



March 2025 Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists

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Living Love Through The Practice of Trust

UUs often talk about trusting “a Love that will not let us go.” This is powerful when it can be easy to lose faith and perceive life itself as an adversary. Our UU communities serve to restore our faith in life as a friend and ally. We can find hope in the reassurance that when we fall, we can count on being picked up.



We all experience a loss of faith in our own way. The trust you need to repair is likely different from what I need. But what we both long for is bold safe space. Space to say how hard that work of repair is. Space to say how much our experience of broken trust hurts. Space to mourn and to breathe and to find the light again. The practice of Trust is about the need to make room for everyone’s uniquely broken heart, including our own. Creating a Culture of Care means living into this aspect of trust in whatever ways we are able.

And so we begin our exploration of Living Love through the Practice of Trust together...



Gnus embody trust in the cycles of nature—trusting that the rains will return, that their migration will lead to sustenance, and that moving together gives them the best chance at survival.

Worship in March

Sundays at 11:00am

Theme: Living Love through the
Practice of Trust

Join us in-person or via Zoom

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



March 2nd

Luminescence: Trusting the Light Within

Join us this Sunday for our annual celebration of Luminescence, a service that honors the light within each of us, and the source of the light within all. When we trust the light within and allow it to shine forth unimpeded, it is our collective light that will shine through even the darkest darkness.

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (She/Her), Service Leader

March 9th

Feeling Into Our Faith

How do our deepest feelings affirm our faith and trust?

Daniel Bailey (He/Him), Service Leader

March 16th

The Trusting Heart

We gather to reflect on the profound connection between trust and love, and explore how cultivating trust within ourselves opens our hearts to deeper connections with others. How did Persephone's journey between the realms of shadow and light contribute to the trust we have this season?

Candice Carver (She/Her), Service Leader

March 23rd

How Can We Trust the Process?

"Trust the process," we're told, when life's outcomes seem uncertain, or "just keep swimming," as the movie "Finding Nemo" suggested. But when things fall apart, how and when can we trust that healing really is possible? This Sunday we find our way with the help of an ancient story, the guidance of Good Trouble, and one of Rev. Nancy's favorite prayers.

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (She/Her), Service Leader

March 30th

Making Room for Trust to Grow

Trust can be like a highway of emotions, feelings, and actions. Who/what do we trust? Are they trustworthy? Where is trust kept? Who/what trusts us? Are *we* trustworthy? Can we do those things needed to live in love through the practice of trust?

What do our UU principles call us to do?

Lydia Patrick (She/Her), Service Leader

Programs

Sundays at 12:30pm

1st Sunday, 2/2

- Faith in Action: Letters to Legislators
- Potluck Lunch

2nd Sunday, 2/9

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

3rd Sunday, 2/16

- Sunday Tarot

4th Sunday, 2/23

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

5th Sunday, 2/23

- No Programs





Worship and More

Worship Services
Sundays at 11:00am
March Theme:

Living Love through The Practice of Trust
Join us in-person or via Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/565460176>

Give Away the Plate



Second Helpings Atlanta

This organization collects unused food from grocery stores and restaurants and redistributes it to those in need. Not only does it help feed hungry people, Second Helpings discourages food waste, benefiting the environment too.

In 2023, Second Helpings' food rescue network diverted over 5.8 million pounds of surplus food from landfills, providing the equivalent of 4.8 million fresh, nutritious meals. A second program, Full Plate Project, provided 400,000 complete meals, donated by Hello Fresh, restaurants and caterers, to partner agencies throughout metro Atlanta.

Second Helpings began in 2004 at Temple Sinai in Atlanta. After continued growth, it became an independent nonprofit in 2012. Currently, the organization serves a 10-county metro Atlanta area. Learn more at secondhelpingsatlanta.org

Congregational Photo Shoot Sunday, March 2



Special Services

Saturday, March 22nd at 6:00pm
Spring Equinox Ritual

The Druid spring equinox festival is known as Alban Eilir, which means 'The Light of the Earth'. Spring is a time of rebirth - the soils warm, plants emerge, trees leaf out, many animals start giving birth, and crops are sown. Come to the Alban Eilir Ritual and stay for pot luck. Please bring a wand, instrument, an offering to Mother Earth, and a dish to share.

Presented by the Sylvan Sanctuary Druids of the Oak Grove

Looking Ahead

April 20th
Easter Sunday

All are invited to celebrate **Easter**, honor **Earth Day**, and participate in our annual **Flower Ceremony** during this service that lifts up the values & practices of renewal, mindfulness, and creating a culture of care.

Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (She/Her), Service Leader

The Desk of Rev. Nancy



What Do You Turn To?

by Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones (she/her)



Trust—our theme for the month of March—is something I'm determined to work on with extra intention this year.

As I write that, I feel my shoulders straighten, I feel space for fresh air to enter my lungs, I remember how my mind sparked with energy when I first chose Trust as one of my focuses for 2025.

Then, just as quickly, I remember all that is already broken in the early weeks of this year: all the political attempts to shift policies and funding away from the paths of Love and Justice. All the fear, anger, confusion, vulnerability, all the exhaustion whipped up like a dark tornado to trick our powerful, liberating engine of Love into losing steam

My shoulders slump, my breath grows shallow, my mind plops down in a bucket of sludge making it almost impossible to move. What or whom can I trust in these perilous times?

