

River of Grass

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485, Sunrise, Florida 33345

WELCOME TO OUR RIVER OF GRASS FAMILY. WELCOME TO OUR WARMTH. WELCOME HOME!

River of Grass Weekly Update – April 7, 2022

The Black Roots of American Popular Music

As we continue this month to explore our theme of Awakening, this Sunday, April 10, we will contemplate the profound impact black musicians have had on American popular music. Come hear Aaron Stang bring this largely unappreciated history of the roots of 20th century music to life.

Through his selection of inspiring words and the incredible, innovative music produced by black artists and entrepreneurs, we will get to experience an awakening of our appreciation for those who truly deserve the credit for the creation of many of your favorite songs and genres in American popular music. You won't want to miss it.

Come as you are to gather with us for this Sunday's love-streamed service, remembering only the medium is virtual; the connections, the love, the spirit are real. Following the service, we will share virtual Hospitality time with a live chat and small groups where we can relish each other's beautiful faces and voices together once again.

Follow the link below to join us in Zoom – or if you'd like, we'll be simulcasting on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu/>. Tune in there for the service, then log onto our Zoom link for hospitality time afterward.

We welcome you on Sunday morning at 10:30. Come a bit before and we can Chat prior to the service... See you then!

We'll be live on Zoom at the link below, as well as on our facebook page.

Virtually at:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/961564350?pwd=cFpKY2RtRk4wVE5NbDczdTU5THViQT09>

Meeting ID: 961 564 350; Password: 873805

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ab3E9JRtb9>

Rev. Amy's sabbatical:

Rev. Amy's sabbatical has begun and will end this Monday, April 11, 2022. She will be back in the pulpit on April 17, for the Season of Renewal - Easter, Passover, and Earthly. For more information about her sabbatical, please read the information that Rev. Amy prepared. It is listed on our website: [Rev. Amy's Sabbatical Page](#).

Virtual Service Watch Pods

Tired of watching our virtual service alone?

Want to share the joy of being together while watching the virtual service?

Invite a couple of your River friends (or other friends) to your patio and watch the service together, on each person's own device. Or on your big screen tv.

And enjoy hospitality together.

Upcoming Virtual Events - This Sunday:

Sunday, April 10, 2021

Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am – The Black Roots of American Popular Music - Music Team -

<https://zoom.us/j/961564350?pwd=cFpKY2RtRk4wVE5NbDczdTU5THViQT09>

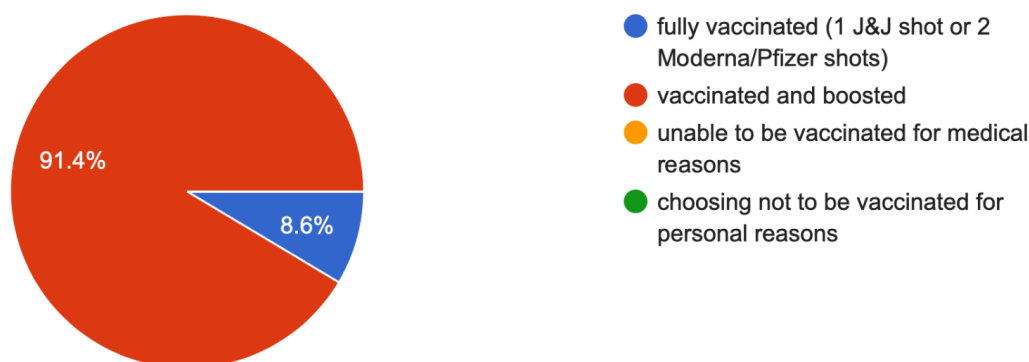
Faith Development: Dragonflies **9:30 am**; Teens **12:00 pm**; Mockingbirds **1:30 pm**

In our Sunday School classes on Sunday, we'll hear an old Russian folktale and practice an old Ukrainian Easter craft, as we continue the theme of "Awakening". Our focus will be on "waking up to the pain and suffering of others". During this Easter time when our Christian friends are remembering the life of Jesus, we're reminded that he taught us to care for our neighbors, so we'll create cards and letters for Ukrainian refugee children to help ease their sadness. There will be no Sunday School classes on Easter Sunday. For more information about our Faith Development Program for Kids and Teens, contact our Faith Development Director, Karen Gonzalez at ReligiousEducator@RiverOfGrassUU.org.

