




GNUUs


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Embracing Possibility

What could we do if we look at everything around us through a lens of possibility and potential? If we assume abundance – that we have all we need to achieve our loftiest goals and vision – we step into a space where we are capable of so much more than we would otherwise be. Even as we allow space for the reality that trusting possibility isn't so easy for many of us,

when we understand that embracing possibility is an act of courage... whose faith can you lean on when yours grows dim? We are present for each other in those moments and circumstances, and it is that deep love that sees us through when the path gets rough.

Instead of asking why, we can ask, "why not?" The creation of a thousand forests exists in a single acorn. Big things grow from the tiniest of seeds. What are you planting right now?



Events This Month

Sept 1...Yarns From the Heart+
Sept 2...Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance+
Sept 5.....Canned Food Drive*
Sept 10..Women's Spirituality+
Sept 12.....Spiral Scouts+
Sept 12.....Belief Exploration+
Sept 18....Magical Arts and Crafts+
Sept 18.....Fall Equinox+
Sept 20.....Full Moon Magick+
Sept 22.....Book Group+
Sept 25.....CUUPs+
Sept 29.....Vision Journal+
Tuesdays.....Covenant Choir+
Sundays.....Tarot Sunday+
*onsite

+online (This month, all UUCG events will take place online unless otherwise noted)

For details visit uucg.org

Did you Gnow?

- The wildebeest's feeding apparatus—a wide muzzle, a broad row of incisors, and flexible lips—is well adapted for taking big bites of short grass.





Worship in September

Theme: Embracing Possibility

September 5: On Zoom

Embracing Possibilities through Forgiveness

What is available to us when we let go of the hurts of the past and explore new possibilities for ourselves and our lives? The Jewish tradition offers insights into how we can practice forgiveness.

Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader

September 12: On Zoom

Possibility and Probability

People are heard to say, "Anything is possible if we set our mind to it." Is that really enough? How can our possibilities become probabilities?

Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader

September 19: On Zoom

Enrolling in Possibility

Hobbit Day is on 9/22. Using this, and the Equinox, as our lenses, we'll explore the art of enrollment to bring people into our grand adventures or to bring balance into our lives.

Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader

September 26: On Zoom

Embracing Possibility: Where the Sidewalk Ends

That place we find after one thing ends and before another thing begins - where life is not yet the next reality but where we pause and consider what is yet to be...possible.

Lydia Patrick (she/her), Service Leader

Looking Ahead:

October: Cultivating Relationships

October 3: On Zoom

Moving at the Speed of Trust

Cultivating connections, friendships, and relationships is an art form that requires many skills, including patience and deep listening.

Rev. Jan Taddeo (she/her), Service Leader

Sabbatical Update

In the April GNUUS, I shared that I'm preparing to take a four month sabbatical. Sabbatical is a time for a minister to renew their spirit, deepen their practices, and engage in activities that increase a minister's capacities. I will be away from congregational life from November 1 through February 28, returning to my office on March 1st and leading worship on March 13th.

Our Sabbatical Committee is responsible for managing the ministry of the congregation in my absence. We have put together a stellar team!

Lorena Griffin (she/her):

Sabbatical Committee Convener, Minister's Discretionary Fund, Personnel

Bob Patrick (he/him):

Lay Minister for Spiritual Growth, representing the Worship Team

Mandy Miller (she/her):

Pastoral Care Associate, representing the Pastoral Care Team

Peggy Averyt (she/her):

Lay Minister for Connecting Beyond, representing the Shared Ministry Council

Christiana McQuain (she/her):

Coordinator of Family Ministries, Staff Liaison

David Morgen (he/him):

Ministerial Intern

In my absence, David Morgen, our new Ministerial Intern, will lead two worship services each month with the support of our Worship Team. The Reverend Jonathan Rogers (he/him) will serve as his Internship Supervisor in my absence. The Reverend Joan Armstrong-Davis (she/her) will provide on-call Pastoral Support through our Pastoral Care Team. Mandy Miller will contact Joan for consultations as needed, and call on her if there is a pastoral emergency.

