

Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

DAVIE, FLORIDA

SUMMER 2013

MINISTER'S CORNER

MOON SPOON JUNE

by Rev. Amy Carol Webb



Okay, I'll admit it: my mother and I used to bond over old Doris Day movies on television, accompanied by enormous bowls of salty popcorn to balance the guaranteed super-sweetness of Ms. Day's characters and singing. I loved it. One particular old movie I remember came under the same title and story line of an even older Tin Pan Alley tune, "By the Light of the Silvery Moon."



"By the light of the silvery moon," Mom and I would sing along with Doris, "I want to spoon/to my honey I'll croon love's tune/Honeymoon keep a-shining in June/Your silvery beams will bring love dreams/we'll be cuddling soon/By the silvery moon." It also became one of our "car tunes" - the ones Mom and Dad would harmonize as we drove down the highways though Summer visiting this relative and that with some sightseeing along the way. That is, when they could out-sing the roar of our 4 x 65 Chevy air-conditioner - i.e. 4 windows rolled down at 65 miles per hour!

Later, the expression "moon, spoon, June" took on a somewhat derogatory meaning, critical of the easy rhymes the Tin Pan Alley era of music in the early 20th century was known for. Rhymes since deemed too obvious, too simple and, therefore, ordinary, mundane and generally uninspired.

But ... It *is* June. And it *does* bring a silvery moon. And Summer loves *do* like to spoon. So here's an idea for the season upon us: what if we made a spiritual practice of noticing the obvious. Of paying particular attention to the seemingly simple. Of contemplating the mundane. Of forfeiting the notion that anything of worth has to be difficult - to understand or to accomplish.

What adventures might be found already at hand this Summer of 2013? What mysteries hiding in a simple stroll through a silvery twilight evening? What enlightenment in re-reading a favorite old book of another Summer long ago? What discovery in our own back yards? What wisdom in casual conversation flowing between family or friends or neighbors, old and new? What accomplishment in just plain sitting still for a long quiet moment, wrapped in a sunrise? What beauty already with us in the course of any otherwise ordinary day? Or perhaps better still, what about letting go the relentless pursuit of adventure, enlightenment, discovery, wisdom, accomplishment, beauty?

What if the great truth we seek really is as easy as "moon, spoon, June"?

IN THIS ISSUE



Calendar	2
Services	2
SSUSI	2
From the President	3
UUA SE Cluster	3
Conference	
Board Matters	4
Facilities	4
SSJC	5
Full Moon Daughters	6
Faith Development	6



CALENDAR



JUNE SERVICES

- June 2 *Bridging Ceremony*, Faith Development
- June 9 *Honoring the Body*, Marjorie Loring
- June 16 *Father's Day*, Rev. Amy Carol Webb
- June 23 *Carolyn SantAngelo*
- June 30 *Prayer*, Diane Lade and Gayle Giese

Rev. Amy Weekend: June 15th & 16th

For a complete listing of our activities for June 2013 (and beyond), please check out our online calendar. Either click [here](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html) for the calendar or go to: <http://www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html> for all the latest events in our congregation! Be sure to check out our [Facebook](#) page, too.

COMING UP IN JULY AND AUGUST

Summer Lay-Led Services!

FUN Children & Youth Activities each Sunday!

Weekly Email Updates

Summer: the perfect season for the three Rs:
Relaxation, Reflection, and Renewal!



River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Phone 954-723-7877
www.riverofgrassuu.org
office@riverofgrassuu.org

Newsletter

Editor Esther Sampol
Design & Production Brit Lundell
Copy Editors Diane Diaz & Zena Tucker

Congregational Administrator

Sophia Brown

Board of Trustees

President Marjorie Loring
Vice President Ken Bresnahan
Secretary Zena Tucker
Treasurer Janet Schwartz
Trustee Tom Robinson
Trustee Diane Diaz
Trustee Grant Basham
Trustee Deb Giblin-Davis
Youth Representative Jenna Berleue