Rowing this River Together: Good news! We have had a tremendous participation in our quick vaccination survey, where our responses indicate that 100% of our members and friends are fully-vaccinated. If you have not had a chance to respond, please do so now here. [Rowing this River Together survey](#)
Thank you, River of Grass Covid Task Force (covidteam@riverofgrassuu.org)

Your vaccination status

70 responses



Family Fun Event for all ages

Our Family Fun Event for all ages this month will take place at [Long Key Nature Center](#) on April 23rd at noon. We'll gather for a bagged-lunch picnic under the oaks, before joining our naturalist for a guided hike along the boardwalk and through the woods. We'll learn about the interconnected web of the Everglades while spotting turtles, fish, birds, insects, spiders and a myriad of butterflies. Families are welcome to explore the Native American museum after our tour. Suggested donation is \$3 per person, if you are able. **We must RSVP to our Long Key**

friends by this Saturday, Apr 9th, so please let Ms. Karen know if we can anticipate seeing you, at ReligiousEducator@RiverOfGrassUU.org.

The Worship Team has a number of opportunities that might interest YOU!

Some of these positions are scheduled on a weekly rotation. Please inquire as your dynamic ministry may just be an email or phone call away!!



- **Tech Builder** - Create Sunday morning worship with Rev Amy and the Crew.
- **Tech Runner** - Run the Pre-recorded services every Sunday morning with the Tech Team.
- **Media Librarian** - We have a media library chock full of music, stories, Chalice Lightings that need to be managed.
- **Zoom Host** - Ever wonder how we make Worship happen on Sunday? The Zoom Host is the key! Inquiries to Rita Cherubini, Worship Chair, 781.856.2335 or worship@riverofgrassuu.org.

8TH PRINCIPLE TEAM MESSAGE

WHAT IS BELOVED COMMUNITY IF IT DOESN'T INCLUDE EVERYONE?

The 8th Principle states, "We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

Celebrating Black Women's History in America:

1) Maggie Lena Walker

She was the daughter of a former slave and cook, was the first woman to charter a bank in the United States in 1902. The bank offered loans and mortgages to black residents of Richmond, Virginia who were otherwise denied service by white-owned banks.

A year later she started a department store allowing black customers to shop with dignity: To enter through the main doors instead of a side entrance, to try on clothing before buying, and to eat at lunch counters. Her store displayed clothing on brown-skinned mannequins and hired exclusively black women to work as clerks.

Later the same year, Walker utilized her newspaper to urge Richmond residents to boycott the city's segregated streetcar system. The boycott was so effective the company operating the street cars declared bankruptcy two months later.

2) *A Black Women's History of the United States*

By Daina Ramey Berry and Kali Nicole Gross

Buy: <https://www.amazon.com/Black-Womens-History-United-States/dp/B08129N8BX/>

Or

Borrow: <https://www.overdrive.com/media/4876779/a-black-womens-history-of-the-united-states>

A 2021 NAACP Image Award Nominee: Outstanding Literary Work - Non-Fiction

A vibrant and empowering history that emphasizes the perspectives and stories of African American women to show how they are - and have always been - instrumental in shaping our country.

In centering Black women's stories, two award-winning historians seek both to empower African American women and to show their allies that Black women's unique ability to make their own communities while combating centuries of oppression is an essential component in our continued resistance to systemic racism and sexism.

Don't forget the adoption vote of the 8th Principle will be held on May 15, 2022 at the Congregational Annual Meeting! 8th Principle Team: Lou DeSantis, Rita Cherubini, Tanya Gustafson and Steve Jens-Rochow. Questions? 8thPrincipleTeam@RiverofGrassUU.org.

Annual Pledge Drive Update

As of Wednesday, we have \$187,729 in pledges. Although we show 44 not responding, our APD team is only counting 10 of those as unable to contact. Pledge time is when we discover who has moved on from being a member of River of Grass. Many folks are more inclined to say nothing than to say no. I am very encouraged by the members I have spoken to and the totals we have accumulated. Thanks to everyone.

