



# May 2025

## Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists

### Table of Contents

[Worship In May](#)

[Looking Ahead](#)

[Message from the Minister](#)

[From the Board](#)

[Radical Welcome](#)

[Green Space](#)

[Spiritual Growth](#)

[Connecting Within](#)

[Connecting Beyond](#)

[Save the Date](#)

[May Calendar](#)

[Staff Schedules](#)



*Scientists believe their incredible ability to navigate across vast, ever-changing landscapes might involve a kind of spatial memory and instinctive 'imagination'. Gnus must anticipate where the rains will fall next and imagine a path to survival, driven by an ancient wisdom encoded in their very being.*

### Living Love Through The Practice of Imagination

Imagination is what allows us to remain hopeful, even in moments of uncertainty, stress, and grief. Its deep magic lies in the way it can reshape our reality. We are urged to imagine the world we dream of. A world with more justice. More peace. More love. And when we can see that world in our mind, we take intentional action to create it in our reality; to pull our imperfect



present into an improved future. Imagination moves us forward.

But imagination isn't just a force that drives us toward an envisioned future, it also brings the sacred into our impoverished present. Through the lens of imagination, every day experience becomes precious, even mystical. The laughter of our children becomes the sound of angels. Sunshine on our face becomes a way that life expresses its love for us. The ocean is able to speak, telling us that we are freer and have more choices than we think. And a simple act of kindness from a stranger shimmers, and through it life says to our burdened heart, "This soon shall pass. Everything will be ok."

This month, join us as we envelop ourselves in the many gifts and messages of imagination.

# Worship in May

Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: Living Love through the  
Practice of Imagination

Join us in-person or via Zoom

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



## May 4th

### ***Forever Founding Anew:***

### ***A Celebration of Founders' Day***

Our congregation's founders imagined an inclusive, justice-seeking Unitarian Universalist community in Gwinnett County, and then took up their roles to help build it. In an ever-evolving ecosystem like ours, founding is never finished. What do we imagine our roles to be in the ongoing creation of this loving community?

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

## May 11th

### ***Home is the Mother***

Join us on Sunday mornings for Worship Services that weave together our own thoughts and experiences with music, beauty, poetry, and words that both comfort and challenge. We come together to be inspired, and to be awakened to our own capacities to make a difference in each other's lives and in the world.

*Sherree Bailey (she/her), Service Leader*

## May 18th

### ***When Imaginations Leap and Bloom + New Member Celebration***

UUCG's children and youth, supported by Rev. Nancy, bring a fresh take on what it means to worship together! And we welcome our newest UUCG members!

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

## May 25th

### ***Memory and Imagination***

How does what we honor in the past inform what we create for the future?

*Bob Patrick (he/him), Service Leader*

## Programs

Sundays at  
12:30pm

### **1st Sunday, 5/4**

- Congregational Conversation: "Town Hall" meeting
- Potluck Lunch

### **2nd Sunday, 5/11**

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

### **3rd Sunday, 5/18**

- Board Meeting

### **4th Sunday, 5/25**

- "Good Trouble"
- The Open Circle (Women's Group)





# Worship and More

Worship Services  
Sundays at 11:00am

May Theme:

Living Love through The Practice of Imagination

Join us in-person or via Zoom

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

Give Away the Plate



The Give Away the Plate recipient for the second quarter of 2025 is Familias Juntas



## Special Services:

Sylvan Sanctuary  
*Betteane* Ritual  
Saturday, May 3rd  
Gathering at 5:45PM  
Ritual begins at 6:00PM

## Founders' Day

a celebration of UUCG

Sunday, May 4th



**Bridging  
and  
New Member Welcome**  
Sunday, May 18 at 11:00am



# Message From the Minister



## Imagining the Past to Find Hope in the Present



*by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)*

To help my grand-niece with an elementary school project, my brother and I go looking for our maternal ancestor who immigrated to this country from France. As I take a joyful dive down the rabbit hole of research, I discover my great-great-uncle Nicholas Ohmer, who happens to share my birthday in mid April just 129 years earlier. His father Francis, a tailor, traveled with Nicholas and the rest of the family in 1832, landing eventually in Ohio.

A tribute to Nicholas written after his death in 1903 tells us that he was an enthusiastic, kind man who grew hundreds of acres of pears, raspberries, and other fruits for a living in the second half of his life.



What really catches my eye is this sentence: “A devout Catholic in religion, he was tolerant and liberal. He believed that ‘above all sects is truth’ and ‘above all nations is humanity.’” My Uncle Nicholas was a universalist, all those years ago! I feel a spark of

encouragement and hope, imagining how he tried to live his life. How does this legacy help me to live a more radically inclusive life now?

I often fuel my energy and determination by imagining the future we want to create. Yet in recent weeks I have been gleaning hope and direction by looking to the past for examples of courage and resistance in especially difficult times. From Pauli Murray, the poet-lawyer-activist-Episcopal priest who helped revolutionize the fight for civil rights for Black people and for women yet who went unheralded for years, to Mies Giep, the Dutch office worker who aided the Otto Frank family and many other Jewish people striving to evade the Nazis in The Netherlands during World War II, and many more, I am finding examples of brave people who defied the authorities and who transcended their own limits.

