






# GNUUs


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## Celebrating Blessings

It's easy to feel demoralized, daunted, and defeated these days. With so many things going wrong, it's easy to overlook the many things going right. And then there's the question: Is it appropriate to celebrate in the midst of suffering? Where does joyful acknowledgement and appreciation of one's good fortune fit in the broader human context of plague and trauma? Sometimes it feels wrong to count blessings and at the same time wrong not to.

Unitarian Universalists tend not to say a lot of blessings. But we do point to them. For us, blessings are not so much about giving something to each other as they are about helping each other notice all that's already been given.

And it's not just about widening our view to see the gifts and blessings themselves; it's about widening our understanding of life. Pointing to blessings repairs our relationship with life, allowing us to see it as generous instead of indifferent or threatening. In contrast, those who feel blessed have little trouble passing blessings on. Life spills into us and we spill into others.

## Celebrating Blessings



## Events This Month

June 1...Yarns from the Heart+  
June 3.....Dungeons and Dragons\*  
June 4.....Property Work Day\*  
June 5...Food Bank Donations\*  
June 8.....Board Meeting\*  
June 12.....Spiral Scouts+  
June 12.....Belief Exploration+  
June 13...Full Moon Gathering\*  
June 15.....Yarns from the Heart+  
June 17.....Dungeons and Dragons +  
June 18.....Green Team Meeting+  
June 18.....Sylvan Sanctuary +  
June 22.....Book Group+  
June 22-26.....General Assembly+\*  
June 29.....Vision Journal Workshop\*  
Tuesdays.....Choir Rehearsal\*  
Sundays.....Tarot Sunday+\*in person  
+online

For details visit [uucg.org](http://uucg.org)

## Did you Gnow?

- Male gnus (bulls) tend to be darker in color than female gnus (cows).





## Worship in June Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: Celebrating Blessings  
Join us via Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/565460176>

### **June 5:** Online and In Person

#### ***Celebrating the Blessings of a Free Faith***

Unitarian Universalists are encouraged to engage in a responsible search for truth and meaning, and there is a whole world of sources we draw from. What sources have inspired your search?

Join us in person or via Zoom

*Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader*  
*Bill Benshoof (he/him), Worship Associate*

### **June 12:** Online and In Person

#### ***The Blessing of Loving-Kindness***

When we can look upon all beings with eyes of compassion, we bless ourselves and each other with loving-kindness. Sounds easy, right?

Join us in person or via Zoom

*Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader*  
*David Morgen (he/they), Worship Associate*

### **June 19:** Online and In Person

#### ***To Bless or Curse the World***

Everyday we make choices - to be people who work for justice or ignore injustice, who praise the sacred or obscure the sacred, who offer love or withhold love. Who do you choose to be?

This service will also include our annual

**Bridging Ceremony** to honor key milestones for our children and teens.

Join us in person or via Zoom

*Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader*  
*Lydia Patrick (she/her), Worship Associate*

### **June 26:** Online and In Person

#### ***What Would Happen If . . .***

In this service we will allow the words of some poets to invite us into a conversation . . . where we tease out the blessings that surround us every day.

Join us in person or via Zoom

*Bob Patrick (he/him), Service Leader*  
*Elna Brynstad (she/her), Worship Associate*

## Faith Development Sundays at 10:00am

On Sunday mornings at 10:00am during the month of June there will be a Faith Development session during which we will explore the theme of Celebrating Blessings.

Please check the weekly e-news throughout the month for details on each Sunday's specific programming.



[Click here for Faith Development Resources to Celebrate Blessings Beyond Sunday Morning](#)



## Gadding About

by Reverend Jan Taddeo (she/her)



Celebrating Blessings is our theme for our shared ministry in June. We'll explore this theme through our worship services, faith development programs, and covenant groups.

What is a blessing? What meaning does this word hold for you? Are there religious connotations you carry that cause you to cringe or to celebrate at the idea of blessings?

When I think of celebrating blessings, I am reminded of the song Holy Now by Peter Mayer in which he shares his own transformation from the holy being something quite specific named by the Church to the lived experience and realization that everything - EVERYTHING - is holy - is a blessing. Every blade of grass, every drop of water, every person, every challenge, every triumph. In this context, everything is a blessing, and the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

I also think of the Buddhist concept of Loving-Kindness as a blessing we give ourselves and each other. To look upon all beings with the eyes of compassion offers the opportunity for a profound sense of connection and interdependence.

Another angle on celebrating blessings is to notice the choices we make as to how we see and engage with the world. Do we choose to be people who work for justice or ignore injustice, who praise the sacred or obscure the sacred, who offer love or withhold love. Who do you choose to be?

