

Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION
DAVIE, FLORIDA

SEPTEMBER 2012

MINISTER'S CORNER Reverend Amy Carol Webb



Happy New Year!

Yes, you read right; I said, "Happy New Year!" That's what September means to me. It started with yellow school buses and the smell of new books and the clang of the thermos inside my new metal lunch-box swinging along my walk to the first day of school. Best were the brand new, freshly sharpened pencils with pristine erasers not yet used.

I was one of the weird kids who looked forward to school starting up again each year. So much so that, even with my schooling done, I still mark New Year's not in January, but in the Fall. Now we don't really get Fall in South Florida. But we still get the promise of a new beginning – and I still have a thing for brand new pencils.

This year, I'm excited to bring my new pencils to the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation as your Consulting Minister for what promises to be a year of going and growing strong. We'll be together the third weekend of each month not only for Sunday services guaranteed to lift the rafters and our spirits, but also for workshops, faith development programs, leadership development and all manner of fun in faith.

Best of all, we'll get to explore together what it really means to be Unitarian Universalists – and why it matters – and work together to expand our vision and mission for the waiting world.

We will begin our journey together on Sunday, September 16th, at the Annual "Water Communion" that will welcome us all back home. With the water that was gathered on your Summer journeys, we will bless the beginning of our new year.

Now we must remember, too, to bring our hearts and minds to the task of becoming who we mean to be as Unitarian Universalists in Davie, South Florida – and our movement throughout the world. And don't forget your freshly sharpened pencils, too. The ones with the pristine erasers. We'll need both ends of them.

Watch your email, the ROG website – www.riverofgrass.org – as well as the newsletter and Sunday announcements for information as it develops. And plan to join us to go deeper in our faith, wider in our welcome, higher in our reach, and stronger in our commitment to build the world we dream of. Happy New Year!

~ Reverend Amy

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BUUKIES BOOK GROUP
Diane Diaz, bUUKies Coordinator

At our last meeting, the bUUKies caught up on our respective summer doings and discussed our wonderful summer reading selections. (We also enjoyed some literary fodder although you might know these as snacks!)

The bUUKies Book Group is open to all book lovers. We meet at River of Grass, once a month (the third Wednesday of the month), at 7:15 pm.

Come join us!

Below are our reading selections for our upcoming gatherings:

- ◆ **September 19:** "Language Intelligence" by Joe Romm (Available from Amazon and in Kindle format.)
- ◆ **October 17:** "Beneath the Shadows" by Sara Foster (Available from the Library, Amazon, and Kindle/Nook formats.)
- ◆ **November 28*:** "Hotel on the Corner of Bitter & Sweet" by Janine Ford (Available from the Library, Amazon, and Kindle/Nook formats.)
- ◆ **December 19:** Holiday Party – Details TBD

*Note: The November gathering is the 4th Wednesday of the month since the week before is the day before Thanksgiving.

The Congregation Library is located near the back door. All are welcome to borrow books on the honor system. bUUKies welcomes your donations, but please only bring in clean books in good condition and leave them on the center shelf and we will organize them. (We recently had to toss out many crumbling, yellowed and mildewed volumes.)

OUR PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

OUR SUNDAY LOCATION

11850 W. State Road 84, Suite 1, Davie, FL 33325

EVERY SUNDAY

Worship Service: 10:30 to 11:30am. **Hospitality Hour:** 11:30am to 12:30pm.

Faith Development Classes: 10:45 to 11:45am

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

There is plenty of parking outside the sanctuary, but please leave the closer parking spaces for our guests and physically challenged worshippers.

All meetings are held at 11850 W State Road 84, Suite 1 in Davie unless otherwise noted.