Studying these ancestors’ stories, I imagine what they must have felt as they faced those dangers and took those risks. I imagine how strongly motivated they were by a sense of people’s worthiness and beauty. I imagine how fiercely they held Love at the center of all they did.

This month, as we Live Love Through the Practice of Imagination, I hope we all look for the ancestors, by blood or temperament or values, whose lives spark our imaginations and inspire us to embody courage, resistance, and Love.

With Love for all that we can imagine together,  
Rev. Nancy



# Practicing Imagination...

## Resources I'm Relishing for Imagining the Past

from Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones

### Books by and about Pauli Murray:

- *Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family*, by Pauli Murray, about her mixed-race Southern family
- *Jane Crow: The Life of Pauli Murray*, by Rosalind Rosenberg, a comprehensive tale of Murray's inner and outer struggles and achievements
- *The Firebrand and the First Lady: Portrait of a Friendship—Pauli Murray, Eleanor Roosevelt, and the Struggle for Social Justice*, by Patricia Bell-Scott

### Podcasts and Books About Courage under Stress:

- **The History Chicks podcast, eps. 264 and 265: Miep Gies, pts 1 and 2** A friend of Anne Frank and her family, Gies became a central helper for the Franks and other Jews in hiding in Amsterdam during World War II. From Miep: "My story is a story of very ordinary people during extraordinary times, times the like of which I hope with all my heart will never come again. It is for all of us ordinary people, all over the world, to see to it that they do not." Where are we now, dear ones? Gain courage from Miep's and others' stories from that time.
- **Full list of resources to accompany these podcasts:** <https://thehistorychicks.com/episode-265-miep-gies-part-two/>

### Our Song Atlanta Performs New Pauli Murray Cantata


Saturday, May 17, 7:00 p.m., and  
Sunday, May 18, 3:00 p.m.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

435 Peachtree St. NE, Atlanta 30308

From Rev. Nancy:

Please do come experience, if you can, the Spring Concert of the choir I've joined, Our Song Atlanta! We will perform a brand-new cantata about Pauli Murray, a powerful but too-long-ignored 20th-century writer-lawyer-activist-Episcopal priest. Black and gender expansive, Pauli organized successful restaurant sit-ins in the early 1940s, created the desegregation argument that Thurgood Marshall used in *Brown v. Board of Education*, and co-founded the National Organization for Women (NOW), to name a few of their accomplishments. To complement Pauli's story, we'll also sing songs that witness to the power and beauty of exactly who we are. Come be reminded: "You Are Enough!"



**THEY CHANGED OUR LIVES**

FEATURING A COMMISSIONED AMERICAN CANTATA BY GALA CHORUSES 2024  
SINCERELY YOURS,  
PAULI MURRAY

**SATURDAY, MAY 17 @ 7 PM**  
**SUNDAY, MAY 18 @ 3 PM**  
ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
435 PEACHTREE ST NE ATLANTA, GA 30308

OurSong is Atlanta's premier all voices chorus, dedicated to performing high quality music while celebrating our unique LGBTQIA+ experience and our evolving place in the world.

WWW.OURSONGATLANTA.ORG @OURSONGATLANTA OURSONG ATLANTA

# Associational Connections & UUCG

## Celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the American Unitarian Association!

by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones



On May 25-26, 1825, a group of Unitarian leaders created the American Unitarian Association (AUA), the first organization in the United States to claim the name Unitarian. The AUA was open to Unitarian ministers and lay leaders as individuals; the congregational structure didn't take form until 1884. And through a wonderful coincidence—or perhaps by the force of the radical ideas swirling in the transatlantic air—the British and Foreign Unitarian Association was also formed on May 25, 1825!

Up until Rev. William Ellery Channing's bold sermon in Baltimore in May 1819, "Unitarian" had been a slur thrown at the liberal Christians who rebelled against Calvinism's strict interpretation of the Trinity and the predestined fate of sinful humans. Unitarians, as Channing explained, believed in the unity of God (and the fully human and inspired nature of Jesus), the use of reason to interpret the Bible, and the possibility of human growth toward the good.

Just five years later, enough people were calling themselves Unitarian to merit creating an organization for the religion. This shows just how hungry people were for Unitarianism's hopeful, empowering message.

Still, the group of educated white men who created the AUA in 1825 had serious differences and limits on their imaginations. The AUA never officially opposed slavery, for instance. Although most Unitarians were abolitionists, our ancestors also include Unitarians such as U.S. President Millard Fillmore and Vice President John C. Calhoun whose words and actions supported the institution of slavery.

*(continued on next page)*

### Congregational Meetings in May: Slate of Nominees & Policy Review

**The Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee will present the 2025-26 Nominees on May 4th at 12:30 pm.**

We will also present our biennial review of Policies for feedback. This will be a Potluck Sunday, and the Board will also be discussing our Open Question, *"How do we as a congregation live into our shared UU values in our daily lives in the larger world?"*



**The Congregational Business Meeting to vote for the 2025-26 Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee will be held on May 18th at 12:30 pm.**

# Associational Connections & UUCG

## Celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the American Unitarian Association!

*continued from page 7*

**Why shall we celebrate this 200th anniversary, then?**

**Here are two reasons:**

- **The Courage to Resist the Status Quo:** In creating the AUA, our ancestors were brave enough to claim the truths that would ultimately demand the recognition of the worthiness and dignity of all. They were brave enough to set themselves apart from the majority culture and to form an institution with the purpose of continuing to learn and grow.
- **The Encouragement to Grow and Change:** From the beginning, Unitarians set themselves on a course to grow and change. Acknowledging the growth of our faith in depth and breadth in these last 200 years—and noticing how much more we want to grow—is a great way to round out this program year at UUCG.