Committee Chairs

Auction Esther Sampol
Caring Ingrid Furlong & Maureen Lundell
Community Awareness Esther Sampol
Concert Aaron Stang
Consulting Minister's Diane Diaz & Committee on Ministry Esther Sampol
Facilities Susan Juncosa
Faith Development Karen Gonzalez & Diane Lade
Finance Roy Schwartz
Membership Leana Bresnahan
Nominating TBA
Pastoral Care Riley Cothran, Pat Katz & Marjorie Loring
Personnel Diane Diaz, Esther Sampol, & Janet Schwartz
Service & Social Justice ... Steve Jens-Rochow & Judi Oltmans
Shared Ministry Diane Lade & Janet Schwartz
Stewardship Ken Bresnahan & Pam Schrimmscher
Worship Kathy Jens-Rochow

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.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Marjorie Loring, Board President

LETTING GO



With summer fast approaching, I take some time to review the past Board Agendas from our monthly meetings over this past congregational year. I see the “to do” lists created from each previous month with their check marks and roll-overs looking back at me from the printed screen, and as hard as I try to focus my attention on all that we have accomplished, my eyes continue to drift to those few things still left undone. Summer breaks come just in time. They provide me with the space I need to let go - to shake off those things that will still be there waiting for me next year, and allow me to close the congregational year out with a true sense of accomplishment.

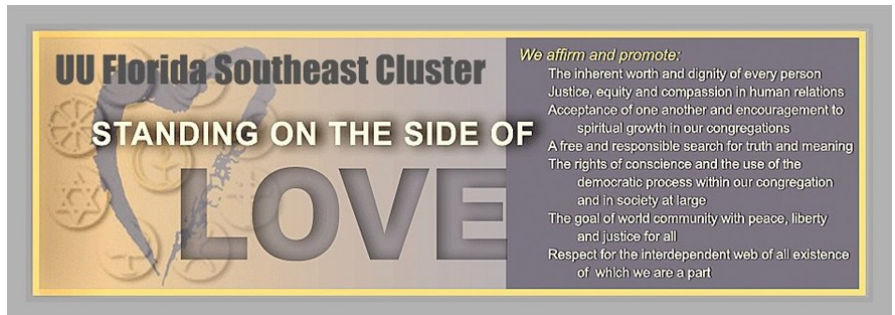


My summer travels also give me time to miss you. For it is in missing you that my heart is filled with a renewed appreciation of how much this River of Grass community nurtures my spirit and how the times we share deepen my connection to each of you, and to all of you.

As I travel, I will see with new eyes how this interdependent web touches me and connects me back to my spiritual home. I look forward to amusement park thrill rides, and tubing lazily down a river. I will wander through dark caves, and go back in time to a Shaker Village. I will travel across mountains to see glacial lakes and will venture out to sea. Letting go is the best way I know to affirm my connection and trust that it will guide me back with fresh perspective into the wonderful challenges of the year ahead.

UUA SE CLUSTER CONFERENCE ON IMMIGRATION AND MASS INCARCERATION

The UUA’s Common Read this spring was Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New Jim Crow is a stunning account of how the majority of black men in urban areas are either under correctional control or saddled for life with criminal records for minor drug offenses, denying them basic civil and human rights.



At the same time, more than 32,000 immigrants are detained without legal process for not having proper documentation. Over 80 percent of them are unrepresented by legal counsel, and many also are denied access to family and community support. They are also targeted for deportation for ‘aggravated felonies’, many of which are neither ‘aggravated’ nor ‘felonies’. Immigration policy and the New Jim Crow are deeply connected. They both result in the creation of a permanent ‘underclass.’

Our speakers will tie these issues together: Christina Fialho, Co-Founder/Executive Director, Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC); Desmond Meade, President, Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, and Jeanette Smith, Executive Director, South Florida Interfaith Worker Justice.

The Southeast UU Cluster Conference on Immigration & Mass Incarceration is **Saturday, June 8, 2013, from 9am to 4pm** at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Miami, 7701 SW 76th Avenue, Miami, FL 3313. The cost is \$15 per person by mail if postmarked by Monday, June 3. (Admission is \$20 at the door.) Please mail check, payable to SE UU Cluster, to Kathy Jens-Rochow, Cluster Treasurer, 1420 SW 13 St., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312. Please indicate dietary preference, if any. Registration fee includes Lunch and Continental Breakfast. For directions to the UU Congregation of Miami, click [here](#).