Still, we—and our ancestors—have made it this far. I have an inkling that we have more to rely on than we may remember in times of stress. Let's try this exercise:

In the face of challenging (and even joyous) times, what or whom do you turn toward? Try on these fill-in-the-blank sentences. Resist overthinking; let whatever arises be your answer for now. Come back again in a few days. Do your answers change? What do you discover about what and whom you can trust?

1. When my path turns uncertain,
I turn to...
2. When my spirit feels drained and dried up,
I turn to...
3. When rage clouds my vision,
I turn to...
4. When injustice dissolves my hope,
I turn to...
5. When I want to feel my joy more fully,
I turn to...
6. When my heart longs to bathe in beauty,
I turn to...
7. When I am tender and long to sit with my pain rather than have it fixed,
I turn to...

My quick answers? (1) friends who know me well; (2) singing; (3) deep deep breaths and what I know about trauma so I can get at the root of what the anger tells me; (4) the persistence and creativity of the justice groups I keep discovering—so many people are doing the work!; (5) the communities I'm part of; (6) the outdoors; (7) my journal, my support team, my kind of prayer.

What are yours, beloveds? And how do our resources for what we can turn to grow when we combine them in community at UUCG?

With courage, persistence, and hope,
Rev. Nancy

Read Lisa Olivera's Beautiful Poem that Inspired this exercise.

What do you turn toward?

The Practice of Trust...

What Do You Turn To?

An Exercise on Trust from Soul Matters Sharing Circle

You are invited to engage with the following questions as you feel moved to. Reflect, journal, or use your responses as inspiration for some creative work this month.

When my path turns uncertain,
I turn to...

When my path turns rocky and my footing is
unsure,
I turn to...

When life asks me to let go but my fingers cannot
release their grip,
I turn to...

When I want to feel my joy more fully,
I turn to...

When my spirit feels drained and dried up,
I turn to...

When rage clouds my vision,
I turn to...

When injustice dissolves my hope,
I turn to...

When a dream of mine dies,
I turn to...

When a dream of mine comes true,
I turn to...

When the loneliness of feeling no one will
understand descends on me,
I turn to...

When I finally feel safe enough to share a secret
long hidden within,
I turn to...

When my heart longs to bathe in beauty,
I turn to...

When I am tender and long to sit with my pain
rather than have it fixed,
I turn to...

When flawed and fragile human beings hurt or
disappoint me and I want to keep tethered to
compassion for them,
I turn to...

When I need to accept and endure the path of
waiting,
I turn to...

When I want to remember that life is a glorious
gift,
I turn to...

When I want to feel the needs and pain of others
as my own,
I turn to...

When I am weary and long for rest,
I turn to...

When I long for the transcendence of wonder,
I turn to...

When life opens a long-closed door, but my feet
fear leaving the familiar,
I turn to...

When I doubt myself and am in need of courage,
I turn to...

When I lose my sense of limited self and melt into
a oneness with all,
I turn to...

When clear-cut answers elude me and I become
frozen by indecision,
I turn to...

When I miss those who have been taken from me
by death or time,
I turn to...

When life turns hard and I need to feel something
tender and soft,
I turn to...

Inhabiting Our Freedom Dreams: Connecting with our accountability partners

On Sunday, February 16th during the Worship Service, Rev. Nancy asked everyone to reflect on the practices we engaged in and consider the questions: What commitments do you want to make about how you'll embody our freedom dreams? What helps you stay connected to the Ground of your Being? And what action or direction does that connection to Love lead you to?

- **Review the document shared during the service.**
- **Check in with your accountability partner.**
- **Do some body movement, dance, sing, or do a tarot spread.**

Know that you are not alone.



Potluck Lunch
&
Congregational
Conversation

Sunday, March 2 at 12:30pm

Bring a dish to share and
join the Board for a discussion
on Shared Leadership

Spring Forward March 9th



From the Board



Good Leaders are not Always Out In Front

by Dan Kelly, President UUCG Board of Trustees

When folks who know me outside of UUCG hear me mention that I serve on the Board for my church, they often raise an eyebrow. I am known for my humor being... shall we say... irreverent. Mentioning that it is a Unitarian Universalist church often gets the response, “Oh, well, that makes sense.”

To be clear: when I agreed to join the Board of Trustees, I had no idea what I was doing. (And if you promise not to tell the others, I’ll admit that I still don’t.)



What I have had, though, is the support and guidance of other leadership (past and present), UUCG staff, and UUA personnel who are absolutely dedicated to helping me navigate the journey. With every question I have faced, I have been presented with resources and assistance in finding answers. Hiring a contract minister? We’ve got resources! Building an annual budget? Here’s the last five years of budgets to review! Concerns about safety and security? Our community has done the research!

I have never walked this path alone.

What I have found is that leadership in this congregation is about partnership. It’s about faithful connection with others who serve the same purpose. It’s about linking arms and moving forward together.

We are all Leaders at UUCG.