SERVICES

- Sept 2 *"But, They Take Our Jobs": A Reflection on Labor Day,* Kathy Jens-Rochow
- Sept 9 The River of Grass Musicians
- Sept 16 *Welcome Back & Water Communion,* Reverend Amy Carol Webb
- Sept 23 *Who Are We and Why Are We Here?,* Marjorie Loring
- Sept 30 *Great Unitarians: John and Abigail Adams,* Guest Speakers Marylin Fermanich & David McElroy

River of Grass
 UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

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 Shared Ministry Diane Lade & Janet Schwartz
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FROM THE PRESIDENT: SLIDING INTO HOME

Marjorie Loring, Board President



For me, there is something magical about “Homecoming Sunday” each year at River of Grass. No matter how much I have enjoyed the summer months, and how amazed I am that they have passed by so quickly, I feel like coming home to my River of Grass community brings a hearty burst of new energy to my spirit. The anticipation builds, my imagination soars, and I feel like I am coming in at full speed from third base, carrying with me the thrill of being in the game and sliding into home. And the best part is ... I’m always safe!



This year we welcome and embrace the **Reverend Amy Carol Webb** and her beloved, **Brooke Bell**, into our congregational family. Rev. Amy will be in the pulpit on the third weekend of each month, and on Christmas Eve. In addition, she will be working with the Board of Trustees on the planning, scheduling, and facilitation of workshops and activities that will help us deepen our faith, strengthen our commitment, enhance our outreach, and guide both our spirits and our actions in the direction of our five year vision.

Our Faith Development chairs have been collaborating with **Christy Schultz**, our new Faith Development Coordinator, and together they have planned a wonderful curriculum for our children and youth; our worship committee is busy lining up and coordinating lay led services for the weeks that Rev. Amy is not with us – so, you may want to come up with a relevant Sunday Service topic that you or your committee might like to share with members and guests on a Sunday morning; our Service and Social Justice Committee is busy planning how we can continue in our commitment of service to LifeNet4Families; and the Membership Committee is already busy coordinating the Pathways for Membership classes and new member Sundays! Finally, don’t forget that we have a variety of active committees, and small groups that make it easy to participate and contribute to the life and spirit of this River of Grass community.

The new season is here and we are all in the game. Together we will call the pitches, make the hits, go to bat for each other, and cheer each other on from the dugout. Game on!

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Leana Bresnahan, Committee Chair

The Membership Committee welcomes everyone back from their summer travels and vacations. We have missed seeing many of your smiling faces and are glad that everyone is safely back home.

Over the summer, we welcomed many guests and visitors to our worship services, as summer is traditionally the time families new to the area look for their new spiritual home and the slower summer pace also allows even those who have lived here for a while the opportunity to visit and explore. Many of our visitors are also telling us that they found their way to River of Grass through friends, so we hope everyone will keep up the good work of inviting friends to visit our wonderful congregation.

We conducted a Pathway to Membership class on August 5th, attended by four potential new members. With the help of nearly everyone in the congregation, we also planned the Welcome Back Picnic, an annual tradition at River of Grass, for Saturday, August 25th. However, Tropical Storm Isaac had other plans for us! The picnic had to be postponed and the new date will be announced soon.

We will celebrate our next New Member Sunday on September 9th. If you are interested in becoming a member at that time, please contact us right away at membership@riverofgrass.org. Also, we invite the entire congregation to attend the potluck New Member Lunch after worship service and hospitality time that day to celebrate our newest members. There will be a sign-up sheet in the hospitality area.

Our next Pathway to Membership class is planned for November 4th. However, if there is significant interest, we will find a Sunday in October to conduct one as well. Please sign up in the hospitality area.



BOARD MATTERS

Zena Tucker, Board Secretary

As Oprah would say: “Here We GO!” Your board hopes that you had a wonderful summer and that you are rested for this exciting year at River of Grass. The warm summer month of July, spent away from most board activities, was a re-energizing time for our Board members and many took advantage of the month off for a vacation, some for SUUSI (the Southeast Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute), and, yet, others made time for relaxation at home. Refreshed, the board took on some exciting tasks at the August meeting.



