

Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION
 DAVIE, FLORIDA SUMMER 2019

WHAT A YEAR! WHAT A CONGREGATION! WHAT A JOURNEY!

Scott May



As our congregational year winds down, I'm in awe of the vitality, love, and spirit of River of Grass! Our members and friends continue to bring seemingly endless energy and love to our beloved community. And our dedicated staff has diligently and skillfully guided us on our journey. It takes many hands to row this river, and fortunately, many hands are here....as well as many hearts!

Our Annual Meeting was held May 19th, with nearly half of our members present. We sang, we conducted business, we celebrated - all in the spirit of deep listening, honest sharing, and covenant. Our members and friends have generously pledged, reaching the highest amount in 10 years or longer. This is a

testament to continuing what River of Grass offers -

- meaningful worship
- revitalizing music, singing, and concerts
- impactful outreach, service and social justice
- a nurturing environment for our children and youth
- a warm and safe place to share and learn, be ourselves, and grow our spirits.

I am grateful to be part of this amazing community. And I can't wait to see how our journey unfolds from here!



WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY AT 10:30 AM

June Monthly Theme: *To be a People of Beauty*

- June 9 **Summer Farewell**
Rev. Amy (with Rita Cherubini)
- June 16 **Poetry Service**
Zena Tucker (with Amy Horton-Tavera)
- June 23 **The "C" Words: Covenants, Conversations, Conflict, Community, and Congregation**
Cypress Springs Covenant Group (with Karen LeFever)
- June 30 **General Assembly Worship Service**
(with Karen LeFever)



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OUR SUNDAY LOCATION

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

EVERY SUNDAY

Worship Service: 10:30 to 11:30 am. **Hospitality Hour:** 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.
Faith Development Classes: 11:00 am to 12:00 noon

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.



River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Phone 954-723-7877

www.riverofgrassuu.org

office@riverofgrassuu.org

Minister Rev. Amy Carol Webb

minister@riverofgrassuu.org

Newsletter

newsletter@riverofgrassuu.org

Editor Melissa Buehler

Copy Diane Diaz

Layout Brit Lundell

Board of Trustees

board@riverofgrassuu.org

President Scott May

Vice President Rita Cherubini

Secretary Bruce Ngo

Treasurer Brit Lundell

Trustee Riley Cothran

Trustee Linda Crain

Trustee Linda Lathroum

Trustee Marilisa Lawless

Standing Committees

contact info at www.riverofgrassuu.org

Faith Development Diane Lade

Finance Rob Giblin-Davis

Membership Zena Tucker

Worship Kathy Jens-Rochow

Staff

contact info at www.riverofgrassuu.org

Choir Director Gayle Giese

Dir. of Faith Development Karen Gonzalez

Office Administrator Sandy Blair Chibnick

Strategy Teams and Other Resources

contact info at www.riverofgrassuu.org

Caring Deb Giblin-Davis &

Georgette Lewis

Community Awareness *Open*

Concert (Café) Robby Greenberg &

Aaron Stang

Congregational Grammarian Pam Schrimsher

Facilities Management Janet Schwartz &

Riley Cothran

Facilities Rental Ken Bresnahan

fUUndraising Kathy Jens-Rochow &

Susan Juncosa

Hospitality Zena Tucker

Nominating Zena Tucker

Pastoral Care Riley Cothran & Pat Katz

Personnel Rev. Amy Carol Webb &

Janet Schwartz

Planned Giving Kip Barkley

Service, Social Justice & Steve Jens-Rochow

Green Team

Shared Ministry Diane Lade &

Janet Schwartz

Stewardship Kathy Jens-Rochow &

Rita Cherubini

Strategy Team Coordination Marjie Loring,

Susan Juncosa, Linda Lathroum,

& Brit Lundell

Web Design Esther Sampol &

Marjie Loring

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.

STAY CONNECTED!

