



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett  
12 Bethesda Church Road  
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30044  
www.uucg.org 770-717-7913

Gwinnett News for Unitarian Universalists



September 2017



## Gadding About

I expect you've heard the phrase "beauty is only skin deep." I wholeheartedly reject this phrase! I understand the implication is that what is inside a person is much more important than how they look on the exterior. However, our culture has established standards of beauty that are Euro-centric, White-centric, and profoundly damaging to the internal sense of self for people of all races, ethnicities, and genders.

Many years ago, I created and facilitated a workshop called "Sex Sells" for a sexuality education-focused youth conference. As part of this workshop, participants created collages that explored the ways magazines use images of people who appear to offer a standard for "perfect" beauty in their articles and advertising. They do this primarily to sell their magazines and the products of their advertisers.

We had a very deep conversation about how these images affect our own self-images and our ability to love and appreciate ourselves, as well as how people have been bullied because they don't fit the "norms" for beauty. We talked about how this also separates us from one another when we judge or avoid some people because of their external appearance. There were many tears, some laughter, and, above all, profound insights about how we either resist or succumb to these influences. Together, we came to realize that true beauty is not on the surface, but rather what is in the heart and soul of a person.

What makes a person beautiful inside? I can think of many qualities ... kindness, compassion, tenderness, curiosity, and joy come to mind right away. What else makes someone a beautiful person?

As we engage in conversations about Beauty this month during our 10:00 faith development programs for teens and adults, the covenant groups, in our worship services, and in other gatherings, I invite you to look at what is beautiful inside you, and what is beautiful inside those around you among family, friends, co-workers, and co-students. Perhaps if we all look more deeply for the beauty in ourselves and in those around us, and cultivate that beauty, the world will become a more beautiful place for all beings.

With a grateful heart...

*Reverend Jan*

### Sundays at UUCG

10:00 am Faith Development

11:00 am Worship Service

### September Theme: Beauty

#### September 3

##### **Defining Beauty**

Miriam Patrick, Service Leader  
Sherree Bailey, Worship Associate  
Sherree Bailey, Pianist  
*Choir Practice before service*

#### September 10

##### **Searching for Beauty**

Rev. Jan Taddeo, Service Leader  
Evan Varner, Worship Associate  
Bryan Bishop, Pianist  
*Choir Practice before service*

#### September 17

##### **Opening to Beauty**

Rev. Jan Taddeo, Service Leader  
Paige Varner, Worship Associate  
Bryan Bishop, Pianist  
*Potluck Lunch*  
*Town Hall Meeting*  
*Michael off. No choir practice.*

#### September 25

##### **Creating Beauty**

Rev. Jan Taddeo, Service Leader  
Sherree Bailey, Worship Associate  
Bryan Bishop, Pianist  
*Choir Practice before service*

*September plate contributions are  
shared equally with  
Lost-n-Found Youth  
www.lnfy.org*



Announcements for the October newsletter are due by September 25. Announcements for the weekly e-newsletter and Order of Service are due on Tuesdays at noon. Send announcements to "announcements@uucg.org". Contact Ldecastro@uucg.org to subscribe to newsletters.

# Faith Development

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## Faith Development Programs on Sunday Mornings at 10:00am