But, first, let’s report back on our meeting in June: The board established a new committee for Adult Faith Development with **Maddi Gutfreind** as chair. Her first responsibility was to oversee a new workshop series called “Healthy Inspirations”. Providing the proposal and putting together the program, **Carolyn SantAngelo** led your board to agree that this was a worthy project for our congregation.

Also in June, **Susan Juncosa**, our facilities committee chair, struggled to keep the air conditioning functioning. As a result, we have a new contractor (hopefully, a better one!) for the next year. Susan is seeking help with ongoing facility matters. Specifically, is anyone interested in being available to meet with a contractor during regular work hours? Or would you assist by being on call for the installation of hurricane shutters? Please email Susan at facilities@riverofgrass.org if you can help.

Financial matters were all in order for the Board meetings in June and August. We continue to see our budget working in the black, even with the added cost of the air conditioning repairs and the purchase of a new office computer.

In August, the Board President appointed the following committee chairpersons with support from the Board:

- ◆ New Incoming Committee Chairs:
 - ◆ Consulting Minister’s Committee on Ministry: **Diane Diaz & Esther Sampol**
 - ◆ Adult Faith Development: **Maddi Gutfreind**
 - ◆ Finance: **Janet Schwartz**
 - ◆ Service and Social Justice: **Judi Oltmans & Steve Jens-Rochow**
- ◆ Continuing Committee Chairs:
 - ◆ Auction: **Esther Sampol**
 - ◆ Facilities: **Susan Juncosa**
 - ◆ Faith Development: **Karen Gonzalez & Diane Lade**
 - ◆ Community Awareness: **Esther Sampol**
 - ◆ Membership: **Leana Bresnahan**
 - ◆ Shared Ministry: **Janet Schwartz & Diane Lade**
 - ◆ Worship: **Kathy Jens-Rochow**
 - ◆ Personnel Committee: **Diane Diaz, Esther Sampol, & Janet Schwartz**

Saving the best for last, the board reviewed, discussed, and voted to approve the contract for Consulting Minister **Reverend Amy Carol Webb**. In other words: It’s Official! (Hip Hip Hooray!) Plans are now underway to schedule her time with us. Rev. Amy will do one service per month (the third Sunday of each month) along with 6 additional 4-hour units each month. The board will decide the best use of Rev. Amy’s time with us; this happy task will be finalized at the “Brown Bag Board Retreat” scheduled for Sunday, August 26th, after the Welcome Back Sunday festivities. (Note: This event was postponed due to Tropical Storm Isaac.)

OUR FIRST AUCTION EVENT OF THE YEAR:

Back by Popular Demand –

A Masquerade Party

When: Saturday, September 29th, 7 - 10 pm

Donation: \$25 - Food, Drink, Music, and Dancing included. *(This event is sponsored by the Full Moon Daughters.)*

Contact: Auction@riverofgrass.org to purchase your tickets! Don’t miss out on this fun event!

Full Moon Daughter’s very own VJ, Spinderella Susan, will be playing hits and videos from the 60s through today. Don’t know – or remember -- how to do the Macarena, the Electric Slide or the Hustle? Or how about the Dougie or the GaGa? We’ll teach you!

Dust off your blue suede shoes and put on your prom best: ball gowns, hippie clothes, or any other dance wear that strikes your fancy - the more outrageous, the better. (Thrift stores, here we come!)



MEET CHRISTY SCHULTZ – OUR NEW FAITH DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Wendell Abern



When I asked Christy to send me an e-mail telling me a bit about herself, I found her narration to be so compelling that I have quoted her liberally throughout.

Born and raised in Hollywood, Florida, Christy grew up as the third of five sisters, in a very loving family that loved to travel, camp, and spend a lot of time outdoors.

Raised Catholic, Christy was educated in private Catholic schools, through high school. After high school, she attended FSU and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education.

“I have always been good with kids and I love teaching,” Christy says. “However, I don’t believe I am suited to traditional-type classroom teaching. After college, I became involved with the environmental movement, working for a non-profit organization. There, my role was to educate both the public and schools about the Everglades and their water supply. I moved to San Francisco with the organization and became a part of the politically active, socially adventurous and nature-loving community that makes up that vibrant city and stayed there for more than fourteen years.”