Between issues of *Reflections* you can stay connected to the River of Grass Congregation the following ways:

- ◆ **Sign up for our weekly email** with events and news: send an email to office@riverofgrassuu.org
- ◆ **Visit our Facebook page:** www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu
- ◆ **Follow us on Twitter:** @RiverOfGrassUU or www.twitter.com/riverofgrassuu
- ◆ **Visit our calendar:** www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html (or go to: www.riverofgrassuu.org – click on Events – Calendar)
- ◆ **Join our MeetUp group:** www.meetup.com/riverofgrassuu



NEW HOME ENVISIONING

Scott May

A New Home Envisioning meeting was held after service on 4/28/2019, with 20-30 members present at any given time. The participants reviewed the UUA Consultant Report recommendations: “River of Grass is ready to move toward a successful relocation effort and capital campaign to finance the investment in a new facility.”

Participants identified New Home needs (in addition to everything we have at River of Grass), in priority order:

- ◆ Bigger Space (square footage)
- ◆ Outdoor Space (natural)
- ◆ Location Accessibility (close to major roads, easy to find, safe, central, visibility)

Eight New Home options were reviewed, and participants identified these top priority options for further research:

- ◆ Buy a building (possibly large enough to become a landlord)
- ◆ Stay here (possibly expanding into more space at our current location)

Participants also felt we should explore opportunities with:

- ◆ TAO Center (Jewish organization that rents from us)
- ◆ UUCFL (UU Congregation in east Fort Lauderdale)

A team is in place to research and discern New Home options, with the goal of sharing details with the congregation next fall. Thank you to the team!

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| ◆ Rita Cherubini | ◆ Maureen Lundell | ◆ Mallory (Friend) |
| ◆ Karen Lefever | ◆ Pixie Wright | ◆ Karen Gonzalez |
| ◆ Rick Tucker | ◆ Linda Lathroum | ◆ Steve Jens-Rochow |
| ◆ Brit Lundell | ◆ Diane Lade | ◆ Scott May |

If you wish to be part of this exciting journey, please reach out to Scott May (president@riverofgrassuu.org).

Getting to Know UU's



RACHEL CARSON (1907-1964)

UNITARIAN, MARINE BIOLOGIST, WRITER AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST

Rachel Carson was born on a family farm near Springdale, Pennsylvania where she spent considerable time exploring the land. An avid reader, she began writing stories (often involving animals) at age eight and had her first story published at age ten.

Perhaps the finest nature writer of the Twentieth Century, Carson is remembered today as the woman who challenged the notion that humans could obtain mastery over nature with chemicals. Her sensational book, *The Silent Spring*, warned of the dangers to all-natural systems from the misuse of chemical pesticides such as DDT. Her actions raised the awareness about climate change, rising sea-levels, melting Arctic glaciers and many other interconnected environmental changes.

“Underlying all of these problems of introducing contamination into our world is the question of moral responsibility – responsibility not only to our own generation to those of the future.”

Sources: *Wikipedia & biography.com*

ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

Scott May

River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation Annual Meeting was held May 19th, with 61 of 128 members present. The following business was conducted:

Our Mission Statement is now:

- ◆ “Nurture our spirits, love intentionally, create a just and healthy planet.”

Our Board of Trustees 2019-2020:

- ◆ Vice President (2-Year Term): Susan Juncosa
- ◆ Secretary (2-Year Term): Linda Lathroum
- ◆ Trustee (2-Year Term): Riley Cothran
- ◆ Trustee (2-Year Term): Rick Tucker
- ◆ Youth Rep (1-Year Term): Marina deMoraes
- ◆ Trustee (1-Year Term): Linda Morgan Crain
- ◆ Continuing for 1 more year:
 - President: Scott May
 - Treasurer: Brit Lundell
 - Trustee: Marilisa Lawless

Our Nominating Committee 2019-2020:

- ◆ Ahysa Boutron
- ◆ Edgar Navarro
- ◆ Georgette Lewis

Several **Bylaws** were amended to:

- ◆ Resolve inaccuracies
- ◆ Clarify wording and improve consistency
- ◆ Remove gender pronouns
- ◆ Expand inclusivity
- ◆ Add references to “teams”

We also recognized the invaluable **congregational contributions** given by so many:

- ◆ The beloved staff of River of Grass
 - Minister: Rev. Amy Carol Webb
 - Office Administrator: Sandy Blair Chibnick
 - Choir Director: Gayle Giese
 - Faith Development. Director: Karen Gonzalez
 - Pianists: Brenda Parker, Anne Smith, Gayle Giese
 - Sunday Assistant: Paulina Guzman Blanco
- ◆ Standing Committees
 - Faith Development: Diane Lade
 - Finance: Rob Giblin Davis
 - Membership: Zena Tucker
 - Worship: Kathy Jens-Rochow
- ◆ Strategy Team Coordination:
 - Overall: Marjie Loring
 - Love Liaison: Susan Juncosa / Kristine Barkley
 - Learn Liaison: Linda Lathroum
 - Lead Liaison: Brit Lundell

Our Budget 2019-2020:

	<u>Budget</u>
<u>Income</u>	
Annual Giving	217,710
Plate	12,000
Spec. Coll. for Outreach	2,050
Fundraising (incl Auction)	16,900
Concerts & Café	7,000
Rental Income	11,000
Other Income	8,040
Grants	3,750
Total Income	278,450
<u>Expenses</u>	
Outreach	9,490
Operations	
Rent Expense	88,585
Utilities/Maintenance	20,532
Insurance	3,200
Total Facilities	112,317
All Other Operating Exp	6,749
Total Operating Exp	119,066
Denominational Support	9,092
Intern Program	7,500
Committees/Teams	
All Committees	5,968
Training (Leadership)	1,625
Registrations	1,275
Total Committees	8,868
Staff (incl benefits)	
Minister	89,404
Religious Education	21,677
Office Admin. (25 hrs)	34,167
Choir Director	8,322
Sunday Assistant	4,077
Pianist	8,486
Workers Comp/Other	1,283
Guest Speakers	500
Total Staff	167,917
Total Expenses	321,934
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(43,484)

ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

(Continued from page 4)

- ◆ Key Leaders:
 - Caring: Kristine Barkley, Deb Giblin-Davis, Georgette Lewis
 - Concert Café: Robby Greenberg, Aaron Stang
 - Facility Mgmt: Janet Schwartz, Riley Cothran
 - Facility Rental: Ken Bresnahan
 - FUUndraising: Susan Juncosa, Kathy Jens-Rochow
 - Grammarian: Pam Schrimsher
 - Hospitality: Zena Tucker
 - Newsletter: Melissa Buehler, Monica Dyer, Brit Lundell, Diane Diaz
 - Nominating: Zena Tucker
 - Pastoral Care: Riley Cothran, Pat Katz
 - Personnel: Rev Amy, Janet Schwartz
 - Planned Giving: Kip Barkley
 - Security: Scott May
 - SSJGT: Steve Jens-Rochow
 - Shared Ministry: Diane Lade, Janet Schwartz
 - Stewardship: Kathy Jens-Rochow, Rita Cherubini
 - Web Design: Esther Sampol, Marjie Loring
- ◆ Board of Trustees
 - Brit Lundell
 - Bruce Ngo
 - Kristine Barkley
 - Linda Lathroum
 - Marilisa Lawless
 - Marjie Loring
 - Riley Cothran
 - Rita Cherubini
 - Scott May
 - Vernon Allen

Thank you to the entire RoG congregation!!



Gerri Mikulski (6/1)
Audrey Stang (6/2)
Pat Katz (6/3)
Bridget Morris (6/5)
Hal Hamblen (6/10)
Amy Horton-Tavera (6/11)
Diane Diaz (6/12)
Devon Smith (6/12)
Valerie Pellegrini (6/16)
Melissa Buehler (6/18)
Alan Meerow (6/21)
Grant Basham (6/22)
Rita Cherubini (6/24)
Anne Smith (6/24)
Georgia Brown (6/27)
Robby Greenberg (6/28)
Kyle Leineweber (6/29)
Kip Barkley (7/5)
Liz Perez (7/7)
Andy Bunce (7/9)
Carolyn Moore (7/12)
Eileen Smith-Cavros (7/13)
Pixie Wright (7/14)
Karrie Jacks (7/14)
Ed Lewis (7/19)
June McCulloch (7/22)
Jody Dowgray (7/23)
Kristine Barkley (7/23)
Sheila Klein (7/25)
Bruce Ngo (7/26)
Bryan Mann (7/29)
John Perez (7/31)
Kris Stewart (8/1)
Erin Robinson Enwright (8/7)
Scott Hemeon (8/8)
Scott May (8/8)
Bruce Seidenstein (8/16)
Mallory McLaren (8/24)
Patty Miller (8/30)
Ahysa Boutron (8/30)



FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Karen Gonzalez



It is with much joy and a little trepidation that I share with you my acceptance into the Unitarian Universalist Association's Religious Education Credentialing Program. With a goal of completion in the Spring of 2022, I begin my journey of study and contemplation. I am excited for the possibilities my explorations will afford us here at River of Grass! Aside from attending training modules, I will also be making my way through a long list of reading material and videos. That should keep me plenty busy while on the road (and in the air) this summer!

