

# June 2024

## Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists

### The Gifts of Renewal

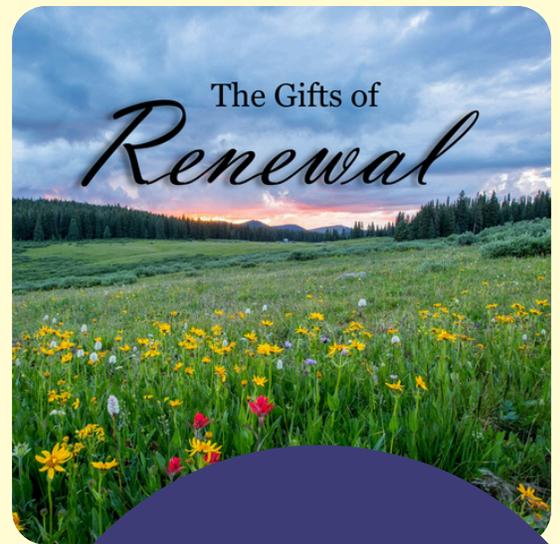
We are renewed by so many things. Among them, nature, relationships, memory, music, play, solitude, and - of course - our faith. Through small groups, calls to justice work, worship, caring for one another, covenant and accountability... our faith breathes new life into us.

It also has a way of changing our lives by changing the questions we ask.

Questions like:

- Are you sure it's your body that's tired, or could it be your soul?
- What if a "break" isn't about restoring yourself in order to return to work, but making space to decide if it's time to re-imagine what your true work really is?
- Is it time to renew your responsibility to those who will come after you? Or to renew your commitment to carry on the work of those who came before?
- What if you saw your daily living and loving as an opportunity (even a calling) to renew others' faith in humanity?
- Could it be that the path to renewal is not continual self-improvement, but instead is compassionate acceptance of who you already are?

This month, let's renew and refresh the questions we ask; reminding ourselves that, indeed, we change our lives by changing our questions.



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# Worship in June

Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: The Gift of Renewal

Join us in-person or via Zoom

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



## After Hour

**June 2**

**Saying Yes!**

**Renewing Faith is MORE than Keeping Your Membership Current**

It also means mending, forgiving, retrieving, and gathering all of the things that you need to keep your faith alive and your journey fresh!

Lydia Patrick (*she/her*), *Service Leader*

**June 9**

**That Elusive Balance: Volunteer Appreciation Sunday**

As folx who love to get things done and as humans who need rest and renewal on the regular, how do we create that elusive balance that allows us to keep our energy and partnerships vibrant and growing? This Sunday, we celebrate our awesome UUCG volunteers and discover ways to sustain our shared ownership of this beautiful community.

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

**June 16**

**The Green Father and the Three Suns**

Join us in this CUUPS lead service as we celebrate the seeding of love and grace, and feeling the power of renewal within ourselves.

Daniel Bailey (*he/him*), *Service Leader*

**June 23**

**Weaving Our Lives**

Join us in UUCG's sanctuary and online to experience together the largest annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists in worship as part of General Assembly! Rev. Nancy and Ginny Andino will weave in live UUCG moments to make this service ours. This is a longer service than usual (90 minutes), filled with the best of UU musicians and speakers. Afterward, we'll share food and conversation about the experience.

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

**June 31**

**Service of Compassionate Presence**

*In this service, we open ourselves to the master-works that the Sky, Earth and Sea offer to us as we seek to heal our lives.*

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

**Sundays at  
12:30pm**

**1st Sunday, June 2**

Congregational Conversation  
& Potluck

**2nd Sunday, June 9**

Spiral Scouts  
(pre-registration required)

Belief Explorers

**3rd Sunday, June 16**

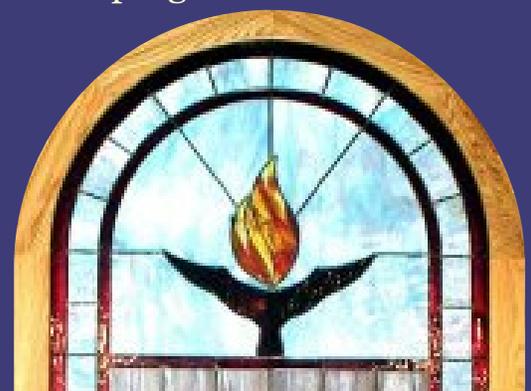
Sunday Tarot

**4th Sunday, June 23**

Good Trouble

**5th Sunday, June 31**

no programs





# Message from Reverend Nancy To “Go Back and Get It”: The Gift of Renewal



In mid May, I spend a weekend back at the camp in Tennessee where I was a counselor in the summers of 1971 and 1972. I go back for the annual Service Weekend, where former campers and counselors return to complete the necessary cleanup chores before this year’s camp begins. But I’m actually there with just one purpose: to reconnect with Margaret and Sarah, the two soul-sister friends I’d made more than 50 years ago.