I invite you to think about your own journey with UUCG and how you might be interested in serving in this democratic institution. Whether it is working with fiduciary and legal responsibilities on the Board of Trustees, or serving on a Committee, or connecting with our Shared Ministry Council in the important spiritual work we do all year long, or simply showing up to help when needed; I promise you will find someone there with you on that journey.

“[Democracy] is not merely majority rule based on the fact that the majority has the physical force to prevail... It rests upon the fact that, when we have proven knowledge, interpreted through the experience of a large number of individuals, it is possible through this pooled knowledge and experience to come to decisions much more fundamental and much more far-reaching than can be had in any other way... The people participating effectively in this pool of democracy must be alive and well, they must know the world which they are interpreting, and they must know themselves.”

~W.E.B. Du Bois*

*from “Human Rights for All Minorities,” an address delivered to the East and West Association on November 7, 1945 and printed in “W. E. B. Du Bois Speaks: Speeches and Addresses 1920–1963,” p. 182.

Ministry of Radical Welcome



Learning About Beloved Community



by Carol Underwood, Lay Minister for Radical Welcome

In February, we began the Trans Inclusion Workshop. I was really struck by the first

lesson which talked about The Beloved Community as a spiritual practice. The term “Beloved Community” is deeply rooted in the words and teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. These words and practices came from a vision of a society based on justice, equal opportunity, and unconditional love.

For King, the Beloved community was not a utopian dream but a realistic, achievable goal. It is one that demanded both personal transformation and systemic change.

values, where our faith is expressed together in JETPIG. **J**ustice, **E**quity, **T**ransformation, **P**luralism, **I**nterdependence, **G**enerosity.

In this particular time period we find ourselves in, the concept of the Beloved Community remains as relevant as ever. It challenges individuals and institutions to confront racism, inequality, and injustice in all forms.

The vision of the Beloved Community invites us to imagine a world defined not by division and competition but by unity, compassion, and justice. The Beloved Community is not just a distant dream but can be a future we build together through love in action.

It is important to recognize the interconnectedness of all people. It is important to show up for those who need it most.

Beloved Community is an important goal for our community especially when there are marginalized groups we are called to protect. We want to prevent the aspect of “the other”. Where we do not become in relationship with those who are marginalized and we don’t learn in relationship with the whole tapestry of humanity. It becomes easy to push away “the other” when we do not engage in a relationship with them. It is important to recognize the interconnectedness of all people. It is important to show up for those who need us most.

King famously wrote, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”. We are all interconnected in the pursuit of justice. These are among our UU

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
Generosity
Justice

Transformation
Pluralism
Equity



UU Values graphic by Candice Carver

Ministry of Radical Welcome

No One is Free Until All Are Free

by Candice Carver

The current political climate and the dismantling of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives have made it urgent to Connect Beyond our congregations. To do this, we must also focus on our desire to become a more Radically Welcoming community. This will require a deep commitment to equity, justice, transformation, interdependence, and LOVE which are part of our UU values.

We have to remember that radical welcome is more than just inclusion—it is about creating a space where marginalized voices are centered, valued, and empowered. This means engaging in active listening and self-reflection to recognize our biases and assumptions, and ensuring leadership and decision-making structures reflect the diversity we seek.

We can frame our work around collective liberation—the idea that no one is free until all are free. This means shifting from a compliance mindset to an

active practice of solidarity by offering space for courageous conversations about race, gender, disability, and justice. We already do this by offering programs such as Trans Inclusion, working with Familias Juntas and supporting and amplifying the voices of those most impacted by exclusionary policies. Not only partnering with local organizations working for justice as we have but also supporting them by attending and participating in events, conferences and organization meetings.

Radical Welcome and Connecting Beyond is also about making sure people feel like they truly belong. This means creating a safe and understanding space that acknowledges the pain of oppression. It's about making sure everyone can access and participate in all aspects of congregational life - physically, linguistically, and culturally. The Lay Ministers and Worship Team discuss these initiatives and all we can to incorporate and practice them.

Being a radically welcoming congregation means taking a stand by advocating for policies that uphold justice and equity, even when they are unpopular, showing up at protests and city council & school board meetings to demand fairness. We can utilize our resources—buildings, networks, people—to support those targeted by injustice.

Radical Welcome means stepping up; this involves using our networks for those directly impacted by oppression, offering space for community organizing, healing circles, and community efforts, and prioritizing relationships over structures, ensuring that people feel seen and supported.

At the center, Radical Welcome is about trust—trusting that we can co-create a world where all belong. What specific aspects of radical welcome do you feel UUCG needs to deepen or expand right now?

Sharing the Journey

Sundays March 23rd,
April 13th & 27th and
May 11th 1:00PM-
2:30PM

Sharing the Journey is a 4-week program for both newcomers and long-time members of UUCG to experience “deep listening and sharing practices” in a small group setting.

[Register Here](#)

Ministry of Radical Welcome

Hospitality Highlight

Call to Connection Request

Help us make our Call to Connection Hour after service even more welcoming by bringing snacks to share!

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

While we love sweet treats, we also welcome:

Fresh fruits & vegetables
Gluten-free options
Vegan & vegetarian



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

Be the Smile that Welcomes

Welcome aboard to our two new Greeters, Christi and Zia! We are excited to have you on our team. We're still looking for one more Greeter to join Peggy, Christi, Zia, and Carol in creating a warm and welcoming space on Sunday mornings. If you're interested, contact Carol Underwood at radicalwelcome@uucg.org.