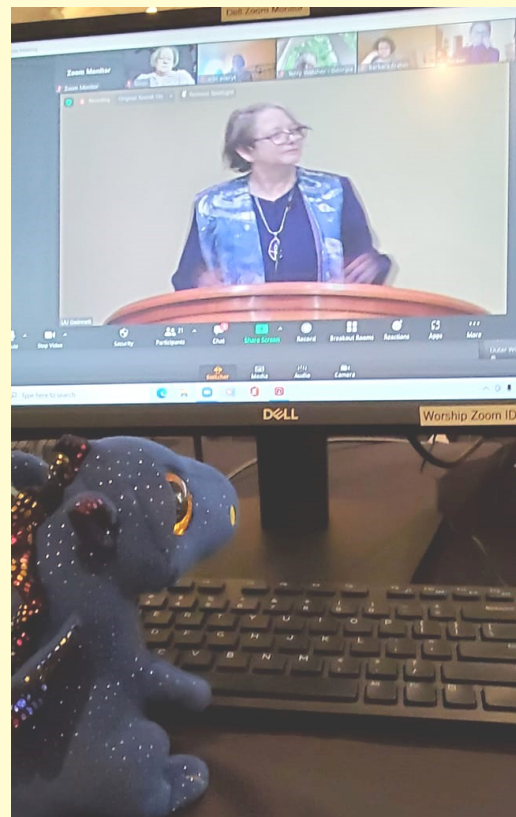
### **Congregational Retreat Scholarships:**

If you would like to support another person or family to be able to participate in the retreat, you can send contributions to UUCG and indicate MDF-Retreat Scholarship in the memo or Venmo/PayPal note. The fee for adults is \$215 per person for double occupancy. If you need financial support to attend the retreat, please contact me at

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

With loving-kindness...

Reverend Jan







## Endowment Fund

Submitted by Doug Beers (he/him)

Have you ever noticed the Endowment Fund plaque in the UUCG main hallway? On it are spaces to honor gifts that go beyond the yearly “Birthday Club” donation to the UUCG Endowment Fund which will help sustain the long-term financial stability of our church. There are four categories of gifts recognized:

**Memorials** – for someone who was not a member of UUCG, **Bequests** – for someone who has left us a gift from their estate, **Commemoratives** – for someone in recognition of their service to the UUCG community, and **Donations** – for recognition of a substantial gift to the Endowment Fund. Currently, recognition on the plaque is for gifts of \$500 for Memorials, Commemoratives, and Donations, and \$1000 for bequests.

We are very pleased to add **Sue-Ann Soloway**’s name under the Donation column for her very gracious gift to the Fund. She has been a long-time supporter of and has served several terms on the Endowment Board.

We thank her for both her donation and her service to the Endowment Fund.

## Celebrate the Blessing of Bryan Bishop



Bryan Bishop (he/him) served as our pianist for 23-1/2 years, offering his extraordinary musical talent and knowledge for our worship services, memorial services, weddings, and other events. Bryan chose to resign in late April, and, being the modest person he is, asked that we not have any fanfare or celebration of his music ministry. However, he would welcome cards of appreciation.

You can send cards to:

**Bryan Bishop**  
**1859 Westminster Way**  
**Atlanta, GA**  
**30307**

## Green Team

PROPERTY WORK DAY!

**June 4th**  
9 AM TO 3 PM



### 1. Trim bushes by road

Several bushes along the road impede sight of the sign and building, we need to remove these and pull any saplings coming up as well.

### 2. Water the garden

The Keyhole garden needs to be watered, this needs to be a daily thing, but giving it a really good soak today would be stupendous!

### 3. Spread Mulch

We need to spread out mulch in the back along the path ways and in the Oak Grove for easier access.



## Saving the Planet One Step at a Time

**Submitted by Candice Bizzell (she/her)**

I recently watched the documentary *The Story of Stuff* and it made me look closer at my own habits with “stuff.” I have to say I do have a lot of stuff, but I’m not one that collects things that are not in my eyes worthy of collecting, and I tend to reuse, repurpose and upcycle a lot of things I do own. But the movie made me question my problem with consumerism and waste.

As I grow older I find that I feel like I don’t do enough to help in the efforts of protecting our cherished planet. It’s not like I can take down corporations and big businesses that account for 55% of the waste in the landfills. And I grow weary of the back and forth on single use plastics and the outrageous cost of alternatives; and now the post covid single use items restaurants are passing out like candy. It’s exhausting to boycott a place for not using biodegradable plastic or real dish-ware when it raises cost... it’s all to protect everyone from contracting COVID.