The weekend does offer us friends the renewal of connection and love we’d longed for, and we marvel at how such love doesn’t wither but runs deep and true across decades! Yet the weekend also brings so much more. Although I don’t remember any camp songs, still the lake, the trees, even the old wooden cabins awaken a familiar tug on my heart.

On the first evening, a group of women come up to me and ask, “Are you Nancy Jones? We were in your cabin in 1971!”—and I feel a few more forgotten pieces drop into this mosaic we’re all constructing with our lives, moment by moment, year by year. In fact, the weekend gives me the chance to come face to face with my younger self—that brave spirit who took a chance on an unknown place and a brand-new job, and who grew a little bit wiser through new responsibilities, a deeper connection with the land, and plain old goofy fun.

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The image of the Sankofa bird—with its feet pointed forward and its head turned backward to pluck up a precious egg—comes from the Akan people of Ghana. It represents the belief that we can “go back and get it,” we can renew our connection to the wisdom from the past that will help us make the best choices now for growing into our future. It’s a good image for what happened for me on that weekend at camp.

It's a great image for the renewal of our Unitarian Universalist faith that's happening this June, both at UUCG and at our larger faith's online General Assembly. What parts of your life—no matter how many years young or old you are!—would you like to pluck up again, so you can weave those experiences, friendships, and wisdom into your present days? What streams of love shall we renew as we offer fresh produce to neighbors and friends on June 6 and celebrate Lilburn Pride on June 9? And how will we use this summer to renew a sense of balance between the hard work of daily living and the rest and care we all need?

I can't wait to discover our answers to these questions together!

Welcome home!

With Love at the center,  
Rev. Nancy



# Message from the Board

By Candice Carver  
(she/her)

In an increasingly interconnected world, the fabric of our community relies heavily on the active participation and collaboration of its members. Serving on committees and teams is a profound way to contribute to this fabric, offering opportunities to drive change, support initiatives, and foster a sense of belonging. But beyond the impact on our community, what often gets overlooked is the personal joy and fulfillment that come from such service. For me this is how serving on committees and teams has renewed my commitment to our community and brings me immense joy.

One of the most profound sources of joy in serving on committees and teams is the opportunity to make a tangible difference. Whether it's planning the auction or the next fundraiser, improving our policies, or supporting vulnerable populations, the impact of my work is visible and often immediate. This sense of accomplishment and purpose can be deeply rewarding. When I see the smiles of everyone at the auction I helped organize or hear the gratitude from people benefiting from new policies and programs, it reinforces the significance of my contributions.

For me, human connections are at the heart of community service. Serving on a committee or team allows me to meet people from diverse backgrounds, each bringing unique perspectives and skills. These relationships have blossomed into lifelong friendships and professional networks. Working towards common goals fosters a sense of camaraderie and trust. As I navigate challenges and celebrate successes together, the bonds I've formed become a

cornerstone of my community experience, this brings me joy through shared human connection.

When I serve on committees and teams, it's not just about giving back; it's also about personal growth. I have enhanced or developed leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills that are invaluable in all areas of my life. Taking on new roles and responsibilities pushes me out of my comfort zone, fostering resilience and adaptability. This personal development is a source of joy and pride, as I and others have witnessed growth and the positive impact it has on our community.

Every year I commit to regular involvement in our community as it's a powerful reminder of why I care about my community. It reconnects me with the core values and principles that motivated me to get involved in the first place. Each meeting, project, and success story renews my commitment, providing a sense of ongoing purpose and direction. This renewal is crucial, especially during times when external challenges might otherwise dampen my spirit and resolve.

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Committees and teams often work towards a shared vision, whether it's improving our buildings and ground, protecting the environment, or enhancing our safety and security. Being part of a collective effort towards a common goal brings me a sense of unity and shared purpose. This collective effort is not only fulfilling but also energizing, as the combined enthusiasm and dedication of the group can amplify the joy and satisfaction of each person.

Every achievement, no matter how small, is a reason for celebration. In the committees and teams we often set goals and milestones, and reaching these provides a sense of accomplishment and joy. Celebrating these successes together strengthens the team's bond and reinforces the value of our hard work. These moments of celebration are crucial for maintaining motivation and sustaining long-term commitment.

Serving on committees and teams is a multifaceted experience that offers significant benefits both to me and our community. It provides joy through making a difference, building relationships, personal growth, and celebrating achievements. Moreover, it continually renews my commitment to our community, ensuring that my efforts are both impactful and personally fulfilling. By embracing these opportunities, I not only contribute to the betterment of our community but also enrich my own life with joy, purpose, and connection.

If you are interested in serving on a committee (of the board) or team (of the ministry) please fill out this form of your interests and a member of either the Board or the Shared Ministry will be in contact with you about serving on a committee or team.

Did You Know: According to an AmeriCorps report, people who volunteer over 100 hours a year are some of the healthiest people in the U.S.