#AUA200

### **Questions to Ponder:**

How shall we embody the boldness and courage, the commitment to growth and change that we have inherited? What will we create in the year to come?

**Fun Resource:** The Britannica offers description of all these movements in one place:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Unitarianism/English-Unitarianism>

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## Next New Member Signing: Sunday, May 18th

Please plan to join us for the New Member Welcome Ceremony during the Worship Service on Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am.

If you are interested in becoming a member of UUCG - or simply have questions about the process - please reach out to Rev. Nancy at [RevNPJ@uucg.org](mailto:RevNPJ@uucg.org) by May 7<sup>th</sup>.



# Ministry of Radical Welcome



## Radical Welcome and the Power of Imagination



*by Carol Underwood, Lay Minister for Radical Welcome*

Imagination is more than daydreams or fantasy. It is the foundation of change.

We are called to imagine a world not as it is, but as it could be. A world where

each person is seen, heard, and valued. Where welcome is not a polite gesture, but a revolutionary act. In Radical Welcome, we are asked to stretch beyond just our comfort, but it invites us to reimagine the very boundaries of belonging. What stories have been silenced and what gifts remain unopened, because we have yet to imagine space for them?

We need to utilize our imaginations to dismantle old barriers and create new pathways. We enter into the sacred work of learning the uniqueness of every person. Each person has a unique sense of agency and whole universe of existence that we can tap into when we utilize our imagination.

It is important to be open and welcoming to all the different facets it means to be a human. Each person has something to provide this congregation. When we take on a role we are called to be imaginative within that role and not expect to fit in a cookie cutter. We are all unique and when we work our diversity together we will find whole new places for us to go inside and outside our communities.

This is why I love being part of the Sharing the Journey program. Everyone that I've heard has a unique story about how they came to be, and the decisions that have led them here. There is so much worth in each person's whole makeup. It is important to know where we all have been and how we have come to be in this community.



### Coffee Hour Invitation

Help us make our Coffee Hour after Service even more welcoming by bringing snacks to share!

**Please label your container with your name so we can offer our gratitude.**

While we love sweet treats, we also welcome:

- Fresh fruits & veggies
- Gluten-free options
- Vegan & vegetarian items



Your contributions help create a nourishing and inclusive space for all.  
Thank you!

# Ministry of Radical Welcome

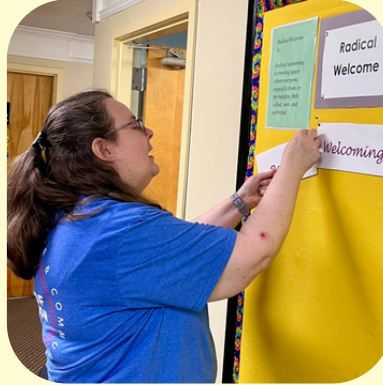
## We Love Our Volunteers! Thank You for Sharing Your Time & Talent!

Each month this newsletter is packed with information about the many activities, programs, and events offered at UUCG. It is essential to acknowledge that this bountiful schedule and the ability to be radically welcoming to each other in this vibrant community is only possible through the contribution of time and talent from our members and friends.

The ministries of the church only thrive when you all come forward to take on the work of the church, in so many capacities.

No matter how much or how little time you are able to give, your effort and dedication are immensely appreciated.

**How do you imagine serving our beloved community? If you are you looking for an opportunity to volunteer, please reach out to [SharedMinistry@uucg.org](mailto:SharedMinistry@uucg.org).**



### Help Create a Culture of Care: Join the Hospitality Team!

- Bring treats to share
- Make coffee
- Assist with organizing the treats brought for Coffee Hour
- Set out items on the coffee cart
- Wash mugs
- Put away coffee cart
- Launder tablecloths or hand towels
- Assist with potluck on first Sundays
- Or any of the many other ways to serve!

Which of your gifts can you share with the UUCG community as we Create a Culture of Care with and for each other?

### 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:

**Interdependence**      **Transformation**  
**Generosity**              **Pluralism**  
**Justice**                      **Equity**





# Ministry of Radical Welcome

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month Acknowledging Shared Trauma

by Jen Garrison

**The month of May is designated as Mental Health Awareness Month.** Since the pandemic, there has been a myriad of news coverage and celebrities sharing their mental health journeys openly on camera. The isolation that was felt worldwide only exacerbated an already growing epidemic of depression, anxiety, and other challenges among our nation's, and the world's, youth. Adults also reported an uptick in depression and anxiety symptoms, and those who were already battling mental illness struggled to find support and balance as care went strictly online.