“I left behind my Catholic upbringing and delved into the hippy, pagan life... it was an amazing journey, full of new philosophies and perspectives, not to mention an intense love of Mother Earth. While there, after my work with the non-profit ended, I was lucky enough to become employed as an environmental educator - teaching children about the outdoor world. It was natural for me; I had found a love and a niche.”

Christy’s son, Cedar, was born at home fourteen years ago, with a midwife. “The experience,” Christy says, “was so spiritual and moved me so intensely that I branched out in the education field and began teaching other families about home birth, natural childbirth and parenting. To me it was another form of environmental education – just a different focus, but still one that taught about life.”

Quite a repertoire, wouldn’t you say?

Christy became a single mother when Cedar was almost two, and has been on her own ever since. In 2007, when Cedar was eight, she returned home to Florida. “I was delighted to be back with family,” Christy says, “but sorely missed the San Francisco area. I had grown so fond of the hills and trees and hiking a few times a week among the beautiful cliffs along the ocean.”

To fulfill her need to be outside in nature Christy explored as much as possible and enrolled in the Florida Master Naturalist course through the University of Florida and became an authority on Florida ecology. She now conducts weekly classes, educating home-schooled children, families and private schools about Florida’s natural history.

“A few of the families in my home-schooling group have attended River of Grass for many years,” Christy continues. “I had always heard about it, but did not make it a priority to make it out on a Sunday, despite being intrigued.”

Christy had met many Unitarian Universalists over the years, so she knew a “teeny bit about it.” This last spring, a friend told her about the OWL (Our Whole Lives) class and that Cedar was invited to attend. “It sounded fabulous to me,” Christy says. “I realized that it was time to be a part of a bigger community/family - to not only provide inner peace for me, but also for spiritual and moral guidance for my growing son. I believe we have found it. I love the services; I cry almost every time. I LOVE the people, they are so welcoming and friendly, and I love that Unitarian Universalism embraces diversity, freedom of belief, and respect, especially for nature.”

When they announced the job for Faith Development Coordinator, Christy realized she would be very suited for it. “I love the philosophy and goals; I love and work very well with children; I am an experienced educator and the schedule would complement my other programs. It would also encourage me to make a stronger commitment, especially for my son.”

“I am so very grateful for this opportunity and to be a part of this wonderful congregation of people. I can’t wait to see what happens next!”

FAITH DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Christy Schultz, Faith Development Coordinator

“The River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation values our children and understands the impact that faith development can have on the life of a child. We believe that through religious education our children will learn the value of worship and the importance of reaching inward and outward.”

Welcome children, youth, and adults!!!

It's that time of year again: families are home from vacation, the kids are returning to their studies, and River of Grass is gearing up for a fantastic and fun year of children and youth programs. We have wonderful things in store: Sunday programs for kids of all ages, Youth Group for the older kids, and field trips and social action projects for all.



We are proud of our long-running Faith Development program and are thankful for the commitment it takes to keep it running. Volunteers accomplish the majority of the work and we are always in search of more. If you feel you have an affinity for this work – as a teacher or fill-in teacher, a youth adviser, a party host or if you would like to contribute in any other way, we would welcome you with lots of hugs and open-arms!!

I would also like to express my gratitude and excitement for being able to join this amazing congregation as Faith Development Coordinator. I can't wait to get to know the kids and the families that follow. Our journey has begun!!

On **Sunday, September 9th, from 10:00-10:25am**, we will have an open house for the kids, the families, and the teachers to meet and mix and to get to know each other. Sunday classes begin, also, on this same day. (There will be fellowship on September 2nd, but no class.)

A little bit more ...