I do love to travel and one of the stops I try to fit into every city I visit is a trip to the local UU congregation. I can't always schedule around a Sunday, so sometimes it's just a quick look at where my local tribe worships. While in Puerto Rico this past Spring with the Full Moon Daughters, we met with the local UUs at a neighborhood library for a "church in a box" service. Last Fall, my husband and I captured a selfie in front of the Southernmost UU Congregation, One Island Family, in Key West. Our family's Thanksgiving weekend in Charleston

gave us the opportunity to wander through the historic Unitarian Church Cemetery, where nature has embraced gravestones dating back nearly 150 years, including that of the famed Annabel Lee.



To where might your summer wanderings lead you? If you find yourself at the doors of one of our sister congregations, take a photo. We'll share them on the hallway bulletin board. If you find yourself inside the doors enjoying a summer worship service, don't forget to take the kids and talk about the experience; what was familiar, what was different, was there anything you want to bring home and share with us? Our UU world is a little small here in Broward County, but the opportunities for a UU experience on the road are endless. I look forward to hearing about yours!



LETTERS

to the Editor

REFLECTIONS ON THE RIVER

We want to hear from you! Do you have thoughts and/or questions about current events, our strategic plan, new home, etc. that you would like to share with our congregation? Consider submitting a letter to the editor! (newsletter@riverofgrassuu.org)

And finally, don't forget to gather some water on your adventures. **Water Communion Sunday** is September 15th! We'll bless our backpacks just before school begins on August 11th.

FRIENDLINESS, MINISTER, AND MUSIC KEEP 'EM COMIN'

Gayle Giese, Choir Director



The UU Association of Membership Professionals say that after **Friendliness**, the **Minister** and the **Music** (in that order) are the top reasons that visitors return to a congregation. I also read that **innovation** is essential to grow membership. With innovation in mind, let's take a moment to consider music ministry at the River.

Our Music Ministry Statement:

- ◆ To select quality, appropriate, and relevant music, presented with excellence.
- ◆ To involve all who are interested in order to enhance the worship service, touch hearts, and deliver the message in a way that words alone cannot.

At the River, we are blessed with many excellent musicians, but who coordinates and connects them, creating vibrant ensembles to make **every** worship service unforgettable?

How do we involve and welcome everyone that wants to participate in our music ministry, including our children, young adults and people of all abilities? How do we advertise our music and how do we attract more musicians, including choristers?

The UUA supplies short descriptions to clarify staff positions:

- ◆ The **Music Director** (or Dir. of Music Ministry) directs the music program, usually in consultation with the minister, and has overall accountability for the program. Responsible for program administration, including budget. May supervise other music staff. Personally, or through others, organizes and directs the choir(s), selects the music for worship, plays the organ or other instruments. May engage other musicians and supervise their performance. Typically, has at least one degree in Music.
- ◆ The **Choir Director** directs the choirs and/or other vocal groups. Often works under a music director. (I am your 1/4-time Choir Director.)
- ◆ The **Organist/Keyboardist/Instrumentalist** accompanies the choir during services, plans keyboard music, and also performs as a solo musician. May be responsible for maintenance and repair of instruments. Usually works in concert with a music director. (Brenda Parker is our principal pianist. I play once a month, and Anne Smith substitutes.)



With these descriptions in mind, how could we grow music ministry, which would increase joy in worship *and* membership at River of Grass? Linda Lathroum and I will be attending the AUUMM (Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries) Convention in July and we will ponder this question and discuss with others and with you. We look forward to sharing some new innovative ideas!