Theme: Beauty

Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person

- **September 3: Faith Development Forum. Beauty** - Ancient philosophers thought of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty as three properties of being. A more modern interpretation is that they help us cope with death and suffering by giving us hope. How does Beauty impact the lives of Unitarian Universalists in this century? If we take care of Truth and goodness, do we think that Beauty will take care of itself?
- **September 10 - Spiritual Practices. Metta** - Metta is a Pali word often translated as “loving-kindness”. Metta meditation is a Buddhist practice of extending feelings of loving-kindness to others and ourselves. (It is the basis of the lyrics of the hymn “Filled with Loving Kindness” in the teal hymnal.) This practice can increase our capacity for compassion, love, and joy - for others and for ourselves. We will spend a little time talking about the concept, but for most of the session we will actually be practicing guided metta meditation.
- **September 17 - Faith in Action.** *“The ability to see beauty is the beginning of our moral sensibility. What we believe is beautiful we will not wantonly destroy.”* ~ John Constable
- **September 25 - Earth-centered practices. The Ogham** - The Irish tradition of Druid spiritual practices includes working with an ancient symbol system known as the Ogham (Oh-ahm). The Ogham can be used for writing tributes and messages on shrines. They can also be used for divination for those seeking wisdom, healing, and magical workings. This first of five sessions introduces the Ogham, how they are organized, and some practical and mystical ways to begin working with them. In subsequent sessions, we will explore each of the 4 groups of 5 symbols and how to work with them.

Every Sunday, Early Elementary aged children are welcome to their program, which begins with Worship service and then explores the theme further in a story-based, age-appropriate program. Children will begin in the Worship Service with their family, and be escorted out to the Studio by their leaders after about 15 – 20 minutes. Their workshops end when the Service is over.

Looking Ahead, our October 22 Book Discussion will be on *The Death of Josseline: Immigration Stories from the Arizona Borderlands* by Margaret Regan. Undocumented migrants cross into Arizona in overwhelming numbers. And Arizona has the highest number of migrant deaths. Fourteen-year-old Josseline, a young girl from El Salvador who was left to die alone on the migrant trail, was just one of thousands to perish in its deserts and mountains.

## UUCG Book Club



**Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Library**

*The Dinner: A Novel* by Herman Koch

Synopsis: A darkly suspenseful, highly controversial tale of two families struggling to make the hardest decision of their lives -- all over the course of one meal. It's a summer's evening in Amsterdam, and two couples meet at a fashionable restaurant for dinner. Between mouthfuls of food and over the polite scrapings of cutlery, the conversation remains a gentle hum of polite discourse -- the banality of work, the triviality of the holidays. But behind the empty words, terrible things need to be said, and with every forced smile and every new course, the knives are being sharpened. Each couple has a fifteen-year-old son. The two boys are united by their accountability for a single horrific act; an act that has triggered a police investigation and shattered the comfortable, insulated worlds of their families. As the dinner reaches its culinary climax, the conversation finally touches on their children. As civility and friendship disintegrate, each couple shows

## CUUPS Gathering



**September 9 with Potluck at 5:00 pm; Program at 7:00 pm**

Come with us on a shamanic journey, led by Daniel Bailey. Please bring a potluck snack and do your best to be on time so the journey isn't disrupted. Fellowship and potluck at 5:00 pm followed by program at 7:00pm.

## Fall Equinox: Finding Balance Again



**Saturday, September 23 with Ritual at 6:00pm and Magical Arts at 3:30pm**

Sylvan Sanctuary members gather to celebrate this second time in the year that we seek balance for our lives as we move more deeply into the dark half of the year and begin to feel the shift of the Earth away from the Sun. Ritual begins at 6:00 with shared snacks and fellowship afterwards. Ritual attire is welcome but not required. All ages also welcome to the Magical Arts of the Crafty Pagan that begins at 3:30 pm.

## UU 103: Where Have We Been?



**October 1 after service**

UU 103: "Where Have We Been?", a class on Unitarian Universalist history topics, will begin October 1 and then continue on every other month on the third Sunday following the service. These classes will continue throughout the 2017-2018 program year, with different topics discussed during each session. While the class is part of our developing UU New Member education series, everyone is invited! The topic on Oct 1 will be early to mid-20th century Unitarian and Universalist church history in Atlanta. Please see Denise Benshoof for details.