I am confident the congregation will be in very good hands while I am away. I will miss you all terribly, and I am very grateful that this congregation understands the importance of supporting my spiritual growth and development.

—Rev. Jan



Gadding About *by Reverend Jan Taddeo*



Our theme for September is Exploring Possibility. At this year's annual leadership retreat, our Board of Trustees, Shared Ministry Council, and Sabbatical Committee gathered for two days at The Mountain UU

Retreat and Learning Center to do just that. It was a time of delicious connection and bonding, as well as exciting conversations about the year ahead and our continued journey towards our vision.

In our current governance model, the Shared Ministry Council "owns" the Annual Vision of Ministry, while the Board "owns" several Open Questions to engage with the congregation about our future. This is the pattern going forward every year ... the input from the Open Questions this year will inform our Vision of Ministry for the following year, and so on. The Annual Vision of Ministry informs our budgeting and programs for the year.

Our Annual Vision of Ministry for 2021-2022 developed out of the questions we explored last year. Knowing that we didn't have the opportunity to explore those questions as broadly and thoroughly as we hoped, we extrapolated from the conversations and engagement with members and friends to develop these goals for this program year:

2021-2022 Annual Vision of Ministry

All that we do from budgeting to implementation is mission and vision focused.

Increase engagement, connection and inclusivity in congregational life.

- Offer more options for program scheduling to stagger core curricula throughout the year (Covenant Groups, Transgender Inclusion, Working on Whiteness, Our Place in the Web of Life, Starting Point)
- Offer options for in-person, on-line, and dual-platform programs
- Develop greater awareness and understanding for inclusivity across diverse platforms
- Focused efforts to continue and increase engagement with children and families

- Increase congregational awareness of opportunities to engage and connect

Develop a mindset of abundance, gratitude and active hope.

- Increased recognition and affirmation of volunteers
- Explore ways to increase the message of gratitude for people's financial gifts
- Research possible workshops and programs to increase comfort with conversations about money and congregational life
- Increase offerings, leadership, and engagement with the Green Sanctuary program
- Share the many ways in which we have the resources we need, and that we are living into our ideals

Tap into the passion of the people in the congregation to anchor our ministry and presence in the community.

- Conduct a Spiritual Gifts Inventory in order to gain insights about the strengths within the congregation and how these strengths might be employed to meet needs in the wider community
- Increase awareness of Ministry Teams and ways for people to participate in church work (internal) and the work of the church (outreach)
- Have conversations with neighbors about their challenges, concerns, and issues in our community
- Install bilingual Little Free Library featuring multicultural selections
- Sponsor the Human Library at Five Forks Library
- Explore starting a tutoring and/or mentoring program with students and/or families at Corley Elementary
- Build relationships in the community to increase our outreach ministry, to engage with people in the community in addition to the work we do for people in the community (creating accountable partnerships in the community even as we continue to contribute resources for the community)

In our shared faith...

Reverend Jan

New COVID Guidelines

The Unitarian Universalist Association came out with new Covid safety guidelines on August 20th. Following these guidelines would require UUCG to discontinue in-person meetings, including worship, as Gwinnett County currently has a transmission rating of "Very High," according to [covidact-now.org](https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/guidance-delta-variant). Your Board of Trustees met the morning of August 21st to discuss whether or not the congregation should cease to meet in person. While we are not required to follow recommendations of the UUA, the Board decided that this was in the best interest of congregational safety. As of August 21, there will be no in-person worship or small group gatherings until further notice from the Board. If you would like to read the guidelines for yourself, you can find them here: <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/guidance-delta-variant>

Thank you for your understanding as we strive to live out our values of inclusion and collective care.

We hope you will continue to join us online via Zoom.

----Lorena Griffin (she/her),
for the UUCG Board of Trustees

Three Open Questions

Last month, your Board of Trustees joined with the Shared Ministry Council for a Leadership Retreat at the Mountain, the UU retreat and learning center in Highlands, NC. As part of this retreat the board developed three "open questions" for discussion with the congregation. These questions will guide the Vision of Ministry for 2022-23 (this year's Vision of Ministry is outlined in the current "Gadding About" column by Rev. Jan Taddeo).