THE RIVER OF GRASS CHOIR VISITS LIFENET4FAMILIES

Gayle Giese

In his poem "Beyond Borders," Rick Hoyt writes, "Go forth, into the anxiety and sadness and loneliness and strangeness of some other place. Carry with you the love and laughter of this place, and let it light your spirit and your life and your way." I felt like that's what our River of Grass Choir did at LifeNet4Families. Judi Oltmans asked the choir to take a month, and so in April we stocked shelves and packed boxes and sang "Love Is" in the dining area. The music was so unexpected that I felt it sparked interest and joy in an otherwise lonely, sad, or anxious day. We thank Judi for asking us to visit, and we will be grateful to, once again, go "beyond borders," carrying the love and laughter and song of River of Grass.



Happiness is singing in the *Choir*



No experience
required

**IMPORTANT DATES:
LAST CHOIR PRACTICE
THIS CONGREGATION YEAR: SUNDAY, JUN 9TH
CHOIR MORNING TALK & SWEETS:
SUNDAY JUN 23RD FROM 9:15-10:00 AM
CHOIR RESUMES:
SUNDAY, AUG 18TH FROM 9:00-10:00 AM**



riverofgrassuu.org

Contact Gayle Giese choirdirector@riverofgrassuu.org

Photo by Andrew Gustar, <https://goo.gl/f6R9fd>



EVENTS

Friday, June 7	6:30-9:00p	River Mixer Peace & Justice potluck	River of Grass
Saturday, June 8	9:00-11:00a	LifeNet4Families volunteer day	1 NW 33 rd Terrace Ft Lauderdale
Saturday, June 8	11:30a-2:00p	SSJGT presents Citizens Climate	River of Grass
Sunday, June 9	After service	Active shooter training for adults	River of Grass
Tuesday, June 11	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Friday, June 14	7:00-9:00p	Drum Circle w/ Rev Amy	River of Grass
Saturday, June 15	11:00a-5:00p	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction – Silent Retreat	River of Grass
Sunday, June 16	12:00-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #2	River of Grass
Tuesday, June 18	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Wednesday, June 19	7:15-9:15p	bUUKies Book Group	River of Grass
Thursday, June 20	4:00-6:30p	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction	River of Grass
Thursday, June 20	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Saturday, June 22	12:30-1:30p	Membership meeting	River of Grass
Sunday, June 23	9:15a	Choir Morning Talk & Sweets	River of Grass
Tuesday, June 25	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Thursday, June 27	4:00-6:30p	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction	River of Grass
Thursday, June 27	7:00-8:30p	New Home Envisioning meeting	River of Grass
Saturday, June 29	9:00-11:00a	Greeter and Hospitality Appreciation brunch	River of Grass
Tuesday, July 2	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Saturday, July 6	9:00a-12:00p	Congregational work day	River of Grass
Sunday, July 7	12:30-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #3	River of Grass
Tuesday, July 9	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Wednesday, July 10	7:00-9:00p	SSJGT presents Climate Reality Project	River of Grass
Saturday, July 13	9:00-11:00a	LifeNet4Families volunteer day	1 NW 33 rd Terrace Ft Lauderdale
Thursday, July 18	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Tuesday, July 23	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Thursday, July 25	7:00-8:30p	New Home Envisioning meeting	River of Grass
Sunday, July 28	12:30-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #4	River of Grass
Tuesday, July 30	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Thursday, August 1	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Friday, August 2	6:00-9:00p	River Mixer	River of Grass
Saturday, August 3	9:00a-12:00p	Congregational work day	River of Grass
Sunday, August 4	12:00-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #5	River of Grass
Tuesday, August 6	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Saturday, August 10	9:00-11:00a	LifeNet4Families volunteer day	1 NW 33 rd Terrace Ft Lauderdale
Sunday, August 11	12:15-1:30p	Facilitator and Greeter training	River of Grass
Tuesday, August 13	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Thursday, August 15	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Sunday, August 18	12:00-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #6	River of Grass
Tuesday, August 20	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Wednesday, August 21	7:00-9:00p	Faith Development meeting	River of Grass
Wednesday, August 21	7:15-9:15p	bUUKies Book Group	River of Grass
Tuesday, August 27	7:15-8:15p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass

IT'S SUMMERTIME, SUMMERTIME, SUM, SUM, SUMMERTIME!

Ah, summertime in Florida! Heat, humidity, sun and . . .
At the River, a time for our summer lay led services.