- Meet people in the foyer with a warm welcome.
- Invite new visitors to fill out the welcome book.
- Answer questions about UUCG
- Encourage everyone to wear a name tag.
- Offer Orders of Service.
- Set up the Greeter area and put items away after Service.

Thank You for Your Dedication

With deep gratitude, we honor the life and service of Katrina Yurko. Since becoming a member of UUCG in 2016, Katrina embodied the spirit of warmth and welcome, greeting all who entered our congregation with her kind smile and open heart. Over the years she has served on the Board, the Nominating Committee, and the Ministerial Search Committee. Her presence made our community brighter, offering both newcomers and longtime members a sense of belonging and friendship.



Katrina was a gifted artist whose creativity touched many. Her beautiful artwork, which graces the walls of our Sanctuary, contributes to the creation of a sacred and inspiring space for reflection and worship. She shared her artistic gifts generously — offering painting classes and sketches to raise funds in support of our community. Through her art and her welcoming demeanor, she not only expressed beauty, but also strengthened the bonds of connection among us.

Though she is no longer with us in body, Katrina's spirit remains woven into the fabric of UUCG. Her kindness, generosity, and artistry have left an indelible mark, and she will be profoundly missed. We hold her memory in our hearts and extend our love and condolences to all who knew and cherished her.

Ministry of Green Space



Brainstorming Breakfast Recap

By Gary Kiel, Lay Minister for Green Space

The Green Team's annual brainstorming breakfast on February 15th was a productive gathering where members, Gary Kiel, Zoey Kelly, Bill Benshoof, Barry Heath, and Terry Welsher, recapped 2024's achievements and laid out exciting plans for 2025.

In 2024, the Green Team accomplished a lot of outreach with several key projects and events. Two successful movie nights were held in partnership with the Sierra Club and other organizations. The team participated in the Climate Justice Revival, fostering awareness and advocacy, and a labyrinth dedication marked a significant milestone in our Green Space, creating a meditative and spiritual space for the community.

Looking ahead, 2025 is blooming with possibilities. We're adopting an Eastern American Toad as our mascot with a naming contest in this month's GNUUS!



Name our New Green Team Mascot!

Hi, I hang out at UUCG. I really like it here. I want to join the Green Team since the property beautification is my dream. What should I put on my name tag? I never had a name, and now it would be good to have one. Please help - give me a name!

Scan the QR Code or click here to submit your name suggestion.



HERE



Movie nights are evolving into quarterly "Grand Green Get Togethers" (G3T), taking place on the third Friday of every month divisible by three. (March, June, September, December)

The first G3T is on March 21st, now we just need to choose a movie.

We had a great time at the most recent Action Sunday worship service on February 9th and, although they are not regularly scheduled services, the team will maintain a list of ready-to-go projects that can be implemented when opportunities arise.

We're exploring new tech and education, like the Marlin Bird Call ID App – An innovative tool brought forward by Bill Kennedy to help identify bird calls. Plant ID Apps – Zoey and Karen have experience with plant identification apps, which could be useful for community learning and nature walks.

Our gardens and green spaces will flourish with flowers and vegetables, and we invite everyone to join in the planting. We're also focusing on maintaining our outdoor areas, including replanting in the labyrinth and removing the large holly tree, with its trunk repurposed for woodworking by Ian and Dave.

The Green Team will also contribute to more worship services in 2025, starting with a reflection from Gary during Candice's Persephone and spring-themed service on March 16th. On March 30th, Lydia's trust-themed Shark Whisperer Service will feature Gary's reflection on trust in the animal kingdom. We're also collaborating on Rev. Nancy's Earth Day service on April 20th and may include more Green Space Reflections in the future.

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Ministry of Green Space

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The Green Team is also exploring additional ideas like the enROADS climate change simulation app and Georgia Drawdown initiative. The enROADS App is a climate change simulation that allows users to adjust 18 parameters to see projected climate impacts. While too complex for an Action Sunday, it could be incorporated into a G3T session, possibly alongside the bird and plant ID apps. Georgia Drawdown is an initiative that explores 20 policies impacting Georgia's environmental future.

Further discussion and exploration are needed to understand its potential applications for the Green Team. These could be incorporated into G3T sessions or other events.

The brainstorming session sparked many great ideas, and we welcome everyone's participation and collaboration to make 2025 a fantastic year for the Green Team!

Saving the Seeds of Change

By Xoe Kelly

On February 9th during the Blessing of the Plow service, a small unassuming plastic tub filled with various types of flower, vegetable, and herb seeds was consecrated on the altar along with garden tools and potted plants before finding its home on the shelves of the Library meeting room. In that room several people came to learn about our new garden sharing initiative and how they might benefit themselves, their community, and the ecosystem from it.