So, here's what that means. We've been working toward a model of "Policy-based Governance" for the past few years. We're not quite there, but we're getting closer. In that model, members and friends discuss the strengths and needs of the congregation in a variety of formats throughout the year. The following year, results of those discussions provide guidance for the emphasis of that year's ministry. The questions are "open," so that they encourage exploration and a diversity of answers.

In the coming months, you will be asked to contribute your thoughts concerning these questions. We will discuss them in a Town Hall Meeting format; we will have round-table discussions, led by board members; we will have on-line options; we may even have some focus groups (such as young families or

LGBTQ members). The Board's three members-at-large (Katrina Yurko (she/her), Erika Shell Castro (she/her), and Lydia Patrick (she/her)) will organize these. In addition, feel free to weigh in with the Board at any time on your own.

The three open questions for 2021-22 are:

- What are the unique gifts that UUCG has to offer the broader community and how do we build bridges between our church and the community that model our shared values?
- What personal and organizational needs must be addressed to move fully into our vision and what resources do we have to help us meet them?
- In what ways does UUCG meet your spiritual needs and how can we support each other in our spiritual journey?

Please think about these in the context of setting goals for the following year.

Thanks, as always.

Lorena Griffin (she/her), for the
UUCG Board of Trustees

GNUUS Deadlines

If you would like an article or event featured in the GNUUS, please send it to admin@uucg.org before the 20th of the month before the one you'd like it published in (e.g. if you'd like something published in September, send it before August 20th). If it is not sent by the 20th, it will not be in the upcoming GNUUS. Thank you.

Please also send photos of events that happen to admin@uucg.org. Just be sure to get the permission of the photographer and the subjects if there are any people in them. We'd love to use them in the GNUUS and other media going forward.

Starting Point

Starting Point is a 4 part program which helps participants find their spiritual path through community. The program is designed as an inquiry into each person's past, present and future, and how they can integrate with our UU community to serve the bigger picture. UU members collaborate through actions that bring our values and principles to the forefront of our lives. Please join us for this enriching experience! [Sign up here](#)

Facilitators Needed

The facilitator is trained to follow a program guide which offers a variety of ways to build on one's past by asking questions about purpose. There are many excerpts from YouTube, UUA, poems and stories from people who have had spiritual awakenings. As a facilitator, you will be a deep listener, yet help people explore the questions that have formed their life's purpose. The process helps bring each individual into focus as well as clarifying a path forward into a community that cares.

The facilitator needs to be comfortable with communication, be responsive to peoples' personal stories and ask questions that will help clarify future direction. It is a rewarding experience that will build relationships, community and serve the bigger picture of humanity.

A team leader is needed for membership. They will be trained and given ample direction in how to fulfill the role.

[Contact Katrina Yurko](#)

Minister for Green Space

The work on our church property has continued through the hot summer. Harry Falise has been organizing work weekends for the last several months. This has included projects led by Don Graff such as building a retaining wall for the garden island (see photo) and removing the old, cracked sidewalk and pouring a new one. There has also been extensive trimming, weeding, planting, and cleaning gutters. The parking lot has been restriped. This work has been done by a small (about 6), consistent group of volunteers. Going forward, among other things, we need contributions (fall/winter vegetables) for the Keyhole Garden and the Labyrinth needs some attention.

The Green Team is exploring a new program from the UUA called Green Sanctuary 2030 as a guide to our Green Space program going forward. "2030" represents the target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 to avoid catastrophic warming during this century. If you would like to know more, send email to greenteam@uucg.org or post questions and ideas at the UUCG Green Sanctuary Facebook Group. More information on Green Space plans will be posted there. Also please let us know if you would like to get more involved in the Green Space Ministry.