- ◆ Children, newborn to age three, are welcome in the nursery from 10am to 12noon, where they will be cared for with love, warmth, and acceptance and plenty of play.
- ◆ The Early Elementary School Program will learn all about the Unitarian Universalist community and get to know the celebrations, ceremonies, symbols, the congregation and the building that we call home.
- ◆ The Late Elementary School Program will reflect on attributes of our UU faith, such as integrity, courage, and love; and learn how to use those attributes as “tools” in their own lives.
- ◆ The Youth Program will explore topics that will help prepare them to become ethical decision makers; topics, such as fairness, generosity, and moderation will be discussed. We will also be continuing with our Youth Group. There will be social get-togethers, meetings, sleepovers, field trips, and “cons” – weekend trips to visit other Youth groups throughout the Florida District. Meeting times TBD.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

(Continued from page 3)

This is going to be an exciting year at River of Grass. Our new photo directory will be available in the next month or so. And Circle Suppers are coming back! You may ask, “Just what are Circle Suppers?” Circle Suppers are a great, informal way to meet and socialize with other congregational members and friends. Members, both new and old, friends and visitors, are all invited to participate. A group of 7 to 10 people meets at a host's home to share a potluck dinner and conversation. The host provides the entrée and the other guests provide the other parts of the meal as assigned by the host. This year we will have three events, in November, February, and May. Look for more information and sign up late September.

Many blessings to all as we begin another great year at River of Grass!

The children and youth begin every Sunday at service at 10:30am with the entire congregation in the sanctuary. At 10:45, after the “Story for All Ages” (all the young children gather on the carpet at the front), they will be blessed with a song as they leave to meet their groups for class. On occasion the children and youth will extend their time in the sanctuary with the entire community, allowing them to participate in intergenerational services and special events. Classes will end at 11:45am, giving you a chance to greet friends and socialize at coffee hour. Parents must either come to the classrooms and pick up their children, or wait for them to be escorted out by teachers. (Children will not be released unescorted when class ends.)

SERVICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Steve Jens-Rochow and Judi Oltmans, Committee Co-Chairs

“We are committed to healing injustice.”

Recognize that quote? It is the central part of our Congregational Mission and the purpose of the Service and Social Justice Committee (SSJC) is to present ways to achieve that part of our mission.

The **Service** component of SSJC:

This part of our name is probably more familiar to you than the Justice part of our charge. Every Sunday we give ½ of our plate to LifeNet4Families, every other month we help in the food pantry at LifeNet4Families, and in May we work in a post office packing food that postal carriers have brought in during the Postal Food Drive. And we collect donations several times during the year for groups in need. Helping others with hands on work is satisfying, sometimes transforming. “Work is love made visible” is a Quaker work camp proverb.

Don't forget our commitment to the UU Service Committee. We encourage congregational members to join during the Guest at Your Table program during the holiday season.

How else can we help our community? What is important? Come with your ideas to our next meeting: Tuesday, September 4th, at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend and bring their ideas to increase our service to people in need and to heal injustice.

The **Social Justice** component of SSJC:

Last year we worked on a letter writing campaign against the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, calling for a people's rights constitutional amendment. This Fall we have the possibility of working on voter registration and Get Out the Vote campaigns. And Women's Reproductive Justice became the UUA's new 4 year Study Action Issue at General Assembly. Shall we get involved? What other thoughts do you have for healing injustice?



Thank you to all the volunteers who helped out at our River of Grass volunteer day at LifeNet4Families on Saturday, July 7th. It's great to get out and make a difference in the community! Volunteers of all ages worked together to stock the pantry shelves and fill the boxes to be passed out to the needy.

Our next LifeNet4Families Volunteer Day is **Saturday, September 8th from 8:45 to 11:00am!** To sign-up for the Volunteer Day, please email ssjc@riverofgrass.org or sign up on Sunday at the Service and Social Justice corner in the hospitality area. LifeNet4Families is also in need of canned food donations, especially meat, beans or peanut butter. Food donations may be dropped off at the SSJC corner.

The ACTS school supply drive sponsored by SSJC was a huge success! Thank you to everyone who donated supplies; they were greatly appreciated.