## Relationship, Commitment, & Stone Soup: Rockin' a Movement Together UU Allies for Racial Equity Conference

**October 20-22, UU Congregation of Atlanta**

This fall Allies for Racial Equity moves into new ways of being in relationship together: among our members, with our accountability partners, and at our annual conference! Together with our conference hosts at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, we invite you to join us in building new relationships, deepening our commitment to the work, and having faith that what we collectively bring to the table crafts the "stone soup" to nurture and sustain the growing movement for racial justice in Unitarian Universalism. UU ARE was our Give Away the Plate recipient for the 1st quarter of 2017. Learn more about the exciting programs included in this year's conference at [www.uuare.org](http://www.uuare.org) and click on the conference link. If you can help with home hospitality that weekend, Please feel free to contact me, Carolina Krawarik-Graham directly at 480-370-4526 or at [theTeam@uuare.org](mailto:theTeam@uuare.org) with any concerns, suggestions, or questions about hospitality, and the conference in general.

## Me2/Orchestra Atlanta Affiliate Planning Meeting on Thursday, Sept 21



Me2/Orchestra is the world's only non-profit orchestra that provides a supportive space for musicians who have mental health challenges and their allies (friends, family, doctors, therapists, etc.). It was started by Ronald Braunstein and Caroline Whiddon, with two orchestras currently located in Boston, MA and Burlington, VT. Jen Garrison is the facilitator for the Me2/Orchestra Atlanta Affiliate currently with piano and violin members. If you are interested, or know someone who would be, please contact Jen at [1blonde.violin@gmail.com](mailto:1blonde.violin@gmail.com) or call (678) 395-6374 or [www.me2orchestra.org](http://www.me2orchestra.org).



# Sabbatical Stars

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For well over a year, a passionately committed team has worked to make sure the Congregation and Minister had the best possible experience. They produced professional-quality, well-written, expertly rendered, and very thorough plans for the entire time, in three flavors- long, short, and brief. They adjusted their work hours and rearranged their personal schedules. When needed, they put their personal lives “on hold.” And, although their light had always shined brightly in our Beloved Community, during Sabbatical, we saw that light with greater clarity. They are Stars!

Over a short, intense period, they provided for the needs of five Ministers- one to introduce Sabbatical, one to handle pulpit and Pastoral Care services, one to share the pulpit duties, one to assist with the Reboot, and our own Reverend Jan. They established and maintained working relationships in a time-sensitive environment. They navigated unforeseen difficulties. They assured that all five ministers had everything they needed.

The services, events, & tasks that Rev. Jan normally handled were enumerated and reassigned. Several aspects of Sabbatical were even rehearsed and role-played beforehand. Life, however, was disrespectful of their impeccable planning, there were weekly- and sometimes daily or hourly- “holes” that needed filling. Almost all of these holes were filled without anyone besides the team being aware of them.

Faith Development- a significant part of Reverend Jan’s job- was also managed through rearranging staff schedules and hours and recruiting additional volunteers.

The Minister’s many tasks include Pastoral Care. The transition and continuous “24/7” on-call work, previously performed solely by Reverend Jan, required a team of six. This was partial coverage, however. It was supplemented with continuous help from the team.

The return from Sabbatical was another marvelous organizational feat. Meetings with leaders in the Congregation were needed, and the task of coordinating them took quite a bit of scheduling, rescheduling, and reminding. The transition to a new Board of Trustees was managed by including the new President. A meeting with Reverend Jan to share the team’s experience with Sabbatical was also required. To round out the experience for everyone, the final arrangements were for a three-day extravaganza, including a Congregational Seminar, a Leadership Conference, and a Reboot Service.

The Congregation and Minister were able to get the most possible benefit from Sabbatical due to the efforts of our “Sabbatical Stars:”

## Sabbatical Committee

Paige Varner- Chair and Worship Committee Liason

Wally Watson- Pastoral Care Team Liason

Karen Smith – Faith Development Liason

Barbara Stahnke- Board President (ex-officio)

Laura de Castro- Congregational Administrator (ex-officio)

## Staff:

Christiana McQuain- Program Assistant

Laura de Castro- Congregational Administrator

Michael Parker- Choir Director



*From left to right, Steven and Karen Smith with sister Norma and husband Rev Dale Sessions.*



## Serving With Grace

### A Message from Theresa Waldrop, President of UUCG

For several years, a convocation for presidents of UU congregation boards was held in Birmingham, but not this summer. Instead, I'll be taking part in monthly webinars with others from around our region, starting in September.