Much like a library for books, a seed library "lends" out seeds to patrons for them to grow in their own personal garden. Seeds can be categorized as being open pollinated, meaning that they produce offspring that closely resembles the parent plant; or a hybrid, which is a cross of two distinct varieties and produces offspring that differ from those sources. Some seed libraries contain and accept only open pollinated seeds, also known as heirloom seeds; however, UUCG's seed library has both kinds. Healthy plants that are grown from the seeds would then be allowed to mature and be harvested, seeds saved, and donated back to the library. In this way the system would be replenished with viable stock for the next growing season, though donating is not required to take part in the program.

Historically, humans have been actively growing plants from saved seeds for millennia, prompting our early ancestors to settle into the first farming villages. Saving seeds from the most successful crops, selecting the traits that best suited their needs ensured their survival and allowed them to...

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Green Space
BEAUTIFICATION
DAY
APRIL 5TH!
9:30AM-Noon

**Spring into action to see
the campus bloom**

Ministry of Green Space

continued from previous page...

advance civilization and humanity. By doing the same we are honoring that culture of care for ourselves and the land that sustains us all. Even today, when access to healthy fresh food is not easy for many to come by, growing one's own can be a life affirming act of perseverance.

Some engage in garden cultivation because they want to help heal the local ecosystem.

Redistributing the seeds of native plants is one step in restoring the biodiversity of a region which may have suffered from overdevelopment of the land. Large scale farms of mainly monoculture crops, sprayed with pesticides and herbicides that devastate the ecological balance of nature, are generally engineered to not even produce viable

“
Redistributing the seeds of native plants is one step in restoring the biodiversity of a region which may have suffered from overdevelopment of the land.
”

seeds for replanting. In some instances farmers are not even legally permitted to save seed from some plants patented by corporations, as doing so would constitute theft of intellectual property.

Considering this, our saving of seeds can be seen as an act of resistance and food sovereignty. And, it is not just the local environment that benefits from home gardens. The carbon footprint for produce from your own yard is nothing compared to that which has been grown and shipped from thousands of miles away. Growing a garden is a proactive response to climate change.

Our small box at UUCG is not the only source for free seeds. Just a short drive away Georgia Gwinnett College has a collection they lend from

housed at the Kaufman Library building in Lawrenceville. Also, the website www.FreeHeirloomSeeds.org is a wonderful source for literally hundreds of types of fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Though email requests are limited to four varieties of your choosing per person, a donation will grant you many more seed packets. Visit the website to see what is available as the list is always being updated and to learn more about the process for receiving and donating back to this successful grassroots project.

As the planning season approaches I hope that you might try your hand at growing something this year, be it food, flowers or fellowship.



Citizens' Climate Lobby
Citizens' Climate Education



CCL CLIMATE CONFERENCE

Saturday Mar 29, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM
at UUCG

A full day of connection with CCL Climate Advocates from all over Georgia including keynote speaker Professor Marilyn Brown, Georgia Tech and Co-leader of Project Drawdown Georgia.

Conference Fee: \$35 [Students \$20]

For more information contact Terry
Welsher, 678 378-2748,
welshert@bellsouth.net

Ministry of Spiritual Growth

SOUUL Summit 2025

Lydia Patrick, Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth



You are invited to participate in this year's SOUUL Summit conference, hosted by UUCA - our sister congregation in Atlanta! Cost should not be a barrier to participation. If you want to attend, please reach out and [request financial aid to cover the registration fee, here.](#)



Full Conference (March 27-30): \$300
Friday only (Commuter rate): \$150
Saturday only (Commuter rate): \$150

[Register now](#)

Don't miss out! Here is what UUCG attendees from last year had to say about the Summit:

Invigorating. Ensuring we don't fall into complacency around the ways we've 'always done things'. Making connections and hearing stories from other congregations. ~ A.H.

As a new member of the congregation, the SOUUL Summit was a stimulating and informative introduction to the Unitarian Universalist Community. It reinforced my decision to be a member of this community. I met wonderful people from other congregations and attended a variety of educational workshops. I intend to attend again this year. ~ B.L.

What a great way to meet new UU friends and renew friendships with existing ones. The all in sessions were so dynamic and powerful and the small group sessions were intimate and gave me so much to take away and think about. We are good people and this is a great opportunity to mingle and refresh our faith! ~ L.P.

I attended the first SOUUL Summit last year at UUCA with others from UUCG. Walking into a gathering of "strangers" is always a little anxiety making for me, and this day was no different. That changed immediately. We were already placed into small groups for discussion before any large gatherings happened. Within that small group (5-6 people) we got to check in and know each other in some small but significant ways. We then pondered some questions for reflection together that pertained to the entire summit's theme. By the end of that small group session, I was at ease. I felt that I was with my larger UU community. I felt that I had heard others and that I had been heard. I knew some names and people that I didn't an hour before. The rest of the event was rich, engaging and inspiring. My work on the Worship Team was enriched because of the SOUUL Summit, and I heard from fellow members at UUCG that their work in various ministries of our community was as well. SOUUL Summit is a treasure for UU's in metro Atlanta and Southern region. ~ B.P.

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

Objects of Trust

a Soul Matters activity

Identifying where trust resides in our lives is most often a mental exercise of examining our thoughts and memories. But this route can end up masking how much trust is embodied in the physical objects surrounding us.

