

# 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 – August 20, 2020

### Am I My Brother's Keepers

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 River of Grass Meeting Room at the link or numbers below. We'll be watching for you!

#### Topic: Worship August 23, 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, August 23, 2020**

**Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am** – Ed Lewis - **Am I My Brother's Keepers**

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

**Faith Development: 12:30:** Pre-K - 1<sup>st</sup> graders; **1:30 pm:** 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> graders

This Sunday, in their Faith Development classes, our children will continue delving into the wonder of their unique selves by learning how to create a self-portrait. Join us as we grow our faith by celebrating the diversities of our beautiful faces! Contact Karen Gonzalez at [ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org) for more information.

Parents, it's time to register your children for this year's Faith Development Program. Please click on your personal link in an email from our Director, Karen Gonzalez, dated August 7<sup>th</sup>.

**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 YUng Adult Virtual Coffee Hour on **Sunday, Aug 23<sup>rd</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.

#### Summer Pastoral Care at River of Grass

Rev. Amy is on her summer study leave until Labor Day in September. The care and support of this Beloved Community carries on through Rev. Amy's Summer leave time, with professional counselors and loving lay-leaders on

hand should the need arise. For care and support, please contact the River of Grass Pastoral Care Team at [pastoralcare@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:pastoralcare@riverofgrassuu.org).

---

From the River of Grass Board of Directors:

We like to show appreciation for those who feed and fuel this Beloved Community. There are so many who contribute so much of their time to our congregation. This week we give a big **Thank You to Diane Lade**.

As our Faith Development Committee Chair Diane has helped organize teachers and especially has facilitated our Summer Faith Development classes. This year was a new challenge, doing the classes virtually.

And the wonderful volunteer teacher/tech people who made the weekly classes fun.

Melissa & Debbie Buehler-Ely, Monica Dyer, Rob & Deb Giblin-Davis, Tanya Gustafson, Kathy Jens-Rochow, Jenna Kane, Corinne Mann, and Devon Smith.

***You didn't have to do what you did but you did, and we THANK YOU!***

---

### ***Auction***

For over 15 years, the River has raised funds to support our work in the community with a fun and fabulous themed event. Luau's, Oscar's, and more!

Your 2020 auction team is trying to determine if we should continue our annual tradition in a new way... Like everything else, there is an online option! Before we invest in this service, we would like to get your input on donations that you could provide. Parties, art, jewelry, timeshares, services, etc. It's time to think outside the box! Please contact the team at [auction@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:auction@RiverofGrassUU.org) and let us know how you can contribute!

### ***Stamp Out Hunger Virtual Food Drive***

For 20 years River of Grass has participated in the Annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive to benefit LifeNet4Families by volunteering at a local post office to box up several tons of food that letter carriers brought in from their routes. This year due to COVID-19 the drive is virtual. And this year the need is greater because of increased food insecurity due to the pandemic. Please go to <https://www.lifenet4families.org/portal/> and donate.

### ***Seeking facilitators for our Inquiries Series***

Our weekly sessions to orient newcomers to our beloved community needs dedicated River members. Facilitating is an excellent way to get to know new people, learn more about the River and serve the congregation. Facilitation guides make it easy! See Zena Tucker or email [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org).

### ***Seeking Zoom hosts for Sunday Worship***

Zoom Hosts are needed for worship services. Be a part of the behind the scenes team that makes our Sunday Experience so great! Learn new skills in Zoom as a bonus! See Zena Tucker or email [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org).

### ***SHOULD I STILL VOTE BY MAIL?***

**With all I'm hearing about Post Office delays, do I risk throwing away my vote if I use Vote By Mail (VBM)?** The latest developments regarding Post Office delays are very concerning, but there are still two ways you can use Vote By Mail and keep yourself healthy, while assuring that your vote will be counted:

**1) Return your VBM ballots VERY SOON after receiving them and then track whether your Supervisor of Elections Office received it.** When you receive your ballot in the mail, fill it out immediately and then drop it in the mail the same or next day. You will be able to monitor if your ballot was received by checking its status online in the State of Florida's Voter Information Lookup System: <https://registration.elections.myflorida.com/CheckVoterStatus>.

(If your ballot still hasn't been received by Election Day, you will have the option to go to the polls and vote in person -- poll workers will be able to check your ballot receipt status online and once they validate that your ballot was not received, you will be permitted to vote in person.)

**OR, EVEN BETTER:**

**2) Drop off your VBM ballot in one of the secure drop boxes available at your county's early voting sites.** This option bypasses the mail altogether and assures that your ballot will arrive at your Supervisor of Elections Office to be counted. Again, you will be able to check your ballot's receipt status in the State of Florida's Voter Information Lookup System. **Stay tuned -- we will be providing the list of early voting sites for your county in a future weekly announcement.**

To be involved in promoting safe and fair elections in 2020, contact the Elders Stand for Fair Elections Florida team at [FairElections-FL@eldersaction.org](mailto:FairElections-FL@eldersaction.org).

#### *Other Events:*

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

Thursdays 6:00 - 7:00 pm for adults;

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/551319571?pwd=TDdRdmhML3FoVVEvbnRXRC9qRlJPQT09>

For more information or to register contact [Carolyn@InsightInstituteLLC.com](mailto:Carolyn@InsightInstituteLLC.com) or [Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com](mailto:Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com), or visit <https://www.insightinstitute.com>

**The River of Grass Men's Group** is open to all men. The 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, Aug 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm we will meet on Zoom** and discuss our topic: Our Encounters with Diversity. Imagine you grew up on a small island where everyone looked and thought just like you. Now you have come to the bigger world on the mainland. You see the locals are different, and that there are more of them than of you. <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, Aug 25<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).

***SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week:** Purchase energy efficient appliances. When it's time for a new TV, fridge, dishwasher, washer, dryer or AC, look for the Energy Star (r) rating. It ensures an energy efficient green product. Even if it costs more up front, it will save money on your electric bill, reducing the pollution created to provide electricity to your home.*

#### **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 we have left our building. 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 – 6 feet between yourself and anyone.
3. Even if well, try to maintain a distance of 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 a healthy lifestyle with proper diet, sleep, exercise, and social contact with loved ones via email, phone, etc.
4. Avoid smoking or using alcohol and other drugs to deal with your emotions.
5. Get the facts from credible sources such as the Center for Disease Control, World Health Organization, or local/state health agencies.
6. Limit worry and agitation through lessening time you spend watching media and the 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.*