Five years later, students and the public in general are still reeling from the trauma of the pandemic, with little if any acknowledgment from those in power of what we collectively went through. Now that we are here, how do we move forward physically, mentally, and spiritually? How can we acknowledge the trauma that we share and attend to those most impacted? How do we continue to care for one another?



I think these questions are vitally important as we strive to live day to day in the current chaos, trying to hold onto our joy. Can we imagine a world where neighbors care for one another, no matter what we look like, what language we speak at home, or whatever other differences might attempt to divide us?

I know we can strive for peace together. Truly, it is only when we care for one another, looking out for our fellow humans and creatures of the Earth, that we will find health, including mental health, that sustains us all.

### Mental Health Resources

- Resources from the **UU Mental Health Network**  
This list of resources was curated specifically for UUs by several contributors to represent different ways of approaching mental health because we know that different people will cope and/or heal in different ways. The resources include personal stories, books and websites which may be helpful.
- **Where to find support**, from the **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**  
This source is an official US government website.



# Ministry of Green Space



## Looking Back at Earth Month

*By Gary Kiel, Lay Minister for Green Space*

### Property Beautification in April

On the fine spring morning of April 5<sup>th</sup>, we were greeted by tulips.



Special thanks to Xoey for trimming all the junipers growing over the sidewalk (next to the road). That was a big effort - 10 wheelbarrow loads of trimming. It looks nice and neat!

Gerald continued brush clearing with his weed eater. It has made a great difference, now it looks civilized out front.

Gary (me) topped up the planters with soil. It is kind of chunky. It should improve as it breaks down.

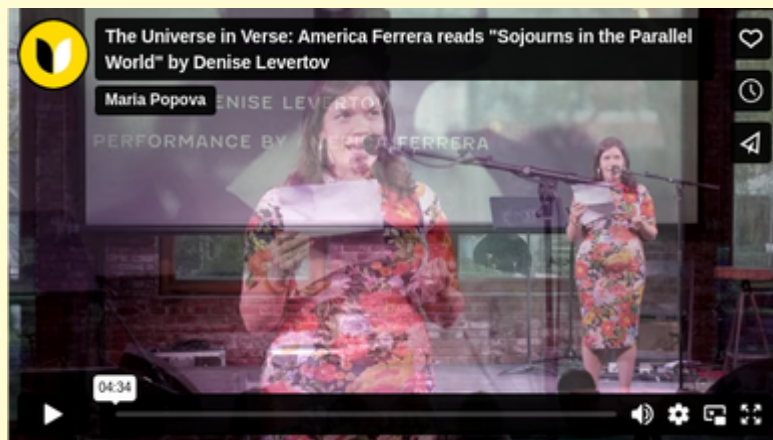
**Our next Property Beautification Day is May 3rd. You are invited to join us!**



### Name that Toad



**Voting is ongoing using a Facebook ballot. Results will be announced in the June issue of the GNUUs!**





# Ministry of Green Space

## Green Space in Worship

### Earth Day/Easter/Flower Ceremony

Dr. Terry Welsher led a reflection that included a garden stake activity. Everyone paired off with a buddy, discussed favorite places, and wrote their favorite on a small garden stake. These stakes were planted in the raised beds after the service.



You probably did not know that Terry does an occasional gig as Twinkie the Kid. Or perhaps I could not find a picture of Terry and made up a tall tale.

Karen Smith, who I usually see battling the brush and garden, provided a nice reflection for the service. That is the cleanest I have seen Karen! Usually she has accomplishment badges of dirt and leaves from her endeavors.



Here is Karen in her native habitat, prepping the soil in the keyhole garden.

### Upcoming Green Team Events:

- May 3 - Property Beautification Day
- May 19 - Green Team Meeting via Zoom
- June 7 - Property Beautification:  
Candice is donating some trees to plant on the grounds. Current thoughts are to plant them near the labyrinth. The trees are 1 Red Bud, 3 Dogwoods, and 1 Hawthorn.