For more information on the UUA Southeast Cluster, please visit their Facebook page by clicking [here](#).

BOARD MATTERS

**Zena Tucker, Secretary
Board of Trustees**

Wearly 2013 board members sprint toward to the finish! Lumbering and out-of breath, but smiling, the immediate goal, our Annual Congregational Meeting, is in sight. Will we make an acceptable plan for our next congregational year? Will **Zena's** head have any dark hair left? Will **Diane Diaz** give us the "Razzle Dazzle" (from our "Chicago" auction event)? Will the gremlins in **Janet's** computer release her precious spreadsheets in time? Come to our Annual Meeting on June 9 to find out!



The race toward the goal was indeed challenging. We assumed pledge amounts would remain on-par with last year for those members who had not yet returned their pledge card. We assumed the number of guest speakers would go down proportional to the possible increase of Rev. Amy-led services. We assumed some income and expenses would remain constant. Finally, we did our best to match our vision for the future with the desire for expansion of staff areas. And we've walked a balancing beam on this obstacle course journey and voted with much consideration on a board recommended budget. Please join us on June 9th after service so we can all consider our options!



Speaking of annual meetings, the Unitarian Universalist Association's HUGE annual gathering is coming soon, and we all can be a part! General Assembly (GA) will be held on June 19th-23rd in Louisville, Kentucky. Members who have attended GA in the past have shared that the 2013 GA will be an inspiring and motivating event. See highlights of last year's GA at this link: [2012 GA](#). But one doesn't have to travel; our board is planning to host relaxing virtual GA 2013 sessions right here at River of Grass. Join your friends and over 4,000 others virtually to connect with our greater UU community. Look for the sign-up sheets in the hospitality area or email secretary@riverofgrassuu.org for more information.

Now as we end our congregational year, I look back in gratitude and wonder. I am in awe of your energy and dedication, River of Grass. Special thanks go out to our departing board members **Ken Bresnahan**, **Deb Giblin-Davis**, **Diane Diaz**, **Grant Basham**, and Youth Representative **Jenna Berleue**. Thanks also go to all the small group, committee, and special task force teams and chairpersons. I have learned so much about leadership, follower-ship, River of Grass, and Unitarian Universalism from you. More importantly, I have grown in friendship and appreciated your understanding and compassion. Thank you all and I look forward to serving you as board secretary again next year!

FEELS LIKE HOME

Susan Juncosa, Facilities Chair

It's hard to believe that we have been at 595 Park of Commerce for more than two years. It was the end of February in 2011 when we got the keys to an empty shell – an echoing, empty space of blank walls and no personality or warmth. In a mere two years we have furnished, decorated, filled up and most of all – used – our community's home. We've had services every Sunday, classes, meetings, weddings, memorial services, conferences, cons and concerts. We've had potlucks, catered auctions, pizza parties, and coffee – lots and lots of coffee.

To sum it up – we've got a home and we're not afraid to use it.

Our limited space has necessitated learning to use the space in flexible and creative ways. For example, a faith development class was held in the back hallway for some time. We have gotten really, really good at moving tables and chairs to convert from one event to another. And I really don't know what we would do without the marvelous rolling dividers!

There are scuffmarks on the floors, dings in the walls, and that 'new house' smell is long gone. You might think that I wished everything stayed perfect and neat and clean – but you would be wrong. What good is a facility which remains pristine yet unused? Who wants to live in a museum, afraid to make the wrong move and unable to relax? Our space feels lived in – it is our Home.



*It feels like home,
Feels like home to me.
Feels like I'm on my way
back,
Where I come from,
Feels like home.
Feels like home to me,
Feels like I'm on my way
back,
Where I'm from.*

"Feels Like Home," words and music by Randy Newman

XTREME VOLUNTEER DAY

Judi Oltmans and Steve Jens-Rochow, Service and Social Justice Co-Chairs



The May 11th *Xtreme Volunteer Day* was an overwhelming success! The Service and Social Justice Committee would like to thank all the volunteers who gave their time at the LifeNet4Families pantry and the Postal Food Drive at the Inverrary Post Office. A special thanks goes to **Bennett** and **Daniel Lorman** and **Rick** and **Zena Tucker** – four Xtremely dedicated volunteers who helped at **both** LifeNet4Families and the Postal Food Drive on the same day! Thank you to our shift leaders – **Gail Goddard** at LifeNet4Families and **Alan Meerow** at the Postal Food Drive. We came together as a community and made a difference for needy families in Broward County. Over 8,000 lbs. of canned and dry food was sorted and packed in over 200 boxes and stacked on palettes ready to be delivered to the LifeNet4Families food bank in Broward County. Way to go River of Grass volunteers!