Kip Barkley, Annual Pledge Drive Lead

APD Results as of April 6, 2022

Total to Date	Goal	Shortfall	Percent
\$187,729.00	\$220,000.00	(\$32,271.00)	14.67%
Candidates	No Response to Date	Not Pledging	Pledged
117	44	9	46
100%	53%	9%	38%

Heritage and Hope:

Heritage - Emily Greene Balch (1867-1961)

Nobel Peace Prize in 1946. She was a delegate in 1915 at the International Congress of Women at The Hague. An ardent pacifist, she met with Woodrow Wilson, promoting the concept of mediation between nations.

When Emily Greene Balch was given the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946 for her lifelong work for disarmament and peace, she received no congratulations from the US government. The official US had long regarded her as a dangerous radical.

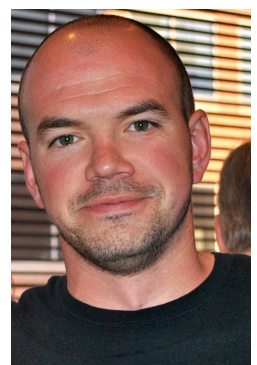
Balch studied the living conditions of workers, immigrants, minorities and women. During World War I she worked with the 1931 Peace Prize Laureate Jane Addams to persuade the heads of state of neutral countries to intervene to stop the war. When the US entered the war, the anti-war campaigners Addams and Balch were stamped as dangerous dissidents.

In 1935 Emily Greene Balch became leader of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She warned against fascism, and criticized the western democracies for not attempting to stop Hitler's and Mussolini's aggressive policies.

"The question whether the long effort to put an end to war can succeed without another major convulsion challenges not only our minds but our sense of responsibility."

Hope - Timothy Mansfield DeChristopher is an American climate activist and co-founder of the environmental group Peaceful Uprising. In December 2008, he protested a Bureau of Land Management oil and gas lease auction of 116 parcels of public land in Utah's redrock country by successfully bidding on 14 parcels of land (totaling 22,500 acres) for \$1.8 million with no intent to pay for them. DeChristopher was removed from the auction by federal agents and taken into custody, eventually serving 21 months in prison.

DeChristopher founded Peaceful Uprising, a nonprofit collective committed to action to combat the climate crisis and build a just, healthy world. The organization seeks to inspire citizens to recognize themselves as agents of change, and to build communities that empower and enable each of us to take effective, necessary nonviolent action.



They recognize that a revolutionary departure from the status quo is required. A greener, cleaner version of the existing world– whose core values of greed and hyper-individualism are the core of the crisis we combat– will not suffice.

This degree of transformation must originate within each of us.

"Our interconnectedness makes the powerless powerful."

Other Events:

Free "Mindfulness for Today's World" weekly online sessions:

Thursdays 6:00 - 7:00 pm for adults, [zoom link for Thursday night at 6 pm](#)

For more information or to register contact Carolyn@InsightInstituteLLC.com or Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com, or visit <http://www.insightinstitutellc.com/>

RoG Men's Group: We meet the first and third Thursday each month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. We will meet on [Zoom at Meeting ID 670 022 402](#) for the foreseeable future. We gather and do check-in where we share our day. Then a discussion topic is presented. We read aloud the premise and questions and then discuss it all until 8:30 pm. The goal is that the sharing moves from head to heart. **The Apr 7th topic is: "Renewing Faith."** The Topic Description is online at KipBarkley.com/topic/. There we post past topics and links to the UU Small Group Ministry Network. We are a lay-led group and look to our members for future topics and the direction we take. Do come out and join us. The Meeting Room opens up at 6:30 pm before the Host arrives. If you have any questions please contact Kip Barkley; mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org; RoG Men's Group Facilitator.

