

# River of Grass

## Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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

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### River of Grass Weekly Update – June 4 2020

#### Flower Communion

Our annual Flower Communion comes in a time our world is more desperate for beauty than ever before. Join us as we once more bring beauty into our midst with even greater intention -- as we remember that when the Rev. Norbert Chapek created the Flower Communion in another time the world found itself in chaos and struggle in the wake of World War. A century later it is now ours to come together in the unity that can only come from a divine diversity, the beauty we each bring in who we are and as we are, no matter the storms raging about us.

If you haven't yet, send a photo of a flower in your life, or you with that flower, or you in your favorite floral attire for our Virtual Flower Parade -- to [minister@riverofgrassu.org](mailto:minister@riverofgrassu.org).

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. And now that we have a larger Zoom space ready to welcome all who will join us from over this world – who will we meet this week?

Sunday morning, gather with us at the River – on your computer, your tablet, your phone (with video or only audio if you like, we'll miss your face!) -- just click or dial into our RoG Meeting Room at the link or numbers below. We'll be watching for you!

#### **Topic: Worship May 31, 2020**

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>

#### ***Upcoming Virtual Events -This Sunday:***

#### **Sunday, June 7, 2020 - New Member Sunday!**

**Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am** – Rev. Amy Carol Webb - **Flower Communion**

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

**New Member Sunday** - Our next celebration for new members will be this **Sunday Jun 7<sup>th</sup>, during service**. If you are interested in becoming a member of River of Grass, please message us or email [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org).

**Summer Children's Virtual Fellowship at 12:30 pm** – Children and parents: Come join us at 12:30 pm this Sunday, Jun 7<sup>th</sup>, for our first Summer Fun at the Zoo virtual children's fellowship. We will take a peek, via a live webcam, at the naked mole-rats living in the Smithsonian's National Zoo in Washington D.C. Kids will learn about the unusual family lives of these rodents while playing mole-rat bingo. Summer Fun at the Zoo celebrates our 7<sup>th</sup> Unitarian Universalist Principle: to respect and protect all living

things and our earth. Faith Development's Summer Fun at the Zoo will be every Sunday through Jul 26<sup>th</sup> via Zoom, and requires a password. Look for an email from Diane Lade, Summer Fellowship Coordinator, or reach out to her at [FaithDevelopment@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:FaithDevelopment@RiverofGrassUU.org).

**Young Adults are meeting every Sunday, at 6:30 pm virtually on Zoom** – Millennials, Gen Xers, and Gen Zs, are welcome to tune in to the YUUnG Adult Virtual Coffee Hour on **Sunday, Jun 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm**. Our purpose is to foster an inclusive, diverse and intentional community that inspires spiritual growth and connection. Please email [youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org) if you have any questions and to obtain the zoom details.

#### ***Faith Development - Parents Having Coffee Online:***

This past week has been hard. Hard, yes, because we are still trying to keep ourselves and our children safe from a new virus. But, harder yet because of the sadness and anger we feel over the murder of George Floyd at the hands of white police officers in Minneapolis. And, as the violence continues and the rhetoric inflames, it is even harder still. I wish you the grace and fortitude to speak the truth in love to your little beloveds. Below is the message to children given at the First U Minneapolis this past Sunday. You may want to share it with your children or you may want to watch it for yourself, to give you guidance in ways to speak with your children about these hard truths. [First Universalist Church of Minneapolis](#). Your kids are not too young to talk about race. See this collection of resources for guidance according to the ages of your kiddos. [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#). Let's come together in conversation about how we parent in these trying days. Parents Having Coffee Online meets at **10:00 on Saturday morning, Jun 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am**. Look for an email from Karen Gonzalez or reach out to her at [religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org).

#### ***Other Events:***

**Thursday Mindfulness Drop-in 6:00 pm** – How are you doing, and are you tending to any felt anxiety or stress? Are you taking time to pause and check-in with your heart, body and mind? Consider joining tonight's community mindfulness Zoom session every Thursday at 6:00 pm. <https://zoom.us/j/551319571>. Note: This is not a class, just a time to pause and notice, and share with others. Drop in any week. Contact: [Carolyn@insightinstitutellc.com](mailto:Carolyn@insightinstitutellc.com) or [Scott@Insightinstitutellc.com](mailto:Scott@Insightinstitutellc.com).

**The River of Grass Men's Group** is open to all men. The Men's Group Men's Group meets via Zoom every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. **TONIGHT, Jun 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm we will meet on Zoom** and discuss our topic: Honoring the Ancestors. In traditional cultures, ancestors are to be honored. Some draw strength from their ancestors. In some modern cultures, ancestors are rejected as not politically correct. What about you? Will our descendants honor us as Ancestors? <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/670022402> The Meeting Room opens up at 6:30 pm before the Host arrives. For more info, please contact Kip Barkley [mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org).