## Give Away the Plate Recipient

The Give Away the Plate recipient for the second quarter of 2024 is the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth (UUMFE). The Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth is a seedbed for spiritual grounding and education that inspires deep practices of Earth care, justice, and flourishing for all.



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST  
MINISTRY FOR EARTH

*Respect Life. Restore Earth. Renew Spirit.*



# Endowment Fund

**Did You Know:** The idea of the stock market was started in the Netherlands in 1602. The Dutch East India Co. company started issuing paper shares. Shareholders could sell and buy these paper shares. This company was the first concept of a stock market. This led to the creation of the oldest Stock Exchange, the Amsterdam Stock Exchange. Today it is known as the Euronext stock exchange.

## We've reached \$100,000 !

*by Doug Beers (he/him)*

The Endowment Fund Board is pleased to announce the achievement of a huge milestone in April. Thanks to the incredible stewardship of an anonymous donor, we received a contribution of stock valued at \$10,000. As of May 21st this brings our total asset value to \$101,106.55

We did not previously have a brokerage account that would enable us to accept donations of stocks or mutual funds. We now have established an account and will be able to do so going forward.

The Endowment Fund (a separate corporation from UUCG) was founded in 1997 with a goal of providing long term financial stability for the congregation. For more than 10 years, we have been able to provide grants to UUCG's GA delegates for registration, and continuing education programs not covered by the congregation's annual budget. We have also been able to establish low interest loans to UUCG to pay for the expansion of our septic system and to replace some of our older HVAC equipment.

Our primary source of income has been the Birthday Club where members make an annual donation in the amount of the year they are celebrating. We also have received 2 bequests and many memorial and honorarium donations.

The bulk of our funds are deposited in the UUA Common Endowment Fund in Boston. They have professional investment managers who make socially responsible investment decisions. The annual returns on our investment there, provide the funds for our grant program.

We encourage you to become an annual Birthday Club donor, and if you have questions about estate giving, please contact Doug Beers for more information.

# Lay Ministry of Radical Welcome

## At What Cost Exclusion?

by Bill Benshoof (he/him)

As a Welcoming Congregation, one of our benchmarks for transgender inclusion is to understand what “transition” means in the context of gender identity. Although the experience is unique to the person, transition from cisgender to transgender allows a person to assert their identity with full closure. So, in welcoming a trans person, we adopt their new identity. For example, if I (a cisgender male) transition from she/her to they/them or he/him, I want to completely leave the gender binary identity (male or female) assigned to me at birth (AFAB or AMAB) behind, including the old, “dead” name and the old pronouns.

Continuing our work as a Welcoming Congregation, living into our UU Values, and observing our Congregational Covenant depends on understanding microaggressions. Because gender identity and sexual orientation are not binary but a spectrum all humans have a place on, I'm going to use "we" when I describe some examples of microaggressions. Although our work will continue toward a more detailed understanding, here are some examples of common microaggressions:

- “Dead-Naming”: Because the experience of unease and the realization that our sex assigned at birth and our gender are different usually result in a name we will live by, our previous name is not just old, it is dead, because it was based on a false assumption. So, "dead-naming," or using a trans person's name from their misgendered past, is a microaggression. Correcting folks who use that "dead name" when addressing us is an important part of living into our identity. Also, we do not want to be referred to as “real name, who was dead-name before they transitioned.” It is certainly best for someone who has transitioned that we treat their real name as their only name- whether we remember their dead-name or not. Regarding the dead-name, one might say “pretend you never knew it,” because, at best, it is irrelevant as well as disrespectful.
- Pronouns: We practice identifying our pronouns clearly for the same reasons that we assert the name we are living by. Using the wrong pronouns is a microaggression. We correct folks who use the wrong pronouns when referring to us as an assertion of our worth and dignity. We expect folks to use our pronouns, so, “talking around” our pronouns by changing pronouns (he/she/they) to proper nouns (John, Betty, Shane, etc.) or using a neutral pronoun (they) instead of our pronoun is also a microaggression.
- Disapproval of our Trans Experience: One microaggression that exemplifies misunderstanding or lack of acceptance is the implication that our experience as trans folks is not "normal." I prefer to say that "Normal" is a setting on your dryer. I do NOT say, "well, that's not a problem for me, since I'm normal."
- Discomfort with our Trans Experience: Our acceptance in the Beloved Community depends on a level of comfort with our experience. There are parts of everyone's "growing up" that are uncomfortable, and the best way to work through

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# Lay Ministry of Radical Welcome

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that discomfort is to take the time to do some focused work. For example, we may need to practice confronting reality in order to become comfortable with it. In this way, when a newcomer who identifies as male introduces his Husband, who is a trans man, we can be openly accepting, instead of visibly uncomfortable.