For instance, our favorite garden gloves represent our faith in the living processes of life, not to mention our trust that being close to the earth and burying our hands in the soil will bring us back to life too. That heirloom necklace we wear represents the trust our family members put in us to hand it - and family stories - down to future generations. Lotions, bath fragrances and silk sheets capture how much we trust our bodies to tell us what they need. For those horse riders among us, our bridles and saddles contain the story of how much we trust these magnificent creatures and how much they trust us. Our old typewriter or new keyboard represents how much we trust ourselves and the creative muses within to generate meaningful words.

So now let's turn to you? What objects sing your special relationship with trust? This month, honor them by going on a treasure hunt to find three objects that represent three important or under-recognized sources of trust for you.

Exploring Trust

Faith Development resources for exploring The Practice of Trust

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

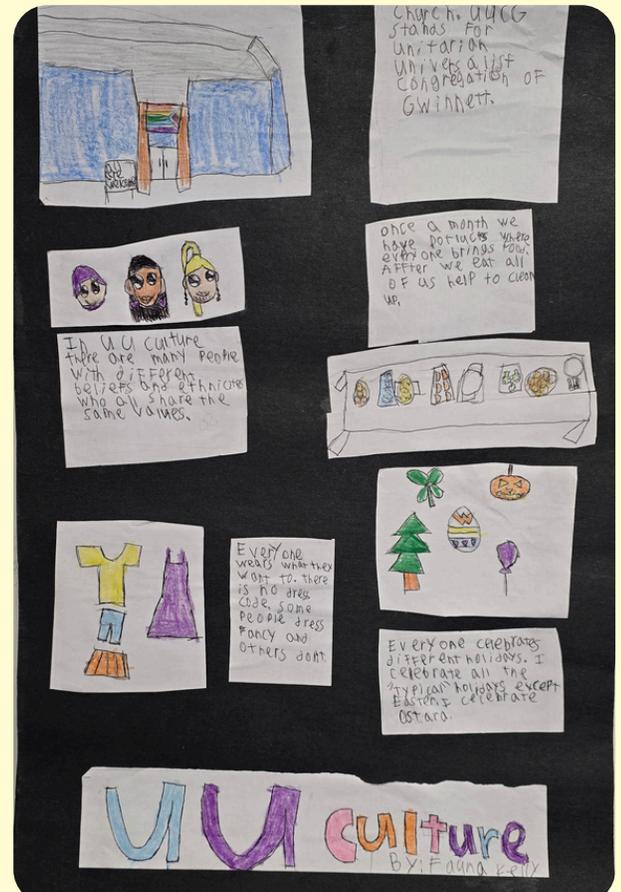


Youth Spotlight

To fulfill an assignment that asked students to create a presentation sharing information about their family's culture, Fauna Kelly created this display about Unitarian Universalism to share with her class.

Fauna says the other students were very interested in her presentation, asking questions that she was proud to answer; and the teacher did an internet search to learn more about our faith.

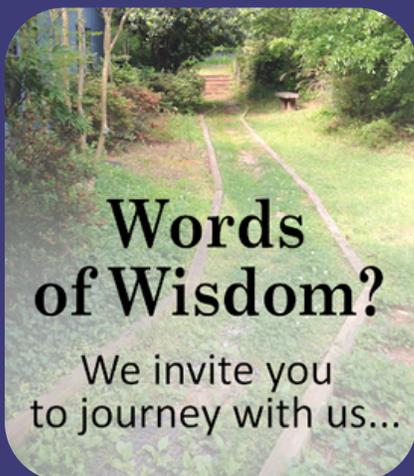
Great work, Fauna!



Project by Fauna Kelly, shared with permission

Words of Wisdom?

We invite you to journey with us...



Ministry of Spiritual Growth

Zöldágjárás a Hungarian Ritual

by Candice Carver



Zöldágjárás, or "Green Bough Walking," is a Hungarian folk tradition celebrating the renewal of spring, fertility, and the return of life to the land. Rooted in pre-Christian Magyar customs, it symbolizes rebirth and the connection between people and nature.

Traditionally, young people would gather freshly budding branches from trees like willow or birch, carrying them through the village while singing and blessing homes, fields, and animals. In some regions, two people would hold branches together to form an arch, allowing others to walk beneath it as a symbol of stepping into new life, protection, and good fortune. These rituals, often tied to courtship and agricultural blessings, echo ancient fertility rites honoring nature spirits and deities like Napisten, the Sun God, and Boldogasszony, the Mother Goddess.

Today, Zöldágjárás can be revived as a personal or communal celebration of spring's renewal. Walking through nature with fresh green branches, setting intentions for growth, and stepping through an arch of greenery can connect us to this ancient tradition. Placing a branch on an altar or by the doorway brings blessings, while singing, dancing, and making offerings of seeds or water honor the earth. Through these acts, the spirit of Zöldágjárás continues, weaving the old ways into modern practice.

Leprechauns

The Trickster Faeries of Irish Folklore

Leprechauns are mischievous faerie folk from Irish mythology, known for their craft in shoemaking and their hidden pots of gold. These solitary tricksters, often dressed in green, are said to grant wishes if caught—but be warned, they are clever and rarely outwitted! Rooted in the older traditions of the Aos Sí, leprechauns have evolved from their red-clad origins to become symbols of Irish luck and folklore. Whether seen as guardians of treasure or playful spirits, they remind us that wit and wisdom often trump greed.