# Ministry of Green Space

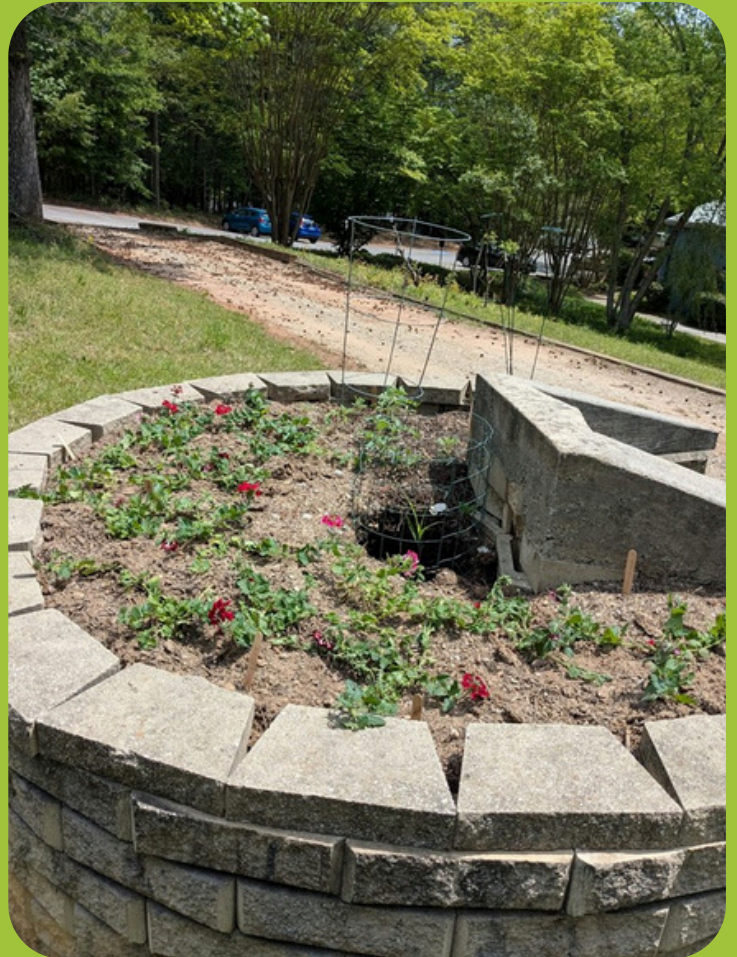
## The Planters Get Some Flowers

After the Earth Day Service, flowers were planted in the “Flower Cube” and Keyhole raised beds. Thanks to all who helped!

Jen Garrison planted a lot of purple petunias, pink periwinkles, and a few red verbenas. “Red verbenas” does not have the same alliteration as “purple petunias and pink periwinkles”. Also, a couple of yellow snapdragons were planted.



Here is the Flower Cube with flowers and ceremonial garden stakes.



The keyhole garden received creeping red verbenas. Ceremonial garden stakes were also added.

***Next Property Beautification Day: May 3***



# Ministry of Spiritual Growth

by Lydia Patrick, Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth



## Voices of Freedom:

### Imagining Ahead to June... Can I Count On You?

For me Freedom is a feeling of open - mindedness. I can decide how my life will look one day at a time. I can decide how to live and love, how to play and rest, how to be with others and be by myself. There are no maps to my journey. There are just lessons and memories and love that is learned, accepted, and returned.

And I see the same in others.

**I am looking for folks who will 'Add Their Voice' to the service on June 22, 2025.**

**You can do this in 3 ways:**

1. Send me a short video clip taken on your phone (1 minute max)
2. Send me a short audio clip taken on your phone (1 minute max)
3. Email me a short paragraph (100 - 150 words) (if you wish to remain anonymous let me know and I will exclude your name from your writing)
4. Let me know that you want to do a reflection during the service on June 22nd and I'll add you to the OOS. (4 minutes max)

**Questions to consider :**

**(You can pick one or more)**

- What does freedom mean to you as a Unitarian Universalist?
- How do you live out your freedom?
- What challenges do you see when you think about freedom?
- How do you celebrate freedom?
- What work needs to be done so that everyone feels 'free'?
- Where did you learn about what freedom means?

These submissions will be used throughout the service on the 22nd of June so that we, as beloved community, can support each other in our journey moving forward.

Submissions due no later than June 8th, please.

Send to: [Lydia.ptrck@gmail.com](mailto:Lydia.ptrck@gmail.com) with "Voices of Freedom" in the subject line.

Blessed be and thank you!

## Join Us!

Volunteer  
Opportunities  
include:

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

We look forward to  
serving alongside you!



Click [HERE](#)

# Faith Development

## Tending the Flame

*by Christiana Fernandez-McQuain, Coordinator of Family Ministries*

As we enter the final month of this Program Year, I am so enthusiastic to embrace this theme of Imagination! **Our annual Bridging service will take place on Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**, and this theme affords us a wealth of wondrous ways to explore and celebrate our children and Youth, and their (and our own) life transitions. Bridging is about growth and possibility - what do we imagine for our future? How will we move forward into those myriad possibilities with strength and confidence? What action will we take to create our dreamed-of reality? Mmmm... so much delicious potential.

**Please plan to join us for Bridging on Sunday on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am, as we imagine the future together.**

Imagination

Faith  
Development  
resources  
for exploring  
The Practice of  
Imagination

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



### Words of Wisdom?

We invite you  
to journey with us...

This month, I offer the following Questions for the Journey, an invitation to reflect on the Practice of Imagination and how it shows up in your own life.

- In your early adult life, who most helped you imagine possibilities of what you could become?
- How close is your current life to the life you imagined for yourself when you were younger? How would that younger self feel about the life you are living now? Surprised? Proud? Confused? Curious?
  - What is your greatest act of imagination?

With gratitude & grace,  
Christiana

### Upcoming Adult Faith Development Program

## Resisting Fascism

Program content will be  
centered on the book  
**On Tyranny**, by Timothy Snyder  
and facilitated by Steve Babb

**look for more information  
in upcoming issues  
of the eNews**



# Ministry of Spiritual Growth

## Living Under the Beltane Sun

*A Season of Abundance and Imagination*

by Candice Carver



Beltane, for me, is far more than just a date on the calendar—it's a vibrant season of waking up, blooming, imagination, and abundance. May 1st is when we celebrate Beltane or May Day, a time festivals that welcome summer's warm embrace. At this time Beltane fires are lit to offer protection and build comradery. However, the Beltane season encourages us to bask in its glow throughout the summer.