Remember

Bring your ideas to the SSJC meeting on **Tuesday, September 4th, at 7 pm.**

FULL MOON DAUGHTERS

Diane Lade, Coordinator



Yeah, it's crazy hot. But beautiful Fall days are right around the corner. Soon it will be time for the Full Moon Daughters to head outside once again.

Our outdoor spirituality group for women and girls, Full Moon Daughters, is in its eighth year; we are still building meaningful relationships, instilling confidence in girls who want to explore things like paddling and sailing –without the boys -- and just having fun. We aim to offer an activity a month during our congregational year, and strive to keep it inclusive.

You can be a Full Moon Daughter and sleep in a hotel on a camping trip, and wander through a lovely garden. Or you can go on a 10-mile bike ride or kayak with dolphins.

You also don't need a daughter to be a Full Moon Daughter. This is not exclusively a mom-and-me group (although we love it when it happens). All River of Grass females, their family and friends are welcome.

Most of our outings are girls only, including two annual camping trips, one in November and one in February. But we do occasionally offer congregational events and include the guys. Last year, we bicycled through the Everglades in the moonlight and went snorkeling together.

Our ministry statement: "We seek to build an intergenerational community of women and girls, bonding through our shared love of nature. We welcome the personal search for meaning through activities and spiritual fellowship that connect us with the earth and each other. We honor our Seventh Principle through our respect of the interconnected web of life."



gUUrl power!

The only thing missing for us to have the best year ever? You! So come join us for our **Annual Brand New Year brunch on Saturday, September 15th**. This is our only "committee meeting" of the year – how great is THAT? – where we plan nine months of activities. We are a shared leadership group so different members volunteer to lead something each month. Bring your ideas. A sunrise meditation on the beach? A guided nature walk in a county park? We would love to hear about it!

The brunch will begin at 10 am at the home of [Diane Lade](#), in downtown Fort Lauderdale. Please RSVP at fullmoon-daughters@riverofgrass.org for directions, or watch for the sign-up sheets during fellowship hour. If you can't attend the brunch but still are interested, please let us know through email or sign-ups, and we will put you on our email list.

See you on the water, along the trail, and under the stars!

MASK MAKING WORKSHOP

Need a mask for the Masquerade Party? (See article on page 4.) A Mask Making Workshop (sponsored by the Spiritual Arts Group) will be held on Saturday Afternoon, September 22, from 1 until 4:30pm. All supplies for your magnificent accessory will be provided. Come and have some fun making your unique mask for the first Auction Event of the congregational year – the Masquerade Party. Watch for a signup sheet during hospitality hour or email: SpiritualArt@riverofgrass.org to sign up for the workshop.



Donation: \$10

RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ

Gayle Giese

The River of Grass Café is proud to kick off its 2nd season on Friday, September 28th with award-winning blues guitarist/singer/storyteller **Doug MacLeod**.



Although Doug now makes his home in Los Angeles, he became acquainted with the blues in St Louis in his teens and started playing country blues on acoustic guitar. MacLeod's formative blues instruction came from Ernest Banks who gave him the guiding principles of his music and performances: "Never play a note you don't believe. Never write or sing about what you don't know about."

MacLeod's performances preserve the tradition of the blues as a story-telling medium, expressed by his soulful voice and powerfully rhythmic acoustic guitar style. Doug has been nominated many times for Blues Music Awards with nominations in 2006 for "Best Song" (Dubb's Talkin' Politician Blues), "Acoustic Artist of the Year" (2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012), and "Acoustic Album of the Year" in 2012 (Brand New Eyes). His portrait is displayed in the Delta Blues Museum in Clarksdale, Mississippi. He received the Golden Note award for Best Original Recording (for his album You Can't Take My Blues). His songs have been featured in Grammy Award nominated albums; Albert King's I'm in a Phone Booth, Baby (1984) ("Your Bread Ain't Done"), and Albert Collins' Cold Snap (1986) ("Cash Talking, The Working Man's Blues").