- **Transphobic Language:** Discussing some spaces in pre-aware terms and the objection to some pronouns are examples of transphobic language. Though it may seem minor to those of us who are not experiencing unease, it can exclude trans folks. For example:
  - making jokes about the transition to gender-neutral bathrooms
  - arguing that gender-neutral pronouns aren't "grammatically correct."
  - disrespect for pronoun choices: "They is a plural pronoun – are you more than one person?"
  - Asking questions to try to find out if we are trans
  - Trying to guess our dead-name, which is not relevant unless someone needs it for legal purposes.

There are two ways that a microaggression can become significantly worse- resulting in a feeling of outright rejection, an aggression:

- when informed of a microaggression, a person has a defensive reaction that further assaults an individual's inherent worth and dignity
- when, over time, it becomes obvious that any apology or promise to correct offensive behavior was not followed up by change.



As your Lay Minister for Radical Welcome, I take the importance of trans inclusion - and thus awareness, recognition, reporting, and correction of microaggressions - seriously, for these reasons:

- they imply we have not taken opportunities to learn proper behavior, or given the opportunities, forgotten them
- they suggest a general atmosphere of tolerance, where we may feel OK seeing or hearing microaggressions without taking action
- they ignore the importance of following our behavioral covenant- a promise we make to each other when we join
- the danger is not just a short feeling of discomfort, but a wide range of more severe consequences

Enduring microaggressions can raise roadblocks to participation in our activities, because they are **EXHAUSTING**; an obvious barrier to staying actively involved, are an **UNFAIR BURDEN** to constantly call out and correct people and, can **ADVERSELY IMPACT** mental health and quality of life.

The sense that our gender identity is different than assigned at birth can lead to persistent unease. This unease ranges from mild to profound. When the unease is profound, it is called "gender dysphoria." Microaggressions can cause or worsen unease, leading to gender dysphoria, social anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, dissociative disorder, major depression, and suicidal ideation.

Watch this space for further information about ways to create and maintain the affirming and supportive space UUCG, as a Welcoming Congregation, can do our best to ensure a great, inclusive experience for every person who crosses our threshold.

# Lay Ministry of Green Space

## GREEN TEAM MOVIE NIGHT A SUCCESS!!

By Karen Smith (she/her)

Thirty people came to UUCG on Friday, May 24, for the viewing of *The Smell of Money*, a documentary about the hog farm industry in eastern North Carolina.

The movie was chosen because of the environmental justice issues faced by the residential communities near the Smithfield meat company's CAFO operations. North Carolina is the only state where untreated hog feces and urine can be sprayed on surrounding fields as a disposal method. This causes a variety of health issues in the surrounding communities and the residents sued Smithfield for property and health damages.

The movie was first suggested by the Gwinnett Chapter of the Sierra Club. Members of the Citizens Climate Lobby joined UUCG church members for the evening, as well as a couple of members of UUMAN too!

The first item in the Take Action section of the accompanying study guide is to educate yourself about the issue. Then use your consumer spending power to have an impact on the meat industry in South Carolina and Iowa. Doing something is always better than doing nothing.



The *Smell of Money* is a richly human and emotionally honest film that finds its power in its truth and in the straightforward testimony of the residents who've fought back.

Richard Propes from  
[TheIndependentCritic.com](http://TheIndependentCritic.com)



# Lay Ministry of Green Space

## Take Action

Want to help fight environmental racism and the many injustices of industrial animal agriculture? Here are ten actions you can take:

1. Educate yourself and others: Improving your understanding of environmental injustice, systemic racism, and industrial animal agriculture can help you become a better advocate for change. Share *The Smell of Money* with friends and family, host a screening for your community, or read and share books and articles about these topics.
2. Support organizations fighting for justice: Support organizations on the frontlines, especially Black- and brown-led groups, through donations or volunteer work to help amplify their efforts. Environmental injustice is everywhere, and so are opportunities to get involved in the fight. Check out our list of recommended organizations below.
3. Cut back on (or cut out) factory farmed foods, and eat more local and/or plant-based foods: mindfully choosing your food is an empowering choice to withdraw your support from harmful industries. Encourage your friends and family to join you.
4. Leverage institutional power: Encourage your school, workplace, faith group, or any other organization of which you're a part to shift its purchasing power away from factory farmed products. Encourage them to serve more healthy, sustainable, local foods. Learn more about the power of making these foods the default options within institutions.
5. Push for policy change: Write letters to and request meetings with your elected representatives, attend public meetings and town halls, and participate in grassroots policy campaigns to advocate for stronger environmental regulations and more effective enforcement of existing regulations. Consider running for office!
6. Vote: Use your vote to elect leaders who prioritize environmental justice and hold exploitative, polluting industries accountable. Volunteer for or donate to their campaigns.
7. Advocate for democracy: Unchecked corporate power undermines democracy, reduces transparency, and allows corporations to shape policies in their favor, entrenching issues of social and environmental injustice. Fighting this influence protects the public interest and puts power back in the hands of the people.
8. Participate in public comment periods: State and federal agencies periodically solicit public comments on proposed policies and regulations. Participating in these public comment periods and sharing your views on harmful agricultural practices can help influence policy decisions.
9. Find common ground: By setting aside our differences—like whether we're vegan or eat meat—we can focus on the shared objective of creating a more just and equitable society. Finding common ground with those who may not share our ultimate end goal is essential to maximizing our impact and bringing about more meaningful and lasting change.
10. Listen to and center impacted people: No matter what shape your advocacy takes, follow the lead of people who are most directly impacted. If you are not personally experiencing injustice, be humble, listen, and don't assume your approach is best. Be patient and consistent—keep showing up and be willing to learn and grow.