So I have to refocus more on what I can do at home. I can’t do it all at once, but I can start with one thing and then continue from there.

This month I want to focus more on recycling, what better time than now to really push up the recycling in my house! Gwinnett Co. has a wonderful recycling program. I don’t even have to sort it out, I just throw all my recyclables in the container and put it on the curb Wednesday morning! But is that it? Well, no, recycling things isn’t complicated, but we need to be more diligent on what we can recycle. Like shoes, clothes, and other everyday items we may not realize can be recycled.

Did you know shoes can be recycled? Well, athletic shoes at least. Nike runs a program called

Move to Zero that collects shoes and refurbishes or recycles them into new material. This isn’t a new concept and there are a lot of shoe recycling places out there, but if your shoes are like mine and to the point of falling apart this may be the best solution for them to get a new life. Otherwise consider donating them to a local thrift store for resale.

If you wear eyeglasses, you’re probably like me and have your last 7 years worth of eyeglasses for the, “just in case these break these will be my backup” pair. Well, now is the time to release at least 5 years worth of eye glasses back into the recycling bin? Well not exactly, but donating your old glasses is something. The Lions Club collects eyeglasses for people that are not able to afford a pair and it helps them raise money to provide vision screening to children.

One thing that has been a big help to my at home recycling efforts is posting a sign at my trash can that says “Can it be recycled, donated or composted?” This sign helps me take a second look at the item and decide if I can compost or recycle it. I was fortunate enough to live next door to a scrapper and now I have the benefit of knowing that scrap metal is in everything. So if all else fails I’ll collect scrap metal for the scrapper and let them take it to the scrap metal recycling yard.



### TerraCycle

This is a reminder that we have a variety of TerraCycle recycling programs available in the office at UUCG.

We have been participating for a little short of a year and have already recycled over 11 pounds of otherwise unrecyclable items.

Some of the brands we recycle include Tom’s of Maine, Burt’s Bees, and all Kroger store brands.

Thanks for your participation.

For more information check out the flyers in the office or email [admin@uucg.org](mailto:admin@uucg.org)

## Covenant Groups Summer 2022

**Submitted by Joe Bentley (he/him)**

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 Summer 2022 groups will start the first week of June and we'll offer a Monday evening group and a Thursday morning group.

**Registration / sign up at**  
<https://www.uucg.org/connectingwithin/>



Lay Ministry: Connecting Within

## Ready to QUUest?

**Submitted by Joe Bentley (he/him)**

The UUCG Dungeons & Dragons group is getting ready to take more adventurers on a QUUest by opening registration for more people to join in June! We have two groups to choose from...one in-person and one online, each meeting once a month. Register at <https://www.uucg.org/connectingwithin/>!

Open to seasoned sojourners and newbies alike, 18 and up. A super fun way to connect!

## Consent in Dungeons and Dragons

**Submitted by Aline Harris (she/her)**

As part of the intersection of Unitarian Universalism and Dungeons and Dragons, all players and Dungeons Masters agree to play within the Covenant of Right Relations with each other. One major element is the issue of consent. Within a game, all sorts of situations can come up as such, we emphasize consent. New players fill out a form listing a variety of topics and let the Dungeon Master know what they are comfortable with and what is a hard no.

There is a wonderful free handbook about consent in gaming (and really just consent in general) that we encourage our Dungeon Masters to read. Here is the link if you are interested. <https://www.montecookgames.com/store/product/consent-in-gaming/>

## Summer Break

**Submitted by Aline Harris (she/her)**

Unitarian Universalists have a history of taking summers off. Many congregations have taken it completely off, closing the building and the minister being unreachable on vacation.

I can speculate about the reason for this; wealthy white congregants escaping to their vacation homes, family vacations taking priority, or just not wanting to crowd into a room in the summer heat. But the truth may come from an old UU joke, "Why do Unitarian Universalists take the summer off? Because God trusts us!"

We don't see our faith as something that only happens in the pews on Sunday morning. Instead, we strive to live our values everyday. 'Church' is great, but it's not what makes a UU.

Never fear though, while some of our programs may be taking the summer off this year, our worship services will continue uninterrupted. We do have the benefit of air conditioning after all.





Lay Ministry: Connecting Within

## The Mountain is Calling

Submitted by Joe Bentley (he/him)

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 16-18, 2022 for a weekend of connection, learning, relaxing, and just being.



### Register for the Retreat

<https://www.themountainrlc.org/uu-gwinnett>

The cost to attend is \$215 per adult, but we want to be sure that no one is left out just because they can't afford the registration fees. If you're able, please consider helping to build our retreat support fund through contributions to the Minister's Discretionary Fund so more people can take advantage of this precious time to connect. If you want to plant some seeds you can contribute by check, Venmo, or Paypal, with a note that says "MDF Retreat Fund).

