



Jon Kitner/Spiritual Art

# River of Grass

Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
11850 W State Rd 84, A-9, Davie, FL 33325

**Welcome** to our River of Grass Family  
**Welcome** to our Love; **Welcome** Home

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Thursday, April 16, 2026

Sunday Service April 19, 2026

Monthly Worship Theme: Embracing Possibility

### Paradise Found

Karen Gonzalez



*“Your gifts – whatever you discover them to be – can be used to bless or curse the world... What will you do with your life’s gifts?”* Rebecca Ann Parker

### Paradise Found

Random Acts of Art

As Unitarian Universalists, we are called to be agents of love and justice, not to prepare our hearts for an afterlife, but to create Heaven on Earth for everyone right now.

As we turn to celebrate the Earth this week, let us begin with an exploration of Eden, its place in early Christianity and in our world today, and in this Beloved Community.

The UU theologian, Reverend Rebecca Ann Parker, will be our inspiration.

## ***Our Mission***

*We nurture our spirits, love intentionally,  
and work to create a just and healthy planet.*

Come as you are Sunday morning at 10:30 – either **in-person in Davie:** 11850 W SR 84, A-9, Davie, FL 33325 or **virtually on YouTube LiveStream** (link below).  
Childcare provided.

**Flowing River Sangha** with Gary Gonzalez  
Sunday in A-9; Zoom below. Gather 8:15, start 8:30

We come together to lament with, celebrate with,  
& care for one another in our community & our world.



## **Children's & Youth's Faith Development 10:30am**

Our children and youth will worship  
with us this Sunday.  
There will be special activities for them on the  
Prayground table.



*For more information about our FD program for kids,  
contact our Director, Karen Gonzalez at  
[religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org)*

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChJNmoySFzsKskHmsjkZe2g/live>  
[riverofgrassuu.org](http://riverofgrassuu.org)

Flowing River Sangha:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82686665851?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82686665851?pwd=kF4kTZS0dA7mK3HM2FXXaIsxV1bJX0.1#success)  
[pwd=kF4kTZS0dA7mK3HM2FXXaIsxV1bJX0.1#success](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82686665851?pwd=kF4kTZS0dA7mK3HM2FXXaIsxV1bJX0.1#success)

# River of Grass Masquerade Ball and Auction

April 18, 2026, 5-9

Long Key Nature Center 3501 SW 130 Ave, Davie



Discover a world of possibility  
at the River of Grass  
Masquerade Ball and Auction.

Elegant Dinner, Dancing to a live jazz trio.  
Silent Auction starts at 5pm.  
Live Auction is at 7pm.

- No park entry fee. Short walk from parking to the venue.
- Masks are optional. We'll have simple ones available for purchase at the door.
- Bring cash for raffle tickets, raffle tree, and wine/beer donations.
- Italian menu with meat, vegan, and gluten-free options.

Masks and Flowers are encouraged.  
Formal to cocktail attire.

Elly: [auction@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:auction@riverofgrassuu.org)

**QR codes to purchase tickets are below:**

ROG 2025/2026 Auction -  
Suggested Price



Suggest price \$50

[https://www.paypal.com/ncp/  
payment/5M69RBS5SHEXG](https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/5M69RBS5SHEXG)

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2025/2026 Auction Ticket -  
Pay it Forward



Pay it forward \$80

I can afford to help others who can't afford to buy a ticket at the suggested price.

<https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/6Z5NRPZSSPB88>

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2025/2026 Auction Ticket -  
Economy



Economy \$30

Finances are tight, but I can afford the economy price.

<https://www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/TSSZ5DJV32RYS>

# Masquerade Live Auction



## Ski Trip to Park City, Utah

Enjoy 3 nights & 2 days  
of skiing  
with accommodations  
at Grace's [Elly's Sister]  
home. This package  
package includes  
airfare from FLL to

SLC on Delta, lift tickets, ski rentals, a guided lesson  
from Grace, and an après-ski experience with  
international freestyle skiers Jamie Mocrazy and  
Jeanee Crane-Mauzy. Value: \$5000+;

**Starting Bid: \$3,000**

## Sicilian Platinum Escape Ultra Luxury Private Villa

Experience five indulgent  
nights for four people in a  
refined villa apartment  
near the historic town of  
of Noto. This exclusive  
getaway includes a



private entrance, outdoor terraces, and pool access.  
The package also features a privately guided gourmet  
tour of historic Syracuse and an elite winery immersion  
with a cellar tour and curated tastings.

**Starting Bid: \$4,995**

## Masquerade Live Auction



### Welcome to Paradise- Antigua All-Inclusive Vacation for 2

Enjoy four nights for two people at a 4-star beachfront resort in beautiful Antigua.