We continue a long time UU tradition of giving our minister the summer off – to regenerate, renew and reinvigorate. Our summer Sunday services are special to us with members of the congregation creating meaningful and spiritual services.

We are looking for a few good people to fill out the summer. Maybe you would like to try your hand at doing a service in August? We provide lots of support and encouragement to help our lay leaders. Here's some thoughts that might help with the inspiration:

Words of Encouragement

- ◆ Something you wish was said to you when you were growing up
- ◆ What you tell (or will tell) your kids to help them
- ◆ Words/Actions to help others

Here. Now. You

- ◆ Being present in the moment
- ◆ Mindfulness
- ◆ Walking softly on the earth

Try Again Tomorrow

- ◆ What helped you succeed?

Gratitude

- ◆ Remembering a person who helped you
- ◆ Forgiveness



Contact worship@riverofgrassuu.org to see if you can share your inspiration through a Sunday service.

WITNESS IN HOMESTEAD ON FATHERLESS FATHER'S DAY JUNE 16.

This Father's Day there will be thousands of teens at the Immigration Detention Center in Homestead who will be without parents, grandparents or anyone to give them love and a hug. This is the result of our government's cruel, mean-spirited policy of taking children away from families seeking asylum at the US border, combined with the practice of grabbing teenagers who've crossed the border in an attempt to be united with loved ones already here, and sending them to private, for-profit detention centers like the one run by Caliburn Corporation in Homestead, Florida.

The government's motive is to discourage other immigrants from coming to the US for help. The Caliburn Corporation's purpose in delaying the reunification of these children with loving families awaiting them seems to stem from the fact that it makes millions of dollars a day in profit, paid by the government from our taxes, for imprisoning these children as long as possible.

Since February, thoughtful people have been maintaining a daily vigil outside the walls of this children's prison asking that it be closed down and that the children be immediately reunited with their families. They call out to the children over the wall and hold up signs of love the children can see.

More than three hundred people – largely from religious institutions including UU from around the state and around the country – protested this cruel imprisonment of children for profit on Mother's Day. The Interfaith vigil and march on Father's Day, June 16 promises to be bigger. Sign up at coffee hour to join the Witness. We will rent a bus or van. Rev. Amy is joining us.

Karen Lee Wald SSJGT@riverofgrassuu.org

RIVER OF GRASS TEAM AT POSTAL FOOD DRIVE FOR LIFE^{NET}4FAMILIES

Judi Oltmans



LifeNet4Families

Cooperative Feeding Program

We would also like to express our gratitude to Gayle Giese and the River of Grass Choir. Choir members Riley, Ken and Leana, Allen and Gayle, Geri, Kris, London, and Linda volunteered together at LifeNet on Saturday morning, April 13th and followed up with a beautiful song in the dining room! Thank you also to Lucy, Art and Kitty for volunteering along with the Choir. Healing injustice in our community is part of our River of Grass Mission and volunteering at LifeNet4Families is one way to put our mission into action.



Thank you to our enthusiastic volunteers who helped at this year's Postal Food Drive on May 11th! We had more than 20 volunteers at the Plantation Post Office branch checking food "best used by" dates, sorting and stacking 11,800 lbs. of canned food and dry goods brought in by the letter carriers. Our special appreciation goes to Zena Tucker, our Postal Food Drive leader! Zena and Rick arrived at 3:00p and stayed until after 8:00! Thank you! All of the Postal Food Drive donations from 11 Post Office Branches went to LifeNet4Families, which will help keep their pantry stocked for many months.



Volunteering at LifeNet4Families doesn't stop for the summer! Come and see what a difference LifeNet makes in so many people's lives. You can help out in the pantry organizing and stocking the shelves, serve in the dining room, sort and hang clothing, or work in the kitchen doing a variety of tasks. High School students will earn service hours for volunteering. If your River of Grass Covenant or other group would like to get together for a service project on a Saturday morning at LifeNet4Families please contact us at ssjgt@riverofgrassuu.org. Our upcoming LifeNet4Families volunteer mornings are **June 8th, July 13th and August 10th**.

Can't make it to LifeNet? Every Sunday you can bring canned foods and clothing for LifeNet4Families to River of Grass and place them in the basket at the SSJGT corner. They are always in need of peanut butter and canned meats such as tuna, chicken or beef.