# Lay Ministry of Green Space

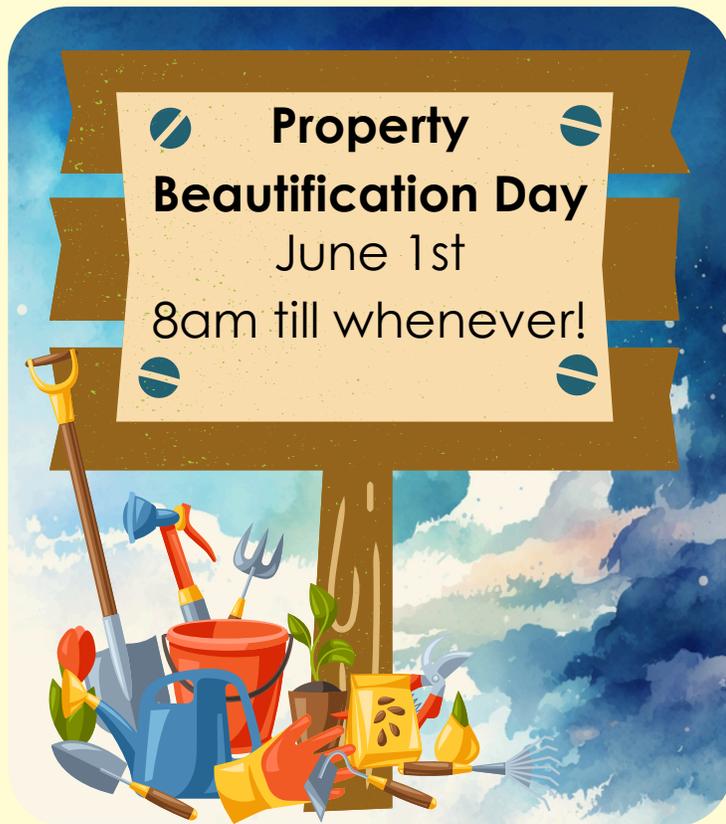
## Spirituality in Nature

GIPL is hosting a Green Team Roundtable to discuss ways to incorporate more of the natural world in worship and personal practices. Our very own Bob Patrick is invited into this discussion. To learn more about GIPL and this event please follow the [link here](#).

What are some ways that you incorporate nature into your spiritual practice?  
Do you know that UUCG has many meditation areas around our property that are surrounded by nature?

- Butterfly Garden
- Labyrinth
- Memorial Garden
- Oak Grove
- Meditation Walking Path

We pride ourselves in allowing nature to thrive in these areas, but we still need help to maintain the paths and accessibility of these areas to invite nature into our worship and daily spiritual lives.



## Building Notes

### *Did you know??*

The school that rents our spaces during the week, Friendship Forest Academy, serves young neurodiverse children? And did you know that it is written into their rental contract that they are afforded exclusive use of the 'classrooms' & outdoor spaces during school hours?

If you plan to be present in the building or on the campus during the daytime during the week, please let Christiana know in advance so she can notify the Friendship Forest staff and they can prepare so it causes as little disruption as possible to the students' routine.

# Lay Ministry of Connecting Within

## Connecting Within

by Lisa Kiel (she/her)

What's your gift or passion? Notice that I didn't ask what your expertise is. I have found that you don't need to be an expert to be an asset here in our community. I find myself in the funny position of Lay Minister for Connecting Within. It's funny to me because I don't think of myself as a leader. I have always been more of a contented worker bee. But here's the thing, the more I saw UUCG as my home, my family, the more I became comfortable in serving my community.

Building a community requires all of our gifts and talents. Everyone here at UUCG is unique, with unique abilities that can help our community grow and flourish, and our groups and programs reflect the diverse interests of our community.

Which gets me to another point. We are a diverse community, and we are a radically welcoming community. Being a welcoming community is not a one and done type of commitment. It is an ongoing commitment that definitely involves passion. This month we have a new group, **Alphabet SoUUp**, meeting at UUCG on June 5th. All our LGBTQIA+ attendees are invited to come share in a monthly potluck, cultivate friendships and join in compassionate discussions. This inaugural meeting, for adults only, will serve as a planning meeting. However, future gathering opportunities for children and youth are anticipated! Questions? Please speak with **Dmitri Novak**.