Known for its crystal-clear

waters and stunning pink and white-sandy beaches, this all-inclusive stay offers a perfect Caribbean escape. **Starting Bid: \$3,450**

## Masquerade Silent Auction



### An Evening with Paul Simon and Friends

Come down to the River to enjoy wine, great songs and light dinner fare.

**Saturday, May 2, 7pm, A-9**

Doors open 6:30pm;

**\$40 per person**

Chef Karen will provide a light dinner. Food, wine & beer available for a donation.

Gary and Friends will perform live music, performing songs by Paul Simon and friends.

Gary can arrange rides.

# Masquerade Live Auction



## Follow Your Spiritual Path

Custom sermon by guest minister Rev. Arthur Jones III, Minister, UU Congregation of Ft. Myers

Got a question quandary you'd like to see addressed in a Sunday service?  
Here is your chance!

Rev. Arthur Jones is offering a special sermon of your choice. You will meet with Rev. Arthur Jones to discuss the topic you choose and watch it come to life at a Sunday service coordinated with the worship committee, Rev. Arthur Jones and you. He has offered to drive over and take you to lunch to discuss the topic, and how he goes about developing a sermon.

Get creative and get some answers – or maybe some new questions.

He told me he absolutely  
“Loves to write new sermons.”

**Value \$500+**

Donated by Rev. Arthur Jones/ Auction committee.

# **Celebration of Life Barbara Ratchford**



**Sunday, April 26, 2026, 12:30 pm**

**River of Grass**

**RevAmy Carol Webb will preside.**

**Light Snacks**

**Personal Reflections**

**are Welcome.**

**In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to:**

**The DHS William & Barbara Ratchford**

**Scholarship Fund**

**c/o Danbury High School, 43 Clapboard Ridge Rd.**

**Danbury, CT 06810**

# River of Grass

## Café Concert Series

Join us for an evening  
with singer, songwriter,  
instrumentalist.

# Billy Jonas



Saturday, April 25, 2026, A-9, 7pm

Doors open 6pm

\$30 advance; \$35 at the door

Food & Beverages available for donation





London Drum Institute

## **Beating Hearts Drum Circle**

Friday, April 17, 7pm, A-9

Drum out the stresses of the days behind and find new rhythms for upcoming days.

Tap into the rhythms that are the heartbeat of life.

Bring your own drum or we have extras.

Contact Andy Bunce or Linda Lathroum  
[andrewbunce@att.net](mailto:andrewbunce@att.net)



UU Miami

## **Big Cypress National Preserve Interfaith Prayer Vigil To Shut Down Alligator Alcatraz**

Every Sunday 4-5pm

When we have a group to carpool, we meet at the  
River at 2:15 and depart by 2:30.

Please contact Andy Bunce or Susan Skach-Bejarano  
for carpool details: [andrewbunce@att.net](mailto:andrewbunce@att.net)



# Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth



## WORSHIP SERVICE

### Sentience Surrounds Us

AN EARTH DAY WORSHIP RITUAL

8pm Wednesday, April 22 7 PT

APRIL  
22



Link is below

UUMFE's annual Earth Day Worship Service is our most anticipated and attended event of the year.

Join UU Ministry for Earth and other partners to honor Earth Day and celebrate this international day of protest and praise, as we use our love for Earth and all beings to ignite our passion for protecting and preserving our planetary home, for the sake of all beings and future generations.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, April 16, 6pm Zoom **Mindfulness for Today's World**  
Carolyn Santangelo and Scott May

Thursday, April 16, 7pm Zoom+A-9 **Men's Group** Ken Bresnahan

Friday, April 17, 6pm A-9 **Drum Circle** Linda Lathroum and Andy Bunce

***Saturday, April 18, 6 pm A-9 Masquerade Ball, Dinner and Auction*** Elly Keane

Sunday, April 19, 8:15am A-9 +Zoom **Flowing River Sangha**  
Gary Gonzalez

Sunday, April 19, 10:30am A-9 + YouTube Livestream **Worship Service – Paradise Found** Karen Gonzalez

Sunday, April 19, 10:30; A-9 **Children's Faith Development**  
Karen Gonzalez

Thursday, April 23, 6pm Zoom **Mindfulness for Today's World**  
Carolyn Santangelo and Scott May

Saturday, April 25, 7 pm **River of Grass Concert Series: Billy Jonas** Ken Bresnahan

Saturday, May 2, 7pm A-9 **Paul Simon & More - Talk about a great evening!** Gary Gonzalez and friends

Sunday, May 3, 8:15am A-9 +Zoom **Flowing River Sangha** Gary Gonzalez

Sunday, May 3, 10:30am A-9 + YouTube Livestream **Worship Service – Curiosity** Steve Jens-Rochow