## Fall Congregational Retreat at The Mountain

Submitted by Carol Pinto (she/her)

Hey, who wants to get together at The Mountain this fall? Located near Highlands, NC, it's a beautiful site for fresh air fellowship and reconnecting.

After many years, UUCG is having a congregational retreat Sept. 16-18. Arrive Friday evening and leave after the Sunday service, or stay for lunch. Members and friends of UUCG of all ages are invited. We'll have activities for kids, teens, and adults, both inside and outside. Some of our members remember past retreats, like Diana Dice and her husband Blue. She talks about the good times they had with their daughter Jaime and friends from UUCG in the 1990s and early 2000s.



*Diana Dice painting at The Mountain*

"We had so much fun! Trivial Pursuit was a favorite. If you were on the team with Doug and Pat Beers, or the Millettes, the Longs, or the Soloways, you were in good shape! Not to mention the Kohls, the Smiths, the Churchills, and the Graffs. We played board games, sang, and put on skits. Jaime was a teen and many of the families had kids, her age and younger."

This fall there will be short hikes, long hikes, meditation, nature studies, games out in the meadow and in the rec hall, a campfire with s'mores, arts and crafts, and maybe a farm tour.

Food at The Mountain is fresh and tasty, much of it grown nearby and organic. Vegetarian and other special diet options included. Families stay together in cabins and get reduced rates.

Some scholarship funds are available.



## Give Away the Plate 3rd Quarter Recipient



North Gwinnett Cooperative has been selected by the Give Away the Plate Committee to be the 3rd quarter GATP recipient.

We already collect food and toiletries as donations on the first Sunday of every month for them and we are excited to add a monetary donation to their efforts to fight hunger in our local community.

Currently they are especially in need of :

- period products
- smaller portions of laundry detergent

The 4th Quarter recipient will be  
The Gwinnett Remembrance Coalition.

## GCPL Social justice Club

Join Gwinnett County Public Library in an open discussion of social issues that affect our community. For the month of June, we will discuss LGBTQIA+ Issues, as we do a deep dive into the article - "Do not say homosexual" invoice tabled at Georgia Basic Meeting" and review Senate Bill 613 ("Don't Say Gay" Bill). Please make sure to read the article ahead of the program. Gwinnett County Public Library presents a bi-monthly discussion club that explores articles about race, gender, immigration, poverty, and criminal justice issues. It is intended to give readers the opportunity to explore current social issues more deeply. Join us every third Thursday of every other month from 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm via Zoom. [Register here](#)



**FIVE FORKS BRANCH**  
2780 FIVE FORKS TRICKUM RD, LAWRENCEVILLE, GA 30044



Come celebrate this important moment in American history with a family-friendly cultural craft, snacks, and storytelling!

Featuring percussionist and storyteller

**Jerry G. White**

Author of

***Anansi and the Colorful Kente Cloth***



























# Nurturing Connections

	<b>Covenant Choir Gathering every Tuesday at</b> Onsite	<b>7pm</b>
	<b>Yarns From the Heart June 1</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 994-7414-0257	<b>10am</b>
	<b>Dungeons and Dragons Open Session June 3</b> Onsite	<b>6 pm</b>
	<b>Property Work Day June 4</b> Onsite	<b>10am</b>
	<b>Food Bank Dropoff June 5</b> Front Porch at UUCG	<b>2pm-4pm</b>
	<b>Tarot Sundays every Sunday at</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 978-9585-2363	<b>5pm</b>
	<b>Spiral Scouts June 12</b> For children ages 3-12 and their families. Preregistration is required	<b>12:30pm</b>
	<b>Belief Explorers June 12</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 896-987-304	<b>12:30pm</b>
	<b>Board Meeting June 8</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 956-757-31773	<b>7pm</b>
	<b>Dungeons and Dragons open session June 17</b> Zoom Meeting ID available after registering	<b>7pm</b>
	<b>Green Team Meeting June 18</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 926-178-30455	<b>9:30am</b>
	<b>Sylvan Sanctuary Ritual June 18</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 528-297-2479	<b>6pm</b>
	<b>Book Group June 22</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 144-736-833	<b>7pm</b>
	<b>General Assembly June 22-26</b> Streaming online <a href="https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2022">https://www.uua.org/ga/off-site/2022</a>	
	<b>Vision Journal Workshop June 29</b> Zoom Meeting ID: 998-7138-6950	<b>7pm</b>

**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

# June 2022

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		