Damh the Bard's song "*Under the Beltane Sun*" reminds us that Beltane extends beyond a single evening of celebration. His sings to mind vivid images of children playing in a creek or river, picking wild black berries and listening to the birds along the way. I play this song on repeat and it becomes a portal—a journey into my child hood summers.

I would sometimes stay with my Aunt in the summer, she lived on a few acres of land by a lake. It was a wild child's dream. Since I was by myself, I would craft people out of pinecones, bottle cap caps, sticks for hands and feet, and leaves for clothes. Cicada shells were the babies of my pinecone people. I would make a house of of stones and build a little pinecone people town telling stories of what they accomplished. I would wandering barefoot in the dirt and dream about my future. I long for that kind of freedom now—to be back in those days where my pinecone people could take me anywhere.

It's amazing how a song can stir up memories that the heart quietly held for years. Damh the Bard does just that. He reconnects me to those sunlit days and playful worlds built from nature and my imagination. Those stories, that wonderment, is still alive somewhere deep within me—and maybe in you, too.

Summer for me is not simply hot days and vacations; it's a sacred time for creativity, passion, connection, and growth. Beltane is the gateway into that sacred season.

### So, let your heart wander for a while:

What would it feel like to live this season as though you truly belonged to the Earth—completely, freely, and joyfully?

What might blossom within you if you dared to dance under the Beltane sun—not just for a fleeting moment, but all season long?

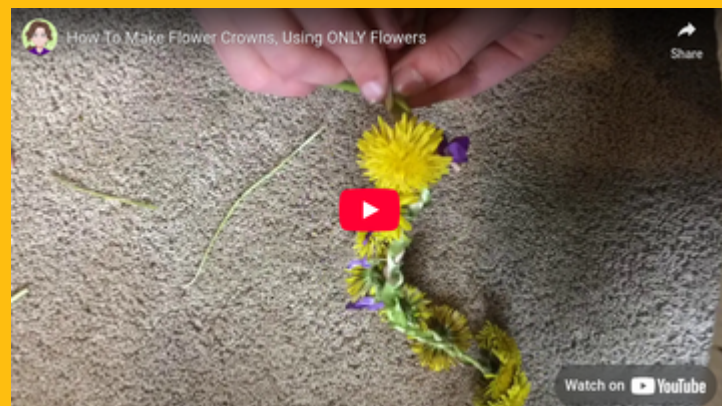
Let the ancient rhythms rise in you. The season is here. Step into it. Become summer. Live in the light of Beltane.



I created these Corn doll God and Goddess figures for Beltane 2019 to burn in the bonfire for abundance, love and prosperity. They are decorated with natural items and the "glue" used was bees wax candles. The only thing that didn't burn was the bells and crystal, which were removed from the ashes afterwards.

### How to Make a Flower Crown

Flower Crowns are common for May Day and fun to make all thorough the Beltane season.



This great video does a wonderful job showing you how to weave a flower crown. Did you make one? Show us on Facebook and submit your photos to [admin@uucg.org](mailto:admin@uucg.org).



# Ministry of Connecting Within



## Growing in Imaginative Ways

by Lisa Kiel, Lay Minister for Connecting Within

*“Trust that little voice in your head that says 'Wouldn't it be interesting if...'; And then do it.”*

~ Duane Michals

Lately I've been thinking a lot about the growth of groups here at UUCG.

When I first began serving as the Lay Minister for Connecting Within, we were just returning to our physical building after sheltering at home and in zoom rooms during the pandemic. Initially, people were scared to be back in close contact with folx, even folx they loved, but over time and with more vaccinations, in-person numbers began to grow.

Along with our members, newcomers began to attend our services and events. We were blessed with new membership, new voices and new imaginations. I can trace the roots of many new groups to our newcomers who came in with new ideas for our community to connect to one another in both enjoyable and meaningful ways. Other groups grew from the imaginations of long time members willing to let go of the past and embrace our present needs. There is no

doubt that we are a creative bunch, and our ability to imagine in new ways lies at the very heart of this creativity.

One of the beauties of creativity is its infectious ability to inspire all of us. Albert Einstein tells us, “Creativity is contagious. Pass it on.” Our community is a reflection of our shared imaginings, our collective practice of imagination so to speak, and each of the groups and events offered here is an invitation to participate in that practice. Today, I'm posting a photo of the new spiral garden that our SpiralScouts first imagined, raised funds for and then created to beautify our grounds here at UUCG. Whenever we see it, may it inspire all of us to listen to “that little voice” in our head and “then do it.”

With joyful gratitude,  
Lisa



## UUCG Book Group

Wednesday

May 28th

at 7:00pm

Online via Zoom

### May Selection:

*The Comfort of Crows:*

*A Backyard Year*

by Margaret Renkl

A luminous book tracing the passing of seasons, personal and natural.