RIVER OF GRASS COMPOSTERS

Judi Oltmans

Thank you to our Composters who "recycled" our River of Grass compost this year! A big thank you also goes to the Hospitality volunteers! Every Sunday morning, they put the coffee grounds and fruit and vegetable scraps into our new, shiny River of Grass compost container. Instead of ending up in the landfill, it took on new life in the compost piles at the homes of our Composters: Steve, Scott, Deb, Karen, Judi, Geri and Rev. Amy. If you are interested in taking home our compost one Sunday please contact the Service and Social Justice Green Team at ssjgt@riverofgrassuu.org. If you have a compost, post a photo of it at [#riverofgrasscomposts](https://twitter.com/riverofgrasscomposts). Go green!

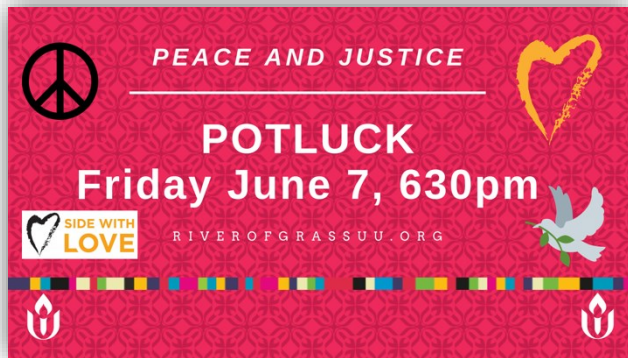
CAPITAL FUND ANNUAL MEETING

Kip Barkley, Foundation Treasurer

Welcome Ed Lewis and Melissa Buehler to our Board. Kathy Jens-Rochow, Ahysa Boutron, Roy Schwartz, and Kip Barkley will continue to serve on our Board. Thanks to Rick Tucker and Susan Juncosa who are moving off.

We have changed our name to the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation Capital Foundation, Inc. Henceforth we shall be known as "the Foundation" that manages the Capital Fund (\$731,344) and the Legacy Fund (\$290). We also tidied up our Bylaws and Mission Statement. Next, we will proceed with applying for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the IRS.

MEMBERSHIP



Pace and Justice Potluck, June 7 at 6:30pm. Bring a friend, bring the whole family and a dish to share. We will enjoy fellowship and food followed by a brief discussion on an important topic: Peace and Justice. Build connections while learning more about our second principle: “Justice, equity and compassion in human relations”. For more information, see Zena Tucker or email membership@riverofgrassuu.org

POETRY SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



Poetry Service – June 16. Do you enjoy poetry? Members are invited to submit a poem for our “Poetry of our Lives” service. The theme is (you guessed it) Father, although other themes are accepted. Note: We welcome all poems, but we will not be able to present all of them. Kindly keep them brief – no more than 4 minutes reading time. Email Zena Tucker at membership@riverofgrassuu.org not later than June 5 if interested.

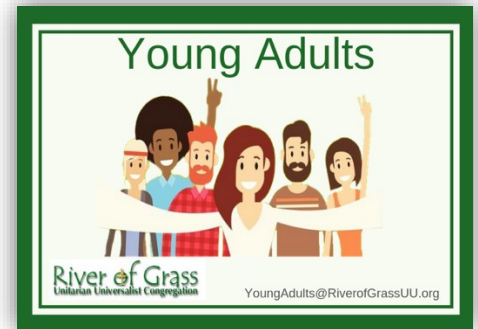
YUUNG ADULTS

Linda Lathroum

The YUung Adults are an intentional community that uplifts and inspires each other. We seek to grow together while enjoying life to the fullest.

This year we have had three events: “Yummy Thai,” “Bowling Fun,” and “Movie Night!” They were all wonderful ways to get to know each other more deeply while having fun!

We are planning several summer events: Karaoke night, another movie night, and possibly even a beach picnic. We will also have an envisioning meeting early in the Fall as our groups continues to evolve. For more information about upcoming events, please email youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org.