If you would like to make a real impact on our community, please contact **Zoey Kelly**, leader of our **Spiral Scout circle** and volunteer to share a hobby or interest with our scouts. Remember you don't need to be an expert, you just need to care about our children and youth! Check out the Connecting Within bulletin board for lots of info about Spiral Scouts. Our young people need all of us, and we need them!

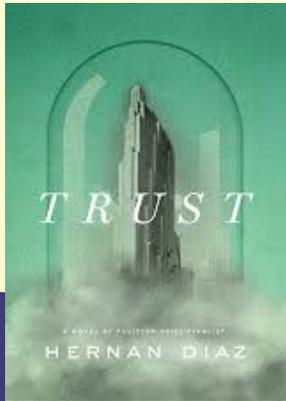
Many of our programs at UUCG take a break over the Summer, but most of our groups continue to meet. Summer can be a good time to check out a new group you've been curious about. Wherever you choose to share your gifts at UUCG, please know they are treasured. Don't dismiss or minimize your contributions. Don't assume someone else will step up and lead or a program doesn't need your participation. You are valued and essential to our community, so take a deep breath and start the process of finding and sharing your gifts.

With Joy,  
Lisa

We all have a gift; we all have a passion - it's just about finding it and going into it  
. Being an asset to your family and community.

*-Angela Bassett*

# Lay Ministry of Connecting Within



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

Alphabet SoUUp - 1st meeting June 5th

Chalice Circle - monthly meeting set by members

Book Club - Online 4th Wednesday from 7-9 pm

Yarns from the Heart - Online 1st and 3rd Wednesday

QUUest - Adults: In Person: 1st Friday at 6pm, 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

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

## Book Group

**June 26 at 7pm**

June Selection:

*Trust by Herman Diaz*

Winner Of The Pulitzer Prize For Fiction

“At once an immersive story and a brilliant literary puzzle, trust engages the reader in a quest for the truth while confronting the deceptions that often live at the heart of personal relationships, the reality-warping force of capital, and the ease with which power can manipulate facts.”

[Learn More...](#)

# Lay Ministry of Connecting Beyond

## Good Trouble

by *Barbara Stahnke (she/her)*

At our April Good Trouble Faith Development program, the small group in attendance determined that we should work toward becoming a 2024 Good Trouble Congregation designation from the UUA. A Good Trouble Congregation organizes our community and engages in multiple and necessary tactics that will help us build a multi-racial democracy in 2024 and beyond.

To achieve Good Trouble Congregation status, we must meet two or more criteria in each of the two categories below.

### Organizing

- Turn out 5 percent of members at a partner public action/witness (6 people)
- Turn out 10 percent of members at a UU the Vote (UUTV) political education event (12 people)
- GT team table or canvasses at three (or more) public events
- At least 2 congregants are line warmers, poll workers, Election Defenders, or non-partisan poll observers. (We did this in 2018).
- Reach 20 percent volunteer engagement in GT programming (24 people overall)
- Act as Ballot Initiative Petition Hub or other ballot-related site.

### Voter Contact

- Average 20 postcards or letters per member (2380)
- Average 200 text messages per member (23,800)
- Average 20 door knocks per member (2380)
- Average 10 ballot petition signatures per member (1190)

We have one congregation in Georgia who achieved this designation in 2022 – Georgia Mountains Unitarian Universalist Church (GMUUC). GMUUC is seeking this designation again this year; Jeff Jones, Minister Emeritus with Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church in Marietta is leading an effort to encourage more Georgia UUs to participate in efforts to become Good Trouble Congregations because these efforts will help Save Our Democracy. (Read more about Rev. Jones local efforts to Stop Cop City.) We will remain non-partisan. We can and will take strong positions on all sorts of issues that are grounded in our Unitarian Universalist faith, but we will not take positions on candidates or political parties.

As Lay Minister for Connecting Beyond, I have registered UUCG as working on this designation. Although I will be leaving the Lay Ministers in July, I remain committed to fighting for our Democracy with my fellow UUCGers and other area UUs. I will stay involved with Leadership of our Good Trouble work.

Next steps: Read the GNUUs and Weekly ENUUs for updates; check in regularly with the UUCG Facebook closed group page for updates about activities. (There is a Private Group for UU the vote on Facebook as well.); attend Good Trouble Faith Development on Fourth Sundays throughout the summer; notify [bstahnke@comcast.net](mailto:bstahnke@comcast.net) if you are working the polls during any part of this election season – including the primaries on May 21, 2024, and provide supportive documentation. Read the UU the Vote Launch Guide. See you on the 4th Sundays this Summer.

You can read more about becoming a [Good Trouble Congregation](https://uuthevote.org/goodtroublecongregation/) here:

<https://uuthevote.org/goodtroublecongregation/>

# Lay Ministry of Connecting Beyond

## Upcoming Events

### ALPHABET SOUP

New monthly potluck social & discussion group for LGBTQIA+ attendees of UUCG! Join us for this Inaugural Meeting Wednesday, June 5th at 6:30 PM UUCG Library.