In the meantime, the new board here at UUCG met in July for what we called a "mini convocation," where our conversation was structured, in part, around the question of how we can engage, empower, encourage and celebrate those who walk through our doors at UUCG. At our most recent meeting, we decided that in our roles as board members, a good start would be to read through our bylaws - a little bit each month - to see what needs updating or changing and to fix inconsistencies.

That may sound strange at first – how can our bylaws help the board engage, empower, encourage and celebrate? But if you think about it, the bylaws can offer a good, solid foundation and conduit to all of that and more. We need to ensure they still fit with our mission and vision.

Speaking of governance: We have a town hall this month, on September 17, after the service. Please join us. We'll be talking about proxy voting, an exciting new program that the endowment fund will be launching, and a number of other important issues. Please mark your calendars now for that!

Last year, as you know from reading Barbara's monthly messages, the Board of Trustees read the book *Growing a Beloved Community*, one chapter every month for the program year, and had a brief discussion focused on a question inspired by that chapter. We felt we had gained a good deal of insight from the conversations we had, and this year's board of trustees is considering ways to continue and follow through on that, for example by going over the results of the conversations during a board retreat.

So, your trustees are off to a good start, but we're not yet firing on all pistons, because we are missing one member at large and a youth member. If you think you might be interested in serving with us, please see me or anyone on the leadership development committee or board.

The board meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. this program year. Our meetings are open to all.

Dear UUCGers

Thank You for being my congregation.  
I am so grateful for the ongoing growth opportunities. I am always encouraged when I attend to keep faith with humanity. when I am away, I am reminded to keep faith with humanity and each of you through the words of our Mission

Courage Curiosity Compassion  
I work with the skills of Trust Compassion and Inquiry  
In all my spiritual endeavors knowing that each of you are on this path too  
And though I write the words "All" and "Always" which are a vow - you know and I know I break those vows - and I know you forgive and continue to love me  
Love from Sue Barbara S.

A Thank You Message from Barbara Stahnke  
2017 Southern UU Leadership Experience (SUULE)



## Congrats to our “Best of Sweets” cook-off winners



Best cake - Meilina Runzi with her mother's recipe for “Death by Chocolate” cake.

Best pie - Dave Averyt with his mother's recipe for “Icebox Lime Pie”

Best cookie - Karen Smith for her “Lemon Biscotti”

Best fruit dessert - Paige Varner for her “Easy Peach Cobbler”

Many thanks to all who entered our first UUCG Cook-Off contest! All entries were delicious, got taste-test approval by many. The taste-testers donated \$177 for our 2017 UUCG budget.

The Resource Development Committee has plans to hold a cook-off contest at most of the 3rd Sunday Potlucks for the remainder of the church year. The cuisine featured for each month will be:

September - Best of Salads

October - Best of Breads

November - Best of Soups

January - Best of Appetizers

February - Chili Cook-Off

March - Best of Vegan Dishes

April - Best of Gluten-Free Dishes

May - Best of Multi-Cultural Cuisine

Recipes for all the dishes that are entered will be collected into a UUCG Cookbook that will be sold as another fund-raiser. If there are stories that go along with your recipe, we want to collect those to go into the cookbook as well. Visit [www.uucg.org](http://www.uucg.org) and select “Register for Events” to send in your recipes and stories!



## The Corley Elementary School Backpack Drive has ended!

Thank you for making this year's backpack drive a success. UUCG collected 67 backpacks! They were delivered to the school on August 2. This year's collection surpassed last year's contribution thanks to the generosity of the community. Woo-who! A representative from Corley wrote, “We look forward to working with you and UUCG again this year!” Reminds me of UU principle 2 or 6 (or 2 and 6). UUCG in action. Blessed be.

