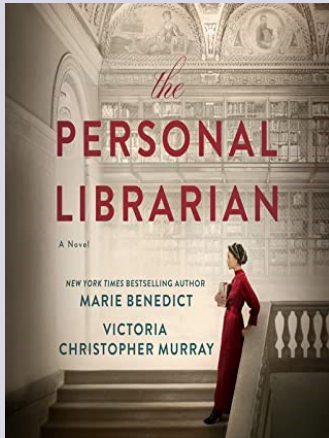
Hanukkah Celebration

You are invited to a Hanukkah Celebration hosted by the Community of Grace in coordination with Temple Beth David. The event will take place at the Community of Grace 1200 Athens Highway Grayson on December 5 starting at 5 pm. The Menorah will be lit around 5:30 followed by refreshments.

[You can find out more and register here.](#)

Registration is not required but requested for planning purposes.

The Book Group will combine our November and December meetings into one final meeting of 2021 on Wednesday, December 15th 7-9pm on Zoom.



Lay Ministry: Connecting Within

Book Group

The Personal Librarian

by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray

SUMMARY: In her twenties, Belle da Costa Greene is hired by J. P. Morgan to curate a collection of rare manuscripts, books, and artwork for his newly built Pierpont Morgan Library. Belle becomes a fixture in New York City society and one of the most powerful people in the art and book world, known for her impeccable taste and shrewd negotiating for critical works as she helps create a world-class collection.

But Belle has a secret, one she must protect at all costs. She was born not Belle da Costa Greene but Belle Marion Greener. She is the daughter of Richard Greener, the first Black graduate of Harvard and a well-known advocate for equality. Belle's complexion isn't dark because of her alleged Portuguese heritage that lets her pass as white—her complexion is dark because she is African American.

The Personal Librarian tells the story of an extraordinary woman, famous for her intellect, style, and wit, and shares the lengths she must go to—for the protection of her family and her legacy—to preserve her carefully crafted white identity in the racist world in which she lives.

Come to the Mountain

Lay Ministry: Connecting Within

It's been a long time since we've retreated to The Mountain. Well, we are happy to announce that we have dates for the UUCG Congregational Retreat at The Mountain! The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center is perched on a 4,200 foot high granite cliff in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains located just across the Georgia border, about four miles from the resort town of Highlands, North Carolina. This has been a long time coming and we look forward to seeing you September 16-19, 2022 for a weekend of connection, learning, relaxing, and just being. More details to follow, but we are looking for folks to volunteer to help plan activities, games, workshops, and general chores.

Please contact Joe Bentley at ConnectingWithin@uucg.org if you're up for helping us create this experience for our congregation.



Covenant Groups

Covenant Groups have been a cornerstone of connection within our congregation. UUCG Covenant Groups are structured small group discussions around our monthly themes. We meet for two hours, twice per month, to connect, share ideas, and learn from one another. Each person is given uninterrupted time to share stories and find meaning from their own experiences. Trained, experienced facilitators are a part of every group meeting. The Spring 2022 groups will start the first week of February and we'll offer a Monday evening group, a Wednesday evening group, and a Thursday morning group. Registration / sign up will be available at UUCG.org soon!

Message from the Lay Minister

Maybe you have had the experience of listening to and singing along with one of our hymns during a UUCG service and found yourself deeply moved by the words or even a phrase that keeps repeating. Hymnody through the ages of religious tradition serves a much larger role than we often acknowledge. Hymns are more than filler between items in the Sunday Service. They can actually be powerful spiritual practices. There are several in our UU hymnal and supplement that come to mind, and I have found that you can search for them on Youtube and often find recordings of them there.

For example, the hymn Filled With Loving Kindness, #1031 in our Supplement, has 3 recordings on Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gi-IUC6wmOs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZwSMpjEb-M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hsc7TKXGUJc>

This hymn is actually a musical version of the Metta meditation in Buddhism. The focus of this meditation is to cultivate a sense or offer a prayer for lovingkindness, health and well being for ourselves, for another, for us together, and for all beings.

I love this meditation, and I love that with these musical recordings, I can turn them on with my phone and have an instant entry point into meditation and prayer.

Try it sometime. Light a candle. Cue up one of these recordings, and open your heart.

Bob Patrick

Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth

Message from The Lay Minister

As we move into our month of Opening to Joy, I hope you will reflect on joyful CONNECTION to each other. When I say each other, I include visitors, friends, and members. The way forward for radical welcome of each other is curiosity, compassion, and courage. I start with curiosity because being curious to know each other without assumptions and bias can bring us joy of community. Keeping compassion at the forefront of interactions helps us lead with our heart and listen deeply to each other's story. Having courage to face any personal fears of making connections to be with each other's whole self is vital to experience the joy of connected community.

As you reflect on ways to learn more about someone, consider the following questions as ideas for starting a deeper conversation:

What's something new you've learned about yourself in the last 3 months?

How has your favorite color changed through the years?

What's a smell that you can always count on to bring you joy?

Who has your favorite laugh? How would you describe it to someone who's never heard it before?

If someone designed a playground just for you, what would be in it?

What is the longest you have ever kept a plant alive?

What is a food that everyone seems to love but you dislike?

With Love, Barbara

Radical Welcome Study Hall

Wishing you joy in all seasons of the year. Join me, Barbara Stahnke, Lay Minister for Radical Welcome at Radical Welcome Study Hall on the first Fridays of the next three months from 6:30PM to 8:30PM.



Nurturing Connections



Yarns From the Heart December 1 10am
Zoom Meeting ID: 994-7414-0257



Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance December 2 7:30pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 814-598-64698



Food Bank Dropoff and Little Free Library Opening December 5 1pm-4pm
Front Porch at UUCG



Tarot Sundays every Sunday at 5pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 978-9585-2363



Online Card Making/Writing Gathering December 7 6-8pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 955-5827-4358



Covenant Choir Gathering every Tuesday at 7pm
Onsite



CUUPs Yule Celebration December 11 6pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 400-036-556



Congregational Meeting December 12 12:15pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 565-460-176



Spiral Scouts November 14 12:30pm
For children ages 3-12 and their families. Preregistration is required



Belief Explorers November 14 12:30pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 896-987-304



Yarns From the Heart November 17 10am
Zoom Meeting ID: 994-7414-0257



Book Group December 15 7pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 144-736-833



Magical Arts and Crafts December 18 3pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 400-036-556



Winter Solstice Sylvan Sanctuary December 18 6pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 528-297-2479



Blue Christmas Service December 19 4pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 565-460-176



Online Cookie Baking Party December 22 6pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 975-2994-8435



Christmas Eve Service December 24 7pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 565-460-176



























Vision Journal Workshop December 29 7pm
Zoom Meeting ID: 998-7138-6950

Visit our Calendar Online for more information and links to our Zoom rooms.

For all of the Zoom events, go to <https://zoom.us/join> or
call 646-558-8656 and enter the Meeting ID

November 2021

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	