LOVE IS LOVE

  
**FREE PRODUCE BOX**  
**JUNE 6 4PM**  
**WSL**



**CELEBRATE  
LILBURN  
PRIDE**

**SUNDAY**  
**June 9th, 2024**  
11AM - 2PM

J.B. Williams Park  
Lilburn, Georgia

**4TH ANNUAL  
COMMUNITY  
POTLUCK**

LOVE UNITES STORIES IGNITE

**G A**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY • VIRTUAL • JUNE 20 - 23, 2024

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JULY 21-27

2024

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# Lay Ministry of Spiritual Growth



## Welcome New Members

Hira Khan  
Jason Pfeffer  
Kim Pfeffer  
Becky Ferguson  
Bruce Leonard

Britt Parris  
Zach Parris  
Ian Van Sice  
Lauren Greenway

## Belief Explorers

June topic: Peace  
Interventions

The Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance is planning Multi-faith Peace Festivals on the United Nations International Day of Peace (Autumn Equinox), September 21. Peace interventions will be described at the inner, interpersonal, community, leaders, and globe perspective.

Discussion facilitated by  
Bruce Leonard



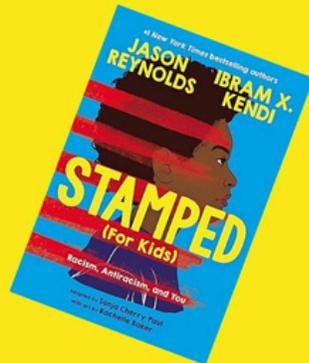
## THIS SUMMER DIG DEEPER

with an exploration of Black history in relation to today's headlines.

### MIDDLE SCHOOLERS THIS IS FOR YOU!

Six week summer book study and discussion of "Stamped (for Kids)."

10:30 am-noon on Wednesday mornings, June 26-July 31. Optional social time to follow. Ages 11-14.



At the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett, 12 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville. Cost is \$25 for the six-week class. This will cover snacks and supplementary materials. You must also have your own copy of the book (available at your local public library). Also required is an open mind and a generous attitude.

This is the first in a series on complex topics, specifically geared for this age group. Stay tuned for future classes in fall and spring.



## What is Sylvan Sanctuary?

Sylvan Sanctuary is a branch of the Oak Grove UUCG CUUPS that focuses on a Druidic path.

The Sylvan Sanctuary Druids host the Rituals for the Eight Solar Holidays with a Potluck afterwards.

To join the Sylvan Sanctuary and become an Aspirant contact Bob Patrick.

## Oak Grove CUUPS

The Oak Grove Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans (CUUPS) of UUCG is open to anyone in the UUCG community. Our purpose is to explore, celebrate, and participate in Earth-centered spiritual practices within the framework of Unitarian Universalism. We have regular attendees from a variety of Earth-centered traditions, as well as people who do not practice a particular pagan path but are interested in learning more.

CUUPS meets to discuss and experience many different pagan paths, while Sylvan Sanctuary delves deeper into the Druidic path. The two groups often work together and have much crossover in membership. CUUPS joins with Sylvan Sanctuary to celebrate the eight solar holidays.

## Midsummer Anointing Oil

*Taken from the Wicca Wheel of the Year Magic by Lisa Chamberlain*

This magical oil can be made at Midsummer and used year round to harness the powerful energies of the height of summer. Use natural essential oils rather than synthetic fragrance oils if at all possible.

### Supplies:

- Clean glass jar
- Brown glass bottle
- small funnel
- 2 tablespoons sunflower oil
- 4 drops lavender oil
- 3 drops lemon oil
- 2 drops cinnamon oil
- 1 drop rose oil

### Instructions:

- Pour the sunflower oil into a clean glass jar.
- Add one essential oil at a time, taking a moment to inhale the aroma as you swirl the oils together in the jar, building a more and more complex scent as you go.
- Funnel your newly-created blend into a brown glass bottle, seal tightly and let it sit outside in the shade for one hour.
- If you clear and charge your crystals under the Midsummer Sun, try anointing them with the oil blend afterward and use it with charms and other spell work.

# Lay Ministry of Spiritual Growth

## Oak Grove CUUPS & Sylvan Sanctuary Summer Schedule



**CUUPS Gatherings will be on hiatus until September 7th**

**June 22nd**

**Summer Solstice Ritual (Alban Heruin)**

*“The Light of the Lake”*

Alban Heruin is the time of greatest light when the Solar God is crowned by the Goddess as the King of Summer. It also brings some sadness because from now until Alban Arthan, the Sun’s strength is declining and we have entered the waning year. For some this is the time of the Dark Twin, or Holly King, who is born and will take his crown at Alban Arthan.