MacLeod plays only his own compositions (of which he is credited with over 300), but his music has also been recorded by many other artists. He has also been a long-time contributor to Blues Revue magazine with his column "Doug's Back Porch."

Friday, September 28th, 8:00 pm

Tickets: \$15 in advance (www.riverofgrass.org; see Events)
\$20 at the door

Doors open at 7:30pm. Music starts at 8:00pm.

Drinks and delicious food from our
River of Grass chefs available!

Come hungry and bring your friends!

River of Grass Café' Sneak Peak – Next Month:

- ◆ Friday, October 19th: Jennings and Keller, wonderful acoustic musical duo from South Florida!

THE BELOVED SONGWEAVER

You know her as **Reverend Amy**. You may also know her as "the Beloved Songweaver". But did you know she's just released her 9th independent CD?!



Join Amy and a passel of Florida's finest musicians to welcome to the world "WELCOME HOME!" – volume two of Amy's tribute to the legend of Florida acoustic music. We'll be ringin' the rafters Saturday, September 8th at 7:30 at the Labyrinth Cafe in the UU Church of Ft. Lauderdale (details below)!

This verdant musical journey brings five new songs from Amy – like the pastoral meditation, "In My Florida," a moment in the festival life, "Wakin' Up in White Springs" and the heart-bursting title track "Welcome Home!" – as well as five lush tributes to Florida troubadours gone before – including Will McLean's haunting "Dance of the Sandhill Crane," Steve Blackwell's call to honor our ancestors, "The Line," and Ann Thomas' tender ode for plight of the manatee, "The Storyteller."

As is her favorite to do, Amy recorded half the CD live at the Will McLean Festival campground, involving as many Florida musicians as she could fit under the canopy of a camper, then finished off with the magic of Ron Litschauer's Acoustic Music Productions Studio in West Palm Beach.

The concert likewise features musicians coming from near and far who played at that festival canopy – Mindy Simmons, Lis & Lon Williamson (Gatorbone), Ron and Bari Litschauer and more!

There's just one place you want to be Saturday night, September 8th – join Amy in the music at the Labyrinth Cafe. Refreshments, give-aways and all manner of joy will abound!

What: Rev. Amy Carol Webb's "WELCOME HOME!" CD Release Concert with special guests Mindy Simmons, Lis and Lon Williamson (Gatorbone), Ron and Barry Litschauer (Roadside Revue) and more!

When: Saturday, Sept. 8, 2012 – 7:30 p.m.

Where: Labyrinth Cafe, 3970 NW 21 Ave, Ft. Lauderdale

Tickets: \$17 advance/\$20 door

For tickets: call 954-478-8637 or email Susan Moss at oz-woman321@aol.com

RIVER OF GRASS SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Diane Lade and Janet Schwartz, Shared Group Ministries Co-Chairs



Small Group Ministries at River of Grass fall into two categories. One type is referred to as “affinity groups,” which attract people of common interests. The Men’s Group, Women’s Group, Full Moon Daughters, dUudes, Spiritual Art Group and bUUKies Reading Group are examples of these. Then there are covenant groups. These gatherings were created so members of the congregation could more deeply explore spiritual topics that typically would not be part of a hospitality hour conversation. Unitarian Universalists acknowledge this format for small group ministries originated with the mega-churches several years ago. The larger congregations understood that they needed a way for congregations of a thousand-plus to bond with each other if they wanted to keep members engaged, and realized one way to do this was to create many small groups within the larger whole. Small groups encourage sharing, and give people a chance to know each other more deeply. The fact that the topics being discussed are very personal seems to accelerate this process. As a general rule, covenant groups are no larger than about a dozen people. Once a group grows to that size, the agreement is to “birth” a new one.