-Terry Welsher

Lay Ministry: Green Space

Living Our Values

We are pleased to announce that we will be buying our disposable paper products from a company that doesn't use any plastic in the packaging, uses recycled paper, and offsets the carbon from shipping. They also donate 50% of their profits to build toilets in communities where they don't yet have access to clean water and sanitation.



Lay Ministry: Green Space

Lay Ministry: Connecting Beyond



Save the Date - Sept. 18th!

UUCG is working on permission to do a Cleanup Event in Bethesda Park on Sept. 18th as part of a World Cleanup Day. We hope you will participate from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. More details coming on this incredible opportunity to Connect with the Community Beyond our Walls and UUCG's Green Team work.

What's Your Preferred Means of Communication?

There is a widening gap between different groups of people and their preferred methods of communication. While phone calls have been the gold standard since the mid 1800s, a few things have changed since then.

Some people find phone calls to be intrusive and anxiety provoking and some people find texting to be rude and impersonal. We are increasing our inclusivity by adding people's preferred method of communication to our records. Please email admin@uucg.org to let Aline know what your preferred method of communication is.

Suggested methods include phone calls, texts, emails, Facebook messenger and snail mail. Please include another option if it is your preference. (You are welcome to rank methods also.)

It would also be helpful to include your pronouns as we are compiling that list as well.

Thank you for helping us all communicate more effectively and be more welcoming to one another.



Yoga

Due to the current COVID numbers in the county, all in-person events at UUCG are suspended. While many events are again being offered online via Zoom, unfortunately **Yoga has been suspended until further notice.**

Consider exploring YouTube for an at home yoga option. Some recommendations:

[Yoga with Adriene](#)

[Dianne Bondy \(Yoga for Everyone\)](#)

Faith Development

Exciting things are upcoming in Faith Development this fall! In the interest of offering a program that is flexible enough to pivot easily when circumstances will allow us to begin regathering again, there will be a few changes that we hope will deepen your engagement with our monthly themes and support you more fully in living into your UU faith and values throughout the week, beyond Sunday morning. Please [register for Faith Development](#) in order to receive news, updates, and access to all of the myriad resources we provide.

Beginning Sunday September 12, we invite you to join us via Zoom for:

• **Faith Development on Sunday mornings at 10:00am** (Adults and Teens)

• **Elementary Religious Exploration on 1st and 3rd Sundays at 12:30pm** (children aged 5-10yrs)

• **Parents of Preschoolers (PoP!) once monthly on a weekday evening (TBD)** (parents with children aged 18mos.—4 yrs.)

You can find more information about each of these programs [here](#).

Little Free Library Arrived & Is Ready for Installation

UUCG's Little Free Library registration plaque, box, and post have all arrived and are ready to be installed. The registration plaque is written in both English and Spanish. **Volunteers are needed to help put it up near the sidewalk in front of UUCG for all our neighbors to enjoy.** Contact Peggy Averyt at peggyaveryt@gmail.com to let her know if you are willing to help so that a time can be scheduled for the installation to be done. The sooner we can get it installed, the sooner we can make more meaningful connections with our neighbors through our Little Free Library.

We are ready to start collecting books for UUCG's Little Free Library. The books can be gently used ones or brand new ones. We especially would like books that are:

1. Books with multicultural characters - black, indigenous, people of color, latinx, etc. that reflect the diversity in our surrounding neighborhoods
2. Books that are affirming of all kinds of people
3. Books written in Spanish or English
4. Books that are both fiction and non-fiction
5. Books for adults, teens, tweens, and children

Place your donations in the large storage box on the front porch at UUCG and label them "Little Free Library Book Donations". Contact Peggy Averyt at peggyaveryt@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Art Gallery Changes

After more than 20 years of adorning the walls of UUCG with beautiful paintings by many local artists, Diana Dice has announced that she is retiring from this job. We want to thank Diana for all her hard work and dedication to making our building into an art museum for so many years. Katrina Yurko and her daughter, Marissa, just put up a new art display in the sanctuary, which includes works by Katrina Yurko and Diana Dice. We hope you can stop by and be inspired by these beautiful paintings. There is some talk of having a UUCG members and friends art show later in the fall. Let Peggy Averyt at peggyaveryt@gmail.com know if you are interested in participating in such an event.