Sunday, May 3, 10:30; A-9 **Children's Faith Development** Karen Gonzalez

Thursday, May 7, 6pm Zoom **Mindfulness for Today's World**  
Carolyn Santangelo and Scott May

Thursday, May 7, 7pm A-9 + Zoom **Men's Group Topic:** Ken Bresnahan

**Carolyn Santangelo & Scott May**

**Mindfulness for Today's World**

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82686665851?  
pwd=kF4kTZS0dA7mK3HM2FXXaIsxV1bJX0.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82686665851?pwd=kF4kTZS0dA7mK3HM2FXXaIsxV1bJX0.1)

**Worship Service:** [https://www.youtube.com/channel/  
UChJNmoySFzsKskHmsjkZe2g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChJNmoySFzsKskHmsjkZe2g)

**Gary Gonzalez Sangha** [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/46777873?  
pwd=WHZaNjJQNWF5T0t6UW1kRlFLTVcyZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/46777873?pwd=WHZaNjJQNWF5T0t6UW1kRlFLTVcyZz09)

**Karen Gonzalez** [religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org)

**Andy Bunce** [andrewbunce@att.net](mailto:andrewbunce@att.net)

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[membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org)

**Ken Bresnahan** [mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org)  
**Men's Group**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81490716445?  
pwd=NHV2akh4OURkQ2YvcTdGdmw5VjY3dz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81490716445?pwd=NHV2akh4OURkQ2YvcTdGdmw5VjY3dz09)

**Elly Keane** [elly.keane19@gmail.com](mailto:elly.keane19@gmail.com)

## Order of Service for April 19 2026

**Morning Sing #38, Morning Has Broken** Words: Eleanor Farjeon, Music: Gaelic Melody

#298 **Wake Now My Senses**; Words: Thomas JS Mikelson, Music: Traditional Irish melody

Oh, Let Us Gather; Words and Music by RevAmy Carol Webb

### **Ringing of the Chimes**

**Prelude** What a Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong

### **Welcome**

**Call to Worship** "Let Us Make this Earth a Heaven" by Tess Baumberger

**Opening Hymn #21 For the Beauty of the Earth**; Words: Folliott Sanford Pierpoint, Music: Conrad Kocher

**Chalice Lighting** "We gather here to worship" by Gary Kiwalski, adapted  
We gather here to worship:

to seek the truth, to grow in love, to join in service;

to celebrate life's beauty and find healing for its pain;

to honor our kinship with each other and with the earth;

to create a more compassionate world, beginning with ourselves;

to wonder at the mystery that gave us birth;

to find courage for the journey's end;

We light our chalice

to welcome Heaven in our midst for the days between.

### **Covenant**

*English: Love is the spirit of this congregation and service is its law.*

*This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace,  
to seek the truth in love, and to help one another.*

*Spanish: El Amor es el espíritu de esta congregación*

*y el servicio su ley principal. Esta es nuestra gran promesa:  
vivir juntos en paz, buscar la verdad a través del amor,  
y ayudarnos mutuamente.*

**Offering/Offertory** "There is a Love" by Rebecca Parker, adapte

### **Candles of Community**

### **Stones of Reflection**

**Pastoral Response** "Join Hands, Join Spirits" by David Chapman

**Sung Response #371, #381**; Music: Genevan Psalter 1551, Words: Isaac Watts 1674-1748

**Wisdom Story** "Garden Song" by Peter, Paul and Mary

**Heritage and Hope** Rebecca Ann Parker / UU Ministry for Earth

**Deepening Music #398 To Seen the World**; Words: Wiliam Blake, Music: Norway c. 1600

**Message** "Paradise Found" Karen Gonzalez

**Closing Music #1064 Blue Boat Home**; Words and Music: Peter Mayer

**Closing Words** "Choose to Bless the World!" by Rebecca Parker

### **Announcements / Invite to Hospitality**

### **Extinguishing the Chalice**

### **Shine On & Music Reprise**



# River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation

[riverofgrassuu.org](http://riverofgrassuu.org)

River of Grass UU Congregation is on FaceBook.

*Unsubscribe* - If you do not wish to receive this weekly email,  
please contact the office and  
you will be removed.

*Announcements wishing to be sent out in this weekly  
congregation-wide newsletter should be received  
by noon Wednesday.*

*All announcements will pertain to congregational life  
and affiliated groups and and will be for activities or  
events occurring within two weeks.*

*Outside groups and individuals, wishing to use this  
vehicle of congregation-wide communication, must  
have the approval of the President.*

Steve Jens-Rochow, Editor