Covenant groups are so called because we literally “covenant” – or make a spiritual promise – to be and grow together. Most groups meet once month, either on a weeknight, during the weekday, on a Saturday morning or on a Sunday afternoon. We are led by a member of the congregation who has attended facilitator training, and follow a session outline that may have been prepared by a former minister at River of Grass or one available online through the UUA Small Group Ministry Network. Many sessions revolve around the classic spiritual themes: What is the purpose of suffering? Why do we pray? What is the purpose of religious community? Others have a more contemporary feel: How do we strike a balance in our lives? What can we do to preserve the earth?

When the group forms, each member pledges, or covenants, to grow together, and keep all discussions confidential. This group format is not a support group – people who need guidance with personal issues are better off seeking professional help - but we do have a personal check-in at the beginning of each session. Through that, and the highly personal nature of the conversation these topics engender, we come to know each other very deeply.

If the idea of participating in a small group ministry appeals to you, and you would like to know more about joining one of the groups at River of Grass, please contact either Janet Schwartz or Diane Lade at SharedMinistry@riverofgrass.org.

COVENANT GROUPS – GOT ONE?

Janet Schwartz, Shared Group Ministries Co-Chair

If you ask anyone who has been a member of a covenant group at River of Grass, they will probably agree that covenant groups exist for two simple yet profound purposes – to help you grow in community, friendship and belonging with other members of our congregation, and to help you grow in your spiritual beliefs through focused and centered conversations about things that matter.



In September, the Committee on Shared Ministry will be sharing information about opportunities for you to join a Covenant Group at River of Grass, so please follow the postings in the weekly email to learn more.

Covenant groups (and all other small group ministries) are open to all adults; you do not have to be a member of our congregation to join one. Questions about becoming a covenant group member may be directed to Janet Schwartz at 954-993-4958 or at CovenantGroups@riverofgrass.org.



SEPTEMBER 2012



Sun.	2nd	10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45 am	Sunday Service Sunday Classes
Tues.	4th	7:00-8:30pm 7:00-9:00pm	Healthy Inspirations – Adult Faith Develop- ment Workshop Service and Social Justice Committee
Sat.	8th	8:45-11:30am 7:30pm	Volunteer Day at LifeNet4Families Rev. Amy Carol Webb's CD Release Concert
Sun.	9th	10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45am	New Member Sunday Sunday Service Sunday Classes
Mon.	10th	7:15-9:00pm	Finance Committee
Tues.	11th	4:00-7:00pm 6:00-8:00pm	River of GREENS Being a UU Parent – Adult Faith Development Workshop
Wed.	12th	7:00-10:00pm	Board Meeting
Sat.	15th	10:00-12:00noon	Full Moon Daughter Plan- ning Brunch
Sun.	16th	10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45am 11:45-12:15pm 12:30-2:00pm	Welcome Back & Water Communion Sunday Sunday Service Sunday Classes Board Report Back Swamp Rose Covenant Group
Wed.	19th	7:00-9:00pm	bUUKies Book Group
Sat.	22nd	10:00am-4:00pm 1:00-4:00pm	Board Retreat Mask Workshop – Spirit- ual Art Group
Sun.	23rd	10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45 am 12:00-2:00pm	Sunday Service Sunday Classes Blood Drive

Mon.	24th	7:00-9:00pm	Women's Group
Tues.	25th	4:00-7:00pm 6:00-8:00pm	River of GREENS Being a UU Parent – Adult Faith Development Workshop
Fri.	28th	8:00pm-10:00pm	Café Concert: Doug Mac Leod
Sat.	29th	7:00pm-10:00pm	Auction Event: Masquer- ade Ball
Sun.	30th	10:30-11:30am 10:45-11:45 am	Sunday Service Sunday Classes

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

- October 2: Healthy Inspirations – Adult Faith Develop-
ment Workshop
- October 6: Auction Event: Latin Potluck Party
- October 9: Being a UU Parent – Adult Faith Development
Workshop
- October 19: Café Concert: Jennings and Keller
- October 21: Rev. Amy Carol Webb Sunday Service
- October 23: Being a UU Parent – Adult Faith Development
Workshop
- October 27: SE Cluster Meeting at River of Grass