*Ritual Lead by Sylvan Sanctuary Druids*

## What to Bring To A Ritual

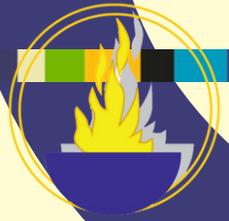
- Offering to Mother Earth
- Canned goods for the Food Drive to Lawrenceville Coop
- Drums and/or other instruments to use during ritual
- A dish to share for potluck
- Your Staff or Wand
- Druid egg to place on the altar



**2023**

**2017**

**2019**



# Magical Arts & Crafts!

As we are reformatting our programming we will be offering a magical craft here monthly for members to do anytime they wish to.

## Summer Solstice Craft

For the Summer we celebrate the Sun at it's highest point. It is the Mid Summer! To honor the Sun our craft for the Summer Solstice are sun catchers!

### Tissue Paper Sun Catchers



#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Tissue Paper (with a variety of colors)
- Mod podge or glue and brush
- Wax paper
- popsicle sticks (Optional) and string
- Scissors

Cut the tissue paper into small pieces, any shape is good. Take a piece of wax paper and start applying a thin layer of mod podge onto the wax paper. Use a foam brush to apply mod podge/glue. Add pieces of the tissue paper to the top of the wax paper with mod podge/glue on top of it and get creative. Leave as few gaps as possible. Apply a layer of mod podge/glue over the pieces and let dry. Use the popsicle sticks to create a frame and glue string onto the frame. Hang in a window with lots of sun.



## Summer Altar Ideas

- Symbols
  - Sun Wheel
  - Oak Leaf
  - Sunflower
  - Lemons and Oranges
- Herbs
  - Chamomile
  - Calendula
  - Lavender
- Crystals
  - Carnelian
  - Bloodstone
  - Citrine
  - Clear Quartz
  - Tigers Eye
- Yellow, Red and Orange candles.
- Rosemary Incense
- Honey

Share you Altar with us on FB  
#SummerSolsticeAltar





## The Sun's Long Kiss

In the longest light of the year's high crest,  
Where sun-drenched hours stretch unconfined,  
The Summer Solstice gently wakes  
The sleeping seeds of my soulful mind.

Upon the earth, a radiant dance  
Of golden beams and verdant floor,  
Whispers through leaves in an emerald trance,  
Where my heart renews and spirit soars.

Celestial fires blaze above,  
In arcs of warmth that kiss my cheek,  
Each ray a touch from my Sun-God's love,  
A blessing for the strong and meek.

Beneath the azure vaults so wide,  
Our Druids with oak and hawthorn crowns,  
Circle 'round the bonfire's side,  
Where mystic words and chants abound.

The air, alive with potent dreams,  
Carries the notes of flutes and lyres,  
Across the fields, alongside streams,  
Igniting Midsummer's nocturnal fires.

Dew-kissed flowers at dawn's first light,  
Collected with a tender care,  
Hold the magic of the night,  
An offering of earth, an herbal prayer.

On this longest day, I pause, a breath,  
I honor the sun and its tireless flight,  
From morning's first blush to twilight's wraith,  
In the embrace of the shortest night.

So spin, O Earth, with graceful poise,  
And tilt towards the source of day,  
As we, your children, with uplifted voice,  
Celebrate, reflect, renew, and pray.

Embrace the gift of Solstice bright,  
For within its glow, I find release—  
From the shackles of the fading night,  
In the sun's long kiss, a deep, sweet peace.

CC Carver

## For the Love of Summer



“Turning With the Sun Flower” Digital Art by Dmitri Novak - 2024



“Field of Echinacea” Photograph by Candice Carver - 2014

# Staff Hours

**Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones, Minister, [revnpj@uucg.org](mailto:revnpj@uucg.org)**

678-558-4834

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

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

**Christiana McQuain, Coordinator of Family Ministries,**

[cmcquain@uucg.org](mailto:cmcquain@uucg.org)

Tuesdays, 9:00am-4:00pm; Fridays (on-site), 9:00am-2:00pm;

most Sundays (on-site) 8:30am-2:00pm

**Aline Harris, Office Administrator, [aharris@uucg.org](mailto:aharris@uucg.org)**

Tuesdays 9:30 am-1:00 pm; Fridays (on-site) 10:00 am-1:00 pm;

most Sundays (on-site) 10:30 am-12:30 pm

**Michael Parker, Choir Director, [choirdirector@uucg.org](mailto:choirdirector@uucg.org)**

Office hours (on-site) Tuesdays, 1:00pm-6:00pm, by appointment

**Becca Parker, Choir Director, [choirdirector@uucg.org](mailto:choirdirector@uucg.org)**

On-site Sunday mornings (except 4th Sundays)

**LaTreisha McKay, Bookkeeper, [lmckay@uucg.org](mailto:lmckay@uucg.org)**

Available for communication on Monday evenings, 5:00-8:00pm



ALL UUCG STAFF ARE PART-TIME, PLEASE RESPECT THEIR HOURS