[Learn more here...](#)





# Ministry of Connecting Within



## ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

 **Alphabet SoUUp** - In Person: 1st Monday at 6:30, bring a dish or snack to share

 **Book Group** - 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

**QUUest Jr.** - Youth: In Person: 2nd Friday at 7pm

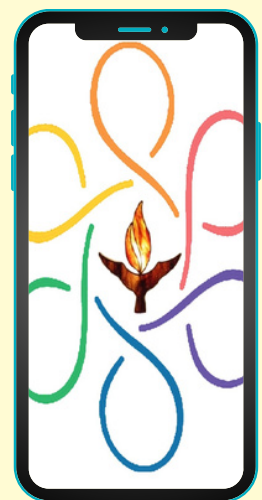
 **Spiral Scouts** - In Person 2nd Sunday following Sunday service

 **Walkers** - 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 11 am, for location information,  
email [admin@uucg.org](mailto:admin@uucg.org)

 **Women's Group: The Open Circle** - 4th Sunday at 12:30pm

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

CHECK OUT THE CONNECTING WITHIN BULLETIN BOARD



Connecting within starts with presence—pausing to breathe, reflect, and truly see the beauty around us. As you walk through the doors of UUCG, capture the moments that bring you joy and share in the collective appreciation of this sacred space.

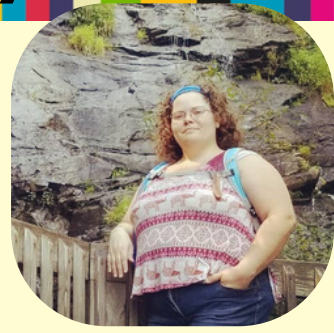


# Ministry of Connecting Beyond



## Imagining What We Can Grow Together

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



When I first started coming to UUCG, one of the things that drew me in was the vibrant sense of possibility. Coming from Charleston - where I was involved in planning events and regularly engaged with the broader community - I was excited to find a congregation where that same spirit lived. I saw so much potential for connection and collaboration, both within our walls and beyond them.

Now, nearly seven years later, it's incredible to reflect on how far we've come. We've grown so much as a community, and we've deepened our connections in so many meaningful ways. But even more exciting is how many new opportunities are still ahead of us, just waiting to be imagined into being.

Imagine our congregation hosting a **monthly farmer's market**, inviting local growers and artisans to share their abundance. Imagine **seasonal plant and seed swaps** that celebrate sustainability and invite neighbors to share in the rhythm of the earth. Imagine **gardening workshops** where folks learn how to grow their own food—and a **community garden** where they can grow it with us.



Now imagine even more:

- **Skill-sharing workshops** where people teach and learn everything from canning and sewing to bike repair and budgeting.
- **Support groups** for grief, parenting, or mental health, held in a space that feels safe and welcoming.
- **A free little pantry or fridge**, stocked with essentials for those who need them.
- **Job fairs, resource clinics, or resume-building events**, giving people tools to move forward.
- **Art shows, open mics, and local music nights**, where the creative spirit of our community shines.

Imagination is more than wishful thinking - it is the beginning of transformation. As George Bernard Shaw wrote,

*"Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last, you create what you will."*

So, what do you imagine UUCG could do to connect more deeply with our local community? What are we already doing that you find meaningful? How can you help make it even more impactful?





# Ministry of Connecting Beyond

## Claiming Our Power

by Barbara Stahnke

On April 27th after our Sunday morning worship service, “The Rite of Spring” (filled with Joy), 4th Sunday Faith Development held our usual session of “Good Trouble”. And yet, it was anything but usual and everything joyful. Working with the UU Georgia Legislative Action Network, Side with Love, Georgia Interfaith Power and Light and Partnership for Southern Equity, UUCG collaborated to create some Good Trouble. We had over 37 registrations for our Faith Development event with 4 of those being Watch Parties (multiple people at one site or congregation in attendance). At the event, UUs from across Georgia learned about the Public Service Commission (PSC) Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) from Georgia Power and took action to impact energy burden in our community and the environment. In short, the IRP involves the way Georgia Power intersects with climate justice powers Georgia Power’s return on investment. Watch the recording [here](#).

### The big ask: TAKE ACTION NOW.

#1 - **Contact the Public Service Commission** immediately upon receipt of reading this. Don’t WAIT. [Here](#) is an easy way to do this.

#2 - **Share the action with 5 friends**. Most people don’t know about the Public Service Commission and how it not only impacts *their* lives but folks in their communities’ lives. [Here](#) is an easy way to do this.

#3 - **Prepare to vote for PSC Commissioner** – Primary in June and Election in November.

#4 - **[Register for the May 17<sup>th</sup> Power Party](#)** - Pay attention to the [UU Georgia Legislative Action news](#) and [Side with Love](#) announcements. (And of course Terry and me with our updates.)

Let’s Create Some GOOD TROUBLE Together.