Round Dance by Jozsef Ferenczy 1866-1925

Zöldágjárás is pronounced as "ZULD-ahg-yah-rahsh" in Hungarian.

Here's a breakdown:

- Zöld ("zuld") – The "ö" sounds like the eu in the French peur or the i in bird (in some accents).
- Ág ("ahg") – The "á" is a long "a" sound, like in father.
- Járás ("yah-rahsh") – The "j" is pronounced like an English "y," and the "s" at the end sounds like "sh."

So when said smoothly, it flows as "ZULD-ahg-yah-rahsh."



Building a Spiritual Practice

APRIL 5TH @ UUCG
4PM - 6PM



Ministry of Connecting Within



Building Trust

by Lisa Kiel, Lay Minister for Connecting Within

I have been privileged this year to help facilitate our in-person Covenant Group. This group includes both newcomers and oldcomers. Since September I have watched this group move step by step, month by month to deeper levels of trust. In our group we trust that our truths will be heard and our vulnerabilities will be safeguarded. We uphold our Covenant, and agree to its directions and protections. Over time, both our trust in the group and between one another has grown, and we are now more than group participants. We are a small community of seekers existing within the larger community of UUCG. We are individuals with unique stories to tell.

We all come to UUCG with past experiences that influence our ability to trust others or to trust a community or church. In the societal climate surrounding us, many folx come with present fears that impede trust, and yet, we are all here. Sometimes, trust is more easily nurtured in the small circles spinning within our UUCG universe.

“ It turns out that trust is in fact earned in the smallest of moments. It is earned not through heroic deeds, or even highly visible actions, but through paying attention, listening, and gestures of genuine care and connection.

— Brené Brown, *Dare to Lead* ”

This past year has seen an increase in groups that offer folx a place to build trust. There are groups that focus on topics and sharing. There are also groups that focus on shared interests and hobbies. Offering varied opportunities to meet each other outside of morning services strengthens our trust in one another. We learn to embrace our similarities and differences.

Right now, it is easy to be overwhelmed by the onslaught of media, uncertainty and fear. I invite you into the caring communities of UUCG where we hold fast to love, shared values and our growing trust in one another.

With joy,
Lisa



Book Group

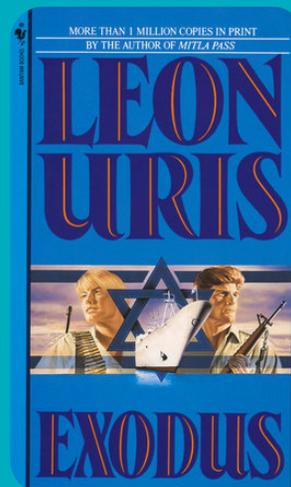
Wed. March 26 at 7:00pm

Online via Zoom

March selection: *Exodus*,
by Leon Uris

A historical novel that chronicles the birth of the modern state of Israel, following Jewish refugees and freedom fighters as they struggle for survival, identity, and homeland after the Holocaust. Blending fact with fiction, the story captures the resilience, sacrifice, and hope of a people reclaiming their destiny against immense odds.

[Learn more...](#)



Ministry of Connecting Within

Get Connected With Us

FOLLOW US

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FOLLOW US

[@uugwinnett](#)

Welcome people in

Tell your friends!

Share in a group!

Share to your page

Comment your thoughts

Respond to an event

Like a Post!



Friends, Family, Fun!

Friday, March 7th
at 6:30pm
in the Sanctuary
at UUCG



Tarot at UUCG

- First Sundays online at 5:00pm
- Second Saturdays in person at 9am
- Third Sundays in person at 12:30pm

All who are interested to learn are welcome, regardless of level of experience.

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES



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



Book Club - 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 Online: 3rd Friday at 7 pm

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



Women's Group- 4th Sundays at 12:30pm



Yarns from the Heart - Online 1st and 3rd Wednesday, for Zoom link: email 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 our UUCG campus, capture the moments that inspire you and share in the collective appreciation of this sacred space.

Ministry of Connecting Beyond



The Truth About Trust

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

Trust and truth are linked in my eyes, forming the foundation of our relationships and interactions with the world. To navigate life, we must place our trust in the information we receive about the world, while others must, in turn, decide whether to trust the truths we hold. It's a tongue twister.

Each of us have our own set of beliefs, shaped by a variety of experiences, those we've directly encountered and those that have influenced us from afar. My truth resides in the realm of visions, dreams, and the guiding whispers of my ancestors along with my experiences. These visions have guided my path, and thus, I place my trust in them. However, I don't expect everyone will readily trust my truth, particularly those who haven't walked in my shoes or shared my journey.

This leads me to a deeper question: How can we practice love through trust when our truths don't always align or resonate with one another? I came to this question because I thought this month's theme was living love through the practice of truth. This mistake made me realize that truth and trust are connected. Trusting myself is essential to believing in my experiences, in my truth. My beliefs are not set in stone, but instead, they are always evolving and being shaped by the world around me.