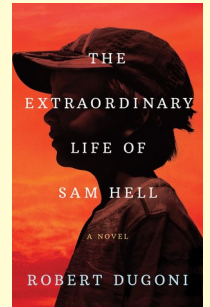
Book Group September Selection:

The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell by Robert Dugoni

Sam Hill always saw the world through different eyes. Born with red pupils, he was called "Devil Boy" or Sam "Hell" by his classmates; "God's will" is what his mother called his ocular albinism. Her words were of little comfort, but Sam persevered, buoyed by his mother's devout faith, his father's practical wisdom, and his two other misfit friends.

Sam believed it was God who sent Ernie Cantwell, the only African American kid in his class, to be the friend he so desperately needed. And that it was God's idea for Mickie Kennedy to storm into Our Lady of Mercy like a tornado, uprooting every rule Sam had been taught about boys and girls.

Forty years later, Sam, a small-town eye doctor, is no longer certain anything was by design—especially not the tragedy that caused him to turn his back on his friends, his hometown, and the life he'd always known. Running from the pain, eyes closed, served little purpose. Now, as he looks back on his life, Sam embarks on a journey that will take him halfway around the world. This time, his eyes are wide open—bringing into clear view what changed him, defined him, and made him so afraid, until he can finally see what truly matters.



Wednesday, September 22nd 7pm-9pm

Zoom Link <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/144736833>



David Morgen (he/him)

Introducing David Morgen, Ministerial Intern

As I begin my 11th year serving UUCG, I reflect on what a strong, healthy congregation this is and how fortunate I am to serve as your minister. UUCG is an ideal teaching congregation, made evident in your support of Josh Gentry and Noël Lemen as our Student Ministers in past years.

This summer I was approached by David Morgen, a student at Candler School of Theology, asking if we would be willing to serve as his Internships site to meet the requirements for contextual education at Candler, and for becoming credentialed as a UU minister.

David is starting his second of three years in the Master of Divinity program at Candler. He's been a UU, mostly at the Northwest UU Congregation, for the last 20 years. In his first career, David taught writing and literature classes at Emory University, Georgia Tech, and elsewhere. He now plans to be a UU Parish Minister. His partner, Anie (she/her), works in legal technology software and his two daughters are currently in college.

After meeting David, including him on our Leadership Retreat in August, and discussing the possibilities, and with the blessing of the Board of Trustees and the UUA Office of Credentialing, David will serve as our intern for two years starting in September for 10 months each year, 15 hours per week. We will have a ritual in the September 12 service to covenant with David as his teaching congregation. Please join me in giving him a warm welcome and in sharing this holy work of teaching new ministers.

-Rev. Jan

Nurturing Connections



Yarns From the Heart September 1 at 10am

Meeting ID: 994-7414-0257



Gwinnett Interfaith Alliance Sept 2 at 7:30pm

Zoom



Food Drive Sept 5 2pm-4pm

Front Porch at UUCG

Drop off donations on the front porch of UUCG



Tarot Sundays every Sunday at 5pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 978-958-52363



UUCG Covenant Choir every Tuesday at 7pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 958-5436-5362



Women's Spirituality September 10 at 7pm

Zoom



Spiral Scouts: 2nd Sundays, September 12 at 12:30pm

For children ages 3-12 and their families. Preregistration required



Belief Exploration September 12 at 12:30pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 896-987-304



Magical Arts and Crafts September 18 at 3pm

Zoom



Fall Equinox Ritual September 18 at 9pm

Zoom



Full Moon Magick and Ritual September 20 from 7:30-9:30pm

Classrooms at UUCG or on Zoom Meeting ID: 933-1676-4508



Book Group September 22 at 7pm

Meeting ID: 144-736-833

September Topic: The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell



CUUPs September 25 at 7:30

Zoom Meeting ID: 400-036-556




















Vision Journal Workshop September 29 at 7pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 998 7138 6950 Preregistration required

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

September 2021

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		