Our LifeNet4Families Volunteer Saturdays continue throughout the summer on June 8th, July 13th, August 10th, and September 14th. If you would like to help, look for the sign up at the SSJC corner at the back of the sanctuary or email us at ssjc@riverofgrassuu.org. Don't forget to pick up an "I volunteered at LifeNet4Families" sticker for your name-tag and check our new photo bulletin board to see if you've been "caught" volunteering!

This summer, we will continue to take donations for LifeNet4Families. Their greatest need is for canned meat, peanut butter, canned beans and fruit, which can be placed in the basket at the SSJC corner. They are also in need of adult clothing, so check the posted clothing list. Do you have electronics to donate? The ARC Broward basket is also at the SSJC corner. SSJC will continue to promote Move to Amend over the summer by providing information and event dates as well as having the petitions available to sign. Go to www.movetoamend.org for more information. Have a wonderful summer!



service
working
projects
faith
social
developing community
opportunities
congregation
justice committee agencies
friends members variety
include unique
express

COME ON IN - THE WATER'S FINE!

Diane Lade, Full Moon Daughters Coordinator



Full Moon Daughters, the River of Grass outdoors and spirituality group for women and girls, will head down to the azure Atlantic in Key Largo for their last outing of the congregational year. We will be going on a snorkeling trip at John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park on Saturday, June 8. River of Grass water nymphs of all ages, female friends and family are welcome.

There also will be a glass bottom boat trip, or do-it-yourself mangrove tours in rented kayaks, for those who don't want to snorkel. Participants will pay their own expenses and make their own snorkeling reservations. For more details on times, costs, etc., watch your email update.

This will be our last Full Moon gathering before taking a break in July and August. Are you interested in the Pennekamp trip, or want to know more about our group in general? Get on our mailing list by emailing: fullmoondaughters@riverofgrassuu.org.

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



(Pictured Here) In April, the Full Moon Daughters participated in a Full Moon Kayaking trip at Oleta River State Park in North Miami Beach.

THE END? OR JUST A BEGINNING?

Christy Schultz, Faith Development Coordinator

June 9th will be the last day for the Faith Development Children and Youth Programs at River of Grass for the 2012/2013 School Year. During the summer months, June to September, Children's Fellowship will be available most Sundays - meaning there will be a rotating schedule of volunteers available to provide activities for the children during service.

The 2012/2013 school year proved to be a year of growth and development, not only in our faith, but also in our numbers. We have welcomed many new families to our congregation this year, including my son, Cedar and myself.

Becoming a part of River of Grass has been a tremendous experience for us. My son has acquired a community at a very transitional time in his life, his friendships have become stronger, and new ones have developed. The Beacon Youth Group offered at River of Grass has given both of us a place to socialize and grow. The Faith Development programs have offered us stimulation both spiritually and as humans on this Earth, while the services have been inspiring and meaningful. I have valued my time as the Coordinator for the Faith Development Program and hope that my sincerity and love has helped the River of Grass Religious Exploration/Education/Faith Development programs blossom and grow and thrive. I will miss my time as Coordinator but look forward to many more times as a member of this community.



Come and celebrate with us on Sunday, June 2nd. We will be honoring our Youth during service. Our oldest Youth will be Bridging into Young Adulthood - a Rite of Passage to be proud of. It is a beautiful thing that UU's honor this transition! Come and support our Young Adults!

Enjoy your summer everyone...whether you travel far and wide to cooler shores, mountains, or forests or stay here and enjoy the quiet that comes with the summer. Let's replenish with the rains as they fill our Earth and our souls with life-giving water so that the next year will be verdant and rich.