**Flowing River Sangha** – We will meet online on **Tuesday, Jun 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm**. Every Tuesday night we will meet via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/201911385>. We will meet from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. This is an open-ended, drop-in group for all levels of meditation experience. For further information, please contact Gary Gonzalez at [meditation@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:meditation@riverofgrassuu.org).

**Faith Forward Inquirers Series is back! The Faith Forward Inquirers Series meets on Wednesdays 6:30 – 7:30 pm on Zoom.** It is a rotation of seven conversations about our congregation and Unitarian Universalism. The series is designed for visitors and newcomers who are looking for a general introduction, and yet the sessions are also appealing to veteran members who want more information about our beloved community. New members and inquirers are encouraged to attend. Classes are not mandatory for membership but are highly recommended! Our next class is scheduled for **Jun 10<sup>th</sup> and is FF Inquirers#5: Worship & Liturgical Year**. For more information, email Zena Tucker, [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org). Zoom link for each is: [ZOOM Link for RoG Inquirers](#).

Date	Time	Event
6/10/20	6:30 - 7:30 pm	FF Inquirers#5: Worship & Liturgical Year

6/17/20	6:30 - 7:30 pm	FF Inquirers#6: Social Action & Community Service
7/1/20	6:30 - 7:30 pm	FF Inquirers#7: Pastoral Care and Small Groups
7/8/20	6:30 - 7:30 pm	FF Inquirers#8: Membership 101 & Congregational Life
7/15/20	6:30 - 7:30 pm	FF Inquirers#2: Unitarian Universalist History, Principles and Sources

**bUUKies are meeting on Wednesday, Jun 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 pm** - It's time for the bUUKies last pick before summer break. Casey McQuiston's novel is entitled "Red, White, and Royal Blue" and promises to answer the immortal question - *What happens when America's First Son falls in love with the Prince of Wales?*

"When his mother became President, Alex Claremont-Diaz was promptly cast as the American equivalent of a young royal. Handsome, charismatic, genius—his image is pure millennial-marketing gold for the White House. There's only one problem: Alex has a beef with the actual prince, Henry, across the pond. And when the tabloids get hold of a photo involving an Alex-Henry altercation, U.S./British relations take a turn for the worse. Heads of family, state, and other handlers devise a plan for damage control: staging a truce between the two rivals. What at first begins as a fake, Instagramable friendship grows deeper, and more dangerous, than either Alex or Henry could have imagined. Soon Alex finds himself hurtling into a secret romance with a surprisingly unstuffy Henry."

This male/male romance may be new for some. Can two guys fall in love and find their Happily-Ever-After? I suspect the answer is love is love is love is love. Join the discussion on **Wednesday, Jun 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:15**. It's a Zoom meeting and Susan will send a link to all on the bUUKies list. If you're not on the list, send a request to be added to [bUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:bUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org).

**River of Grass Cafe' Virtually Presents Kiya Heartwood on Saturday, Jun 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm** - Kiya Heartwood is an award-winning roots rock and folk singer-songwriter. She has just returned from touring her one woman show, Song Tales from the American Edge in Ireland and the UK. The UK's Broadway Baby describes Kiya Heartwood (Stealin Horses, Wishing Chair) as "an award-winning American singer-songwriter who writes smart, funny and poignant songs about the famous and not-so-famous legends of America. Kiya's music serves up a lively batch of original songs that follow on to two of the oldest traditions of folk music: storytelling and political broadside."

Tickets are \$15 per person. ([Purchase using this link and using the BUY NOW button.](#)) Please purchase a ticket for each person attending the virtual concert. More than ever, artists are depending on us during this time of social distancing. You will receive a link to the ZOOM concert before the scheduled date/time. **(Please note: Ticket sales close at 4:00 pm on the day of the concert.)**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GA) ONLINE JUNE 24-28** Want to participate in GA? This is the year! Our UU faithful will hold GA online this year, so this is a great opportunity to be part of it. GA (General Assembly) is the annual meeting of our faith through the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association). Attending GA can be a very uplifting and moving experience, as it's an opportunity to witness the broad impact of our faith. There is money in our budget for several folks to register and participate in GA online. If interested, please reach out to Scott May at [president@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:president@riverofgrassuu.org).

**Clothing, Masks and Hygiene Products Needed at LifeNet4Families** - LifeNet4Families has suspended their volunteer program but the staff continues to hand out about 300 hot to-go meals a day, Monday-Friday, as well as providing showers, food boxes and bags.

If you would like to help, LifeNet has provided a list of items they need. The items can be dropped off **outside** the gate at LifeNet from 8:00am to noon, Monday-Friday. Let the security guards at the gate know that you have a donation and then leave it outside the gate (or security can get a staff member to come out).

LifeNet4Families is in need of:

- Hygiene products (deodorant, toothpaste, soap/shower gel, razors, shave cream, lotion, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- Specific menswear (t-shirts, shorts, belts, underwear, socks, sneakers)
- Masks for clients (homemade or store bought)

Location and Directions:

Lifenet4Families, 1 NW 33rd Terrace, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

On Broward Blvd. just east of 441 on the north side of the road.