## Call for Artisans

Share your creations at the  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett's

## Holiday Artisan Fair

We're looking for woodworkers, stitchers,  
jewelry makers, soap makers, specialty  
cooks, painters, and creatives of all kinds.

Saturday, November 11, from 10am-3pm. 12 Bethesda  
Church Road, Lawrenceville, 30044. Tables rent for \$25. To  
reserve a space online, go to [www.uucg.org](http://www.uucg.org) and click on  
“register for events.”

## Top 10 reasons to buy popcorn from a Boy Scout

10. It tastes good. There are so many awesome flavors!
9. You're encouraging Scouts to practice communication skills.
8. You're helping a Scout earn funds to pay expenses related to his camping, caving, swimming, orienteering, fishing and other exciting monthly activities.
7. You're helping a Scout pay for an awesome week at summer camp.
6. Tins of popcorn make great gifts to college students, grandchildren, grandparents, and every other relative or friend.
5. Tins and boxes of popcorn are great to have around the house for holidays and family gatherings.
4. You don't eat popcorn? No problem. You can support our military. Donate funds that will ship popcorn to military bases and VA hospitals.
3. The new flavor this year, Salted Caramel Corn, is awesome.
2. How can you turn down chocolatey caramel crunch, or white chocolatey pretzels, or white cheddar popcorn?

And the top reason to buy popcorn is...

1. You're not really buying popcorn so much as SUPPORTING SCOUTING!

***Bring your checkbook or cash on September 24. Sorry, credit/debit cards not yet accepted.***



***UUCG hosts Troop 99 on Monday nights in the Playhouse classroom. Look for Scouts on Sunday, September 24 selling popcorn after service.***



# UUCG

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## Building Open

Sunday: 9:30am-12:30pm  
Tuesday: 10:00am-3:30pm  
Friday: 10:00am-2:00pm  
By Appointment: 770-717-7913

## Staff

### Rev. Jan Taddeo, Parish Minister

RevTaddeo@uucg.org  
Office: 770-717-7913  
Cell: 678-558-4834  
Hours: Mon-Wed. 11am-9pm  
Appointments scheduled at:  
<https://revtaddeo.acuityscheduling.com/>

### Laura de Castro, Administrator

Ldecastro@uucg.org  
Office: 770-717-7913  
Hours: Tues & Fri 9:30-3:30; 3rd Sundays  
Appointments suggested as hours vary.

### Christiana McQuain, Program Assistant

cmcquain@uucg.org

### Michael Parker, Choir Director

choir@uucg.org

## Board of Trustees

### Theresa Waldrop, President

president@uucg.org

### Bill Benshoof, Vice President

vp@uucg.org

### Barbara Stahnke, Treasurer

treasurer@uucg.org

### Steve Smith, Secretary

secretary@uucg.org

### Board Members at Large

Nathalie Bigord  
Ally Perras  
Evan Varner  
Vacant  
Youth Vacant



## Yard Sale

The annual UUCG yard sale fun and frolic returns this September 29 and 30, from 9:00am-2:00pm. Clean and gently used items can be dropped off on the week prior to the sale, starting after service on Sunday, September 24.

Volunteers are needed to sort and price items as they arrive at the building, as well as Friday and Saturday during the hours of the sale. And as always, we can't do it without YOU! See Karen Smith for more info.



During the week, the building will be open for drop-off, sorting, and pricing:

9/25 Monday:	10-4
9/26 Tuesday:	10-8
9/27 Wednesday:	10-4
9/28 Thursday:	10-4



Curiosity. Courage. Compassion.

*We are a radically welcoming sanctuary in a green space.  
We foster spiritual growth as we joyfully nurture connections  
and community within our walls and beyond.*