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

Devon and family moved to Weston in the summer of 2018 for her husband’s promotion to a VP role with the YMCAs of South Florida. Devon is originally from California, but spent 20 years in Washington D.C. where she received a Master’s degree in Exercise Physiology. She currently



works as a fitness trainer and a Realtor. As a former competitive gymnast, she is happiest in the gym but also enjoys yoga, the beach, and traveling. Tyler is in the third grade at Eagle Point Elementary school. He loves playing Fortnite & Minecraft on the computer and watching his favorite “youtubers” post live videos. Elise is in preschool at A Children’s Carousel. She loves playing with her dolls, playing doctor, doing gymnastics and ballet, and going to the playground.

Mallory is new to River of Grass but not to Unitarian Universalism. In 2016 she began her journey back to life in congregation with the Washington Ethical Society, an Ethical Culture congregation which is part of the American Ethical Uniobn (a sister “denomination” to UU) in the D.C. area. A law graduate, Mallory recently returned to Florida to join a local surgical recovery center non-profit serving transgender patients during a transitional phase.



As such, she is looking to set long-term roots in Florida and would welcome hearing from fellow members about new housing and work opportunities for later this summer. Mallory can be reached at her personal e-mail address, mallory.e.mclaren@gmail.com, and she would love for you to say hello on Sundays!



May 2019

Monthly Tidings

Unitarian Universalist Association

Welcome to the second email in a new series of UUA thought leadership messages sent monthly to all UU congregations and leaders to strengthen our connections and support shared learning. Enjoy!

Dear Congregation Members,

The UUA's annual congregational certification is in! Every year, congregations report their membership, religious education (RE) enrollment, budgetary figures, and much more. It's a helpful snapshot of what's happening in our congregations. And here's this year's headline: membership is steady, while religious education enrollment and average Sunday attendance continue to fall.

Adult membership is steady overall, coming in at 154,704, almost identical to last year. We have stabilized a downward trend in membership that had run 2010-2017, but beneath the headline we see substantial movement in membership figures in congregations. Last year 43% of congregations grew their adult membership, and 30% grew their RE enrollment. Growth is coming largely from our smallest congregations – of the almost 400 members we added to brick and mortar UUA congregations last year, 70% were from congregations of under 150 members. Regionally there is also some variation. The Central East, New England and Southern Regions grew this past year, and the Southern Region in particular has been a source of growth over the past five years.

"There is still a hunger for the values of justice, equity, compassion and liberation to which our faith aspires. Advancing these values matters far more than any simple statistics can capture."

So, what do these numbers mean; what's going on here? First, it's important to note that Unitarian Universalists, like many faith communities, continue to be impacted by the tide moving away from religious involvement in the United States. We see this in the generational shifts in RE enrollment. And the fact that we are not losing members at the rate of some of our mainline Christian cousins attests to the relevance of Unitarian Universalism in our time, as we tread water against the current trends.

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It's also important to acknowledge that the transition to the new formula for the Annual Program Fund, asking congregations to contribute to the UUA based on their ability to pay rather than their members, means we are not penalizing congregations for membership. The regions that grew this past year are the ones who have fully implemented the formula, and the remaining two regions – Pacific Western and MidAmerica – will complete their transition to the new formula next year.

Most importantly, what I see is that there is still a hunger for the values of justice, equity, compassion and liberation to which our faith aspires. Advancing these values matters far more than any simple statistics can capture. As we have engaged at a deeper level in the past two years in examining how systems of oppression have shaped our own UU institutions, we have not seen big changes in our membership, implying most folks are staying in the conversation. There is much more work to do to build “the power of we” in Unitarian Universalism, and I am glad to be on the journey.

In faith,

Carey McDonald

UUA Executive Vice President



FURNITURE FOR SALE!

All prices are negotiable, and the furniture is located at my home in Wellington. Half of the proceeds will go to River of Grass. Pictures can be found here: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/z2owH9KNb6K625578>

Please contact Karen Holland for additional information (k.f.g.holland@gmail.com).

- ◆ Daybed: white, metal frame, one handed trundle (aligns with other twin) with nearly new twin mattresses (\$600 obo)
- ◆ Armoire: solid wood, all drawers, well-constructed (\$400 obo)
- ◆ Thule car topper (\$200 obo)
- ◆ Cocktail table: wood and glass
- ◆ Computer desk - great for children's room
- ◆ Vintage chairs: 2 spoon back, 2 with wheels and a hassock with wheels