Celebration of Life – Patricia Ann McCrary. River of Grass member, Patricia McCrary, passed away on January 21, 2022. There will be a celebration of her life for her beloved S. Florida spiritual family and friends (and via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person). **Where: Center for Spiritual Living Ft. Lauderdale; 4849 North Dixie Highway, Oakland Park, FL 33334. When: Sunday, Apr 17th from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM ET.** Please indicate on your RSVP if you will be joining via Zoom or in-person: <http://evite.me/5j769vHyUf>



BUUKies April Read – "The Four Winds" by Kristin Hannah. We will meet on Wednesday, Apr 20th at 7pm.

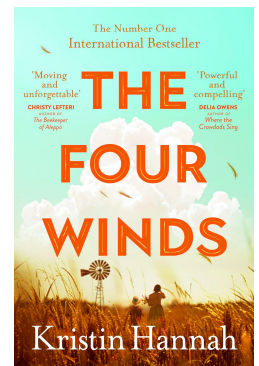
[River BUUKies Zoom Link](#) Meeting ID: 926 5701 7488; Passcode: 746613

One tap mobile +13017158592,,92657017488#,,,,*746613# US (Washington DC)

"The Four Winds seems eerily prescient in 2021 . . . Its message is galvanizing and hopeful: We are a nation of scrappy survivors. We've been in dire straits before; we will be again. Hold your people close." – The New York Times

"Through one woman's survival during the harsh and haunting Dust Bowl, master storyteller, Kristin Hannah, reminds us that the human heart and our Earth are as tough, yet as fragile, as a change in the wind." – Delia Owens, author of "Where the Crawdads Sing".

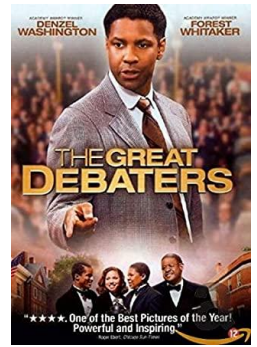
Steve Jens-Rochow BUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org.



8TH Principle Dinner Conversations – If you missed the Lunch and Dinner Conversations offered in March by the 8th Principle Team, please join Steve and Kathy Jens-Rochow at their home in Ft Lauderdale on **Apr 24th at 6:00 pm!** Please respond to 8thprincipleteam@riverofgrassuu.org to secure your space or for further information. We look forward to your participation as we plan to vote on this principle at the May 15th Annual Meeting!



HI LOVERS OF BLACK FILM – The Black Film group will discuss “The Great Debaters” on **Wednesday, Apr 27th**, at 7pm. It is a docudrama based on the true story of a young James Farmer Jr. (who went on to create the Committee on Racial Equality), a 14 year old attending an all-Black college in Texas in the 1930’s. He is selected to be on the debate team. The team was the first black debate team to compete against a White University (Oklahoma City University) but then went on to challenge Harvard (although in the real life story it was University of Southern California, the number 1 debate school at that time). Directed by Denzel Washington [black]. Great cast Denzel Washington, Denzel Whitaker, Forest Whitaker. [all black]



Watch the movie “The Great Debaters” on your own (available on Amazon). We will meet via Zoom on **Wednesday, Apr 27th, at 7pm**. Please reply to Steve Jens-Rochow blackfilms@riverofgrassuu.org if you are coming.

For Discussion join Zoom Meeting at 7pm: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84418593114>

Meeting ID: 844 1859 3114; One tap mobile +13017158592,,84418593114# US (Washington DC). Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84418593114>

The SE UU Cluster and UU Justice Florida present – Justice Saturday 2022 – Environmental Justice: Big Money, Sugar Cane, and Racism – Saturday, Apr 30th, at 1:30 pm

Other countries have effectively banned sugar cane burning and found better ways to harvest sugar cane. While in Florida, Big Sugar continues to burn sugar cane fields despite the environmental and health issues of surrounding BIPOC communities.



Join us as Rev. David Lawlor, Co-Chair of UU Ministry for Earth, and Keynote Speaker, Dr. Rashid Shaikh, Co-Chair of UU BIPOC Caucus for Climate Justice, and a panel of activists discuss the issue and what we can do to stop this injustice.