~ Barbara – [bstahnke@comcast.net](mailto:bstahnke@comcast.net)



**Food Distribution**



**Gwinnett**

**Starting at 3:00PM  
while supplies last.**

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

**May 13**

LENORA PARK

4515 Lenora Church Road, Snellville

**May 20**

BRYSON PARK

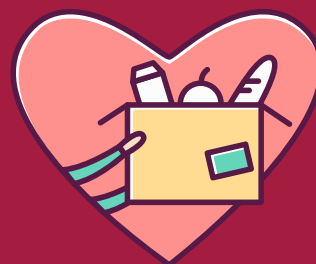
5075 Lawrenceville HWY, Lilburn

**June 10**

ROCK SPRINGS PARK

550 Rock Springs Road, Lawrenceville

For more information, visit  
[GwinnettCounty.com/FoodResources](http://GwinnettCounty.com/FoodResources)



**Reimagine Together  
From An Extractive  
Age To A New Era**

# Ministry of Connecting Beyond

## Opportunities to Connect with Our Wider Community

### Opportunities to Serve



*Two upcoming events where your help is needed:*

- **LUUV Fest** – Sunday, June 1st, 12:00–1:30 PM  
(organized by Joe Bentley)
- **Trunk or Treat** – Friday, October 31st

*Both are playful, purposeful ways to Connect Beyond - and there's room for your creativity in every part of them.*

*Reach out to [ConnectingBeyond@uucg.org](mailto:ConnectingBeyond@uucg.org) to volunteer to assist.*

*And if your imagination runs wild with new ideas?  
Even better. Let's dream together.  
Let's Connect Beyond.*



**COLLECTING ON  
May 4th at UUCG**

Lawrenceville Co-Op is again partnering with Village of Hope to make sure those students in our area who are in need of food get the support they need.

Current needs include:

- Microwaveable rice or pasta packets
- Pop Tarts
- Individual Cereals
- Canned pasta
- Canned tuna, chicken, or Vienna sausages
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Snack items



**The Gathering**  
♥ Fortifying Ourselves for the Long Road Ahead ♥

Second Monday of Every Month  
8pm ET / 5pm PT

**The Gathering is a new monthly virtual event from Side With Love, designed to offer:**

- Spiritual Grounding – Strengthen your heart and spirit for the work ahead.
- Political Analysis – Understand the threats to democracy and justice.
- Collective Action – Organize with others to block anti-democratic forces and build a just and loving world.

**Join us every Second Monday of the month at 8pm ET / 5pm PT.**

- May 12
- June 9

View recordings of previous The Gathering sessions.

**Call to ACTION!**  
Rise up With UUCG for PRIDE Month!  
**Lilburn Pride Date TBD**  
**Gwinnett Pride - June 21<sup>st</sup>**  
**Atlanta PRIDE Oct 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>**

Looking for volunteers to help with planning, executing, marching and working one or many of the three PRIDE events. Let us know by registering here:





# Save the Date

## Volunteer Appreciation Sunday

Sunday, June 1st

Join us for this celebration of our volunteers who give so generously of their time and talents to make UUCG the vibrant, welcoming community that we are!

## LUUV Fest

(Living Unitarian Universalist Values Festival)

Learn ways to create a world that recognizes the importance of the core values of the UU community!

Sunday, June 1, 2025 - 11 am to 1:30 pm Unitarian Universalist  
Congregation of Gwinnett 12 Bethesda Church Rd Lawrenceville GA 30044

**BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION!**

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

# May 2025

for more information about any of these events,  
please [visit our online Calendar](#)



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	<u>3</u> 
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



	Food Bank Donations Days	Food collection for our members in need and the Lawrenceville Co-op	In-Person
	Potluck Lunch	Sign up to volunteer; bring a dish to share; come break bread together	In-Person
	Board Of Trustees	Congregational Conversation, Board Meeting, or Business Meeting. All members and friends of UUCG are invited to attend	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Alphabet SoUUp	Discussion group for Queer-identified folx	In-Person
	Choir	Rehearsal for performance during Worship Services	In-Person
	Yarns from the Heart	Creates prayer shawls and baby blankets for members and friends	Online via Zoom
	Music Night	Musicians of all skill levels gather to play together	In-Person
	Property Beautification	Monthly indoor/outdoor workday. All skills and abilities are welcome	In-Person
	Oak Grove UUCG CUUPs	Oak Grove UUCG Covenant of UU Pagans Gathering, all are welcome	In-Person
	Belief Explorers	Explorers of world philosophies, faith traditions & religions	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Spiral Scouts	All-gender scouting group for ages 3-12	In-Person
	Covenant Groups	Small Group Ministry. Registration Required	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Men's Group (inclusive)	Male-identified people gather for discussion	In-Person
	Tarot Classes	A learning space for all who are interested in the tarot	Online via Zoom
	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
	G3T	Grand Green Get Togethers: Movies and more with the Green Team	In-Person
	Worship Services	Sunday Morning Worship Services at 11:00am weekly	In-Person and Online via Zoom
	Family Game Night	Board and card games in community - all ages welcome	In-Person
	QUEST & QUEST Jr.	D&D campaigns, registration required	In-Person
	Good Trouble	Sunday After Service at 12:30PM	In-Person
	Women's Group	All who identify as women are welcome to this safe space for sharing & connection	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 & Third Saturdays: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

### LaTreisha McKay *Bookkeeper*

lmckay@uucg.org  
Monday (remote), 5:00 pm-8:00 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

### Jason Pfeffer *Office Administrator*

admin@uucg.org  
Tuesdays & Fridays, 9am-2pm  
Third Sundays, 10:30-12:30pm

### Becca Parker *Choir Director*

choirdirector@uucg.org  
Sunday mornings (On-site),  
9:00am-12:00 pm