In the present moment, amidst a world inundated in fake news, we are called upon to trust our ability to discern truth from falsity. We must hold onto the conviction that the truth will be revealed and that our presence and voices in the community can bring clarity where there is confusion. Being authentic with ourselves beyond our personal realm; when we step outside the confines of our own views and share our truths, we extend an invitation of trust, just as we are challenged to trust them in return. In some ways I feel this trust is also a "don't think I'm crazy, but this is how I feel" type trust.

The path forward is lit by trust: trust in ourselves, trust in one another, and trust in the enduring power of truth to pierce through the darkness.

This journey of trust is not always smooth; it is bulging with challenges, hurdles and strife. Yet, even in the face of conflict, we must not allow our faith in trust to waver. For it is through trust that we forge genuine connections, build strong communities, and create a world where truth is cherished and upheld.



“

How can we practice love through trust when our truths don't always align or resonate with one another?

”

As we continue to explore the intricate dance between trust and truth, we come to appreciate the transformative power they hold. Trust enables us to embrace vulnerability, to open our hearts to the possibility of love and connection. Truth, in turn, provides the foundation upon which trust can flourish, allowing us to see one another with clarity and compassion. By living love through trust, we embark on a lifelong journey of self-discovery, connection, and growth. It is a journey that requires courage, resilience, and an unwavering belief in the inherent goodness of humanity. And as we navigate this path, we may find that the greatest truths are not those we hold individually, but those we discover together, through the shared experience of trust and love.

Ministry of Connecting Beyond

The UU Georgia Legislative Action Network (UUGALAN)

Shaping The Future Is Not a Possibility, It's a Responsibility

By Barbara Stahnke

This year's Georgia Legislative Session is matching the activity of last year. With the massive information overload, we all need to prioritize our actions. Please consider contacting your State Senator and Representative at least one time per week in opposition or support based on the information from the UUGALAN.

The UUGALAN is made up of UUs from across Georgia who are monitoring our State Legislature to prioritize actions where our action may impact legislation.

Go to <https://tinyurl.com/UUGALAN>

You can make a difference right here in Georgia.

Please contact Barbara Stahnke if you need help with an ask or have questions. bstahnke@comcast.net.

February 28th - Total Economic Blackout

March 7 - 14 Amazon Boycott

March 21 - 28 Nestlé Boycott

April 7 - 14 Walmart Boycott

April 18th - Economic Blackout #2

April 21 - 28 General Mills Boycott

Food Distribution



Gwinnett

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

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

March 11th

ROCK SPRINGS PARK
550 Rock Springs Road, Lawrenceville

March 25th

SHORTY HOWELL PARK
2750 Pleasant Hill Road, Duluth

April 8th

RHODES JORDAN PARK
100 E Crogan St., Lawrenceville

April 22nd

BEST FRIEND PARK
6224 Jimmy Cartger Blvd., Norcross

For more information, visit
GwinnettCounty.com/FoodResources



Ministry of Connecting Beyond

Opportunities to Connect in Our Community

SOUUL SUMMIT 2025

FEED YOUR SOUUL

Thursday, March 27 to Sunday, March 30
at UUCA in Atlanta, GA

SOUUL Summit is a Unitarian Universalist Conference designed to empower and inspire congregational lay leadership.



ADOPT-A-STREAM

Chemical Workshop
Tuesday, March 11th 3:00PM-6:00PM
at Tribble Mill Park - Holly Pavilion
2125 Tribble Mill Parkway, SE

Join Georgia Adopt-a-Stream to help monitor local water quality and protect Gwinnett's streams! This free workshop provides training, supplies, and certification in chemical testing, empowering you to become a steward of our waterways—register today at gwinnettcba.org/adopt-a-stream!

COLLECTING ON MARCH 2ND

Most Needed Food Items

- Applesauce
- Instant potatoes
- Canned tuna and chicken
- Canned fruit
- Canned soup/stew
- Cereal
- *Village of Hope needs mac and cheese cups, ramen cups, boxed milk, and rice cups

Most Needed Non-Food Items

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



Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, March 4th

Location: Community of Grace
12 Athens Highway, Grayson

Meeting 7:30PM-8:00PM

Presentation 8:00PM-9:00PM

Speaker: Rabbi Zev-Hayyim Feyer
Topic: "Judaism Today: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist, Renewal"

gwinnettinterfaithalliance@gmail.com

Save the Date

*Earth Day
Flower Ceremony
Easter*

Sunday, April 20

Sylvan Sanctuary
Befane

Ritual
Saturday, May 3rd
Gathering at 5:45PM
Ritual starts at 6:00PM

Founders' Day
a celebration of UUCG
Sunday, May 4th



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

March 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 	3 	4 	5 	6 	7 	8
9 	10 	11 	12 	13 	14 	15
16 	17	18 	19 	20 	21 	22
23 	24	25 	26 	27 	28 	29
30	31					

	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	In-Person
	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		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 and Third Saturdays: 10:00 am - 2:00 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

Becca Parker
Choir Director

choirdirector@uucg.org

Sunday mornings (On-site), 9:00 am-12:00 pm

LaTreisha McKay
Bookkeeper

lmckay@uucg.org

Monday (remote), 5:00 pm-8:00 pm