Free: Pre-register for the zoom link: vicepresident@SEUUcluster.org

Panelists:

- **Colin Walkes**, former mayor of Pahokee, representing Sierra Club’s “Stop the Burn” Campaign
- **Robert C. Mitcherll**, Friends of the Everglades
- **Dr. Arkush Banzal**, Clinicians for Climate Action
- **Aliki Moncrief**, Executive Director of Florida Conservation Voters
- **Rep Anna V. Eskamani**, District 47, Orange County, Florida House

POSTAL FOOD DRIVE – On Saturday, May 14th, River of Grass needs 30 volunteers for the Postal Food Drive. We got the Post Office we had 3 years ago: Plantation Post Office, 7580 NW 5 St, Plantation, FL 33317. This Drive is where we sort and pack food coming in during the Postal Food Drive for LifeNet4Families, the feeding program we support. This is a family friendly event. Children and youth can help by sorting and packing food for LifeNet4Families. We will have two shifts: 4 to 6 pm and 6 to 8 pm. Please sign up by replying to Steve Jens-Rochow, SSIGT@riverofgrassuu.org.



SUUSI 2022, “Gratitude,” will be held in-person on the campus of Western Carolina University, from July 17-23. Registration has opened! If you haven’t been to SUUSI before, the SUUSI website has a [page of helpful information to help you get oriented](#). From the webpage, use the menus at the top to navigate to practical information about SUUSI (the “join us!” menu), programs for various age groups (the “by age” menu), and our planned events (the “by interest” menu).



Click on the [2022 catalog link](#) to see the listing of all planned events for SUUSI or to search by event type. You can also view [workshops](#), [nature trips](#), and [sports & games](#) events on the pages devoted to those programs. **To register for SUUSI, you will need to have an account in SOLIS, the SUUSI Online Information System.** Click [here](#) to create an account or to log in and register for SUUSI on April 1st. We're so excited! We hope you are too.

SUUSI Job Listings! We are always looking for folks to join our SUUSI staff family. While everyone at SUUSI is encouraged to volunteer to help out in some way, SUUSI Staff make a formal commitment to work a set number of hours in one (or more) SUUSI departments. In exchange, they receive credit towards the cost of registration, meals, and housing. [Staff applications are available in SOLIS.](#) Considering applying for staff? Our current openings are on the SUUSI website, [information on staff positions.](#)

SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Before buying new clothes, check out thrift stores (like Goodwill). You may be surprised to find some excellent choices and big savings.

Drive to the Finish: Capital Campaign - Our Future Home Search Team is diligently looking for our new home. There are many ways we can go, either find an existing church, find a building we can use and build out to suit our needs, or even purchase and build our church ourselves.

We need your help in order to be better prepared when the right opportunity presents itself. Those of you who made your pledge during our campaign last fall, thank you for your commitment. We have received about 65% of the total amount pledged.

In order to get a handle on our finances, **we would like to know when you plan to complete your contribution.** And we are always open to new pledges and contributions. Go to our website, riverofgrassuu.org, scroll down to the [click on the link to make your pledge.](#)

With gratitude and hope, Your Capital Campaign Team, capitalcampaign@riverofgrassuu.org.

Capital Campaign Contributions

We have set up several methods for you to make your pledges/contributions to the Capital Campaign. The table below details the various methods, including charges that the River accrues when this payment method is used. We are here to help with any questions you may have. Feel free to contact our office administrator, Sandy Blair Chibnick, via email at office@riverofgrassuu.org.

Monetary Donations		
Method	How	Processing fees paid by River of Grass
Check	Write CC on memo line Mail to River of Grass: 3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485 Sunrise, FL 33345	\$0
Checking account via Vanco	Set up payment on our Donations page . Designate on the Capital Campaign line	\$0.45 per transaction plus processing fee 1%
Credit Card via Vanco	Set up payment on our Donations page . Designate amount on the Capital Campaign line.	\$0.45 per transaction plus credit card processing fee: American Express: 3.5% Visa/MasterCard: 2.75%
PayPal	https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/my/profile In the notes write "Capital Campaign"	Varies based on method of payment
Zelle	Use your bank to set up \$ transfer. Send Zelle payment to CapitalCampaign@riverofgrassuu.org .	\$0
Securities		

Any questions contact Northstar Financial Planners:

	<p><i>Allen Giese, Steve Tepper, or Stacy Saavedra at (954) 693-0030</i></p> <p>Securities should be transferred per instructions from the donor's brokerage or advisor using the following DTC and A/C numbers as the destination</p> <p>#0188 - TD Ameritrade Institutional</p> <p>A/C #944110334</p> <p>RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION, INC.</p> <p>The donor should notify the CC Team and the Office Administrator of the details of the donation by emailing CapitalCampaign@riverofgrassuu.org.</p>
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Interim Recommendations from the RoG COVID-19 Re-Emergence Team

Team: Deb Buehler Ely, Karen Gonzalez, Susan Juncosa, Jeanne Masten (COVIDTeam@RiverofGrassUU.org)

Purpose of Team: To review guidelines for congregational and smaller group gatherings in order to provide recommendations to the Board to be used for official River of Grass meetings and events.

These recommendations are:

- For: only for official, River of Grass - sponsored outdoor and indoor small group gatherings.
- Fluid: new information comes out all the time and the recommendations could change.
- Inclusive: all attendees should be able to attend physically or virtually.
- Protective: considers first those who are most at risk.
- Science-based: follow the directives according to the experts.

Sources:

- UUA: <https://www.uua.org/safe/pandemics/covid-19>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>
- Johns Hopkins: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map>
- UU Reston Covid-19 Guidelines: <https://www.uureston.org/covid>

MEETINGS IN THE TIME OF COVID

RIVER OF GRASS COVID-19 TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD: Updated March 24, 2022

This is a living document that will be regularly reviewed and updated.

River of Grass COVID-19 Re-Emergence Team is monitoring Broward County's risk level of transmission. The level of risk used by the River of Grass UU Congregation shall be as measured on [Broward County, Florida \(FL\) - COVID Vaccine & Risk Tracker - Covid Act Now](#). Risk levels are **low**, **medium**, **high**, **very high**, and **severe**.

In-person/hybrid Worship services, large group concerts, fundraisers, other large events (with 50 or more participants) shall occur while the COVID risk is at low, medium, or high levels. In-person worship services and other large gatherings shall be suspended if the level of risk for Broward County is and has been very high or severe for two or more weeks. The level of risk, as reported on the COVID Act Now website, will be monitored by the Re-Emergence Team, which will alert the Board and Worship Team if the risk level changes to or from very high or severe and stays at that level for two weeks.

When risk levels are very high or severe, for over two weeks, in person gathering may be canceled.

Further, all attendees of in-person gatherings, small or large, are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated as possible based on eligibility by age. Vaccination or recent negative COVID tests are strongly encouraged for in-person gatherings. Facial coverings/masks are required for large indoor in-person gatherings and strongly encouraged for other groups to protect the most vulnerable, including unvaccinated babies and young children.

It is highly recommended that persons attending in person gathering be vaccinated.

In person service leaders, hosts and singers may wish to be unmasked. If so desired, the individual shall have tested negative within the last 24 hours.

The meeting space shall be well ventilated. Air purifiers or fans may be utilized within the meeting space.

Chairs shall be arranged utilizing social distancing (6 ft).

Food may be shared outdoors only, provided people remain socially distanced while unmasked.

Small groups are encouraged to set-up and enter into their own covenants, using the guidance herein, regarding COVID-19 safety procedures.

If protocols at rental facilities are more restrictive, their guidelines will be followed.

To see all of the upcoming events at River of Grass, please visit the calendar on our website at riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html. **River of Grass UU Congregation** is on [Facebook](#) (LIKE us) and [Twitter](#) (FOLLOW Us). For more information, please contact communityawareness@riverofgrassuu.org.

Unsubscribe - If you do not wish to receive this weekly email, please send an email and we will remove you from the mailing list, office@riverofgrassuu.org.

Announcements to be sent out in the weekly congregation-wide update should be e-mailed to WeeklyEmail@RiverofGrassUU.org by 12 pm Wednesday. All announcements will pertain to congregational life and affiliated groups and will be for activities or events occurring within two weeks of the e-mail. Outside groups and individuals, wishing to use this vehicle of congregation-wide communication, must have the approval of the Board of Trustees.