Landmark: there is a Mobil gas station at the corner of 33rd Terrace and Broward Blvd.

Stay safe! Any questions about LifeNet4Families please contact Judi Oltmans, [SSJGT@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:SSJGT@RiverofGrassUU.org).

### **Welcoming Congregation Opportunity – Have you started it yet?**

“Transgender Inclusion in Congregations” course, of course

River of Grass UU congregation has made a commitment to be welcoming to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We became a UUA recognized Welcoming Congregation June 4, 2002. Throughout this past congregational year, the Welcoming Congregation Renewal Team has taken intentional steps to renew our commitment to welcoming and inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

We are now offering “Transgender Inclusion in Congregations.” This module is a very important one for all of us.

This course is for congregations who want to take their knowledge and skills to the next level in terms of trans identity and learn how to create congregations that are fully inclusive and affirming of the full breadth of gender diversity. Over 6 sessions you will deeply explore the intersection of trans identity, spirituality and faith community and gain the grounding, context and skills to transform yourself and our congregation.

This module can be very deeply moving, with personal reflection. Many people may need to process what they learned. We will also talk about how the River can incorporate changes to become more naturally welcoming. We will be scheduling some Zoom sessions for anyone who wishes to participate.

Yes, we are already pretty welcoming, but awareness of the multi-layers of identity can make critical subtle changes to improve our welcome to all.

Please take advantage of this “stay at home” time to take this course. You can view the sessions at your own pace. For more information and the link to connect to the sessions, contact Kathy at [Welcoming@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:Welcoming@riverofgrassuu.org).

*SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Use efficient LED light bulbs. Resist temptation to buy "old fashion" light bulbs, and instead replace bulbs with LED. They barely cost more, and they use 1/7 the electricity, produce less heat, reduce your electric bill, and last for 20 years.*

### **COVID-19 Response Update**

Our River of Grass faithful is actively responding to COVID-19. All face-to-face gatherings of any kind are suspended or moved on-line, and our building is closed. Numerous meetings and gatherings have transitioned online via Zoom. Welcome to our new norm!

We are grateful that many many members and friends are in self-quarantine, doing their part to protect themselves as well as reduce the spread of the virus, and only venturing outside when absolutely necessary.

Our extended Caring Team has coordinated a 'network of contacting' to help ensure our community has communication and is cared for..... and our Covenant Groups are a large part of this.

There is deep gratitude for the way our community cares for each other, remains flexible, and is diligent in responding to this unprecedented situation!

Take a deep breath. Allow any feelings and thoughts to be as they are. Know you are supported. Stay safe!

### **Basic Protective Measures Against the New Coronavirus**

Your leadership at River of Grass are taking every precaution against the new coronavirus here at River of Grass and in the wider community we share. River of Grass is adhering to the following recommendations from the World Health Organizations.

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Be aware of those in our midst with compromised immune systems.

**Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:**

1. Regularly and thoroughly CLEAN YOUR HANDS with an alcohol-based hand-rub or washing with soap and water, especially – after coughing/sneezing; when caring for the sick; before, during, and after you prepare food; before eating; after toilet use; when hands are visibly dirty – and when they are not; after handling animals or animal waste.
2. Maintain social distancing – 5-6 feet between yourself and anyone coughing or sneezing.
3. Even if well, try to maintain a distance of 5-6 feet from others and when greeting, instead of elbow and fist bumps (no handshakes or hugs), consider placing your hand over your heart as a gesture of welcome and hello.
4. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to avoid transfer of viruses from contaminated surfaces.
5. Practice respiratory hygiene: 1) Cough/sneeze into your elbow, 2) If you use tissues, dispose of them immediately, then clean your hands.
6. If you have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care promptly.
7. If you feel unwell, stay home, even with mild symptoms like headache and runny nose.
8. Stay informed, and follow any guidelines from your healthcare advisor.

**How to cope with stress during this coronavirus outbreak:**

1. It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared, or angry during any crisis.
2. Talk to people you trust, and contact your friends and family.
3. If you must stay home, maintain healthy lifestyle with proper diet, sleep, exercise, and social contact with loved ones via email, phone, etc.
4. Avoid use smoking, alcohol, and other drugs to deal with your emotions.
5. Get the facts from credible sources such as the World Health Organization or local/state health agencies.
6. Limit worry and agitation through lessening time you spend watching media and internet.
7. Draw on coping skills that have helped you in the past.
8. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor, and have a plan to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

To see all of the upcoming events at River of Grass, please visit the calendar on our website at [riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html](http://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](mailto:communityawareness@riverofgrassuu.org).

*Unsubscribe* - If you do not wish to receive this weekly email, please send an e-mail and we will remove you from the mailing list, [office@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:office@riverofgrassuu.org).

*Announcements to be sent out in the weekly congregation-wide update should be e-mailed or called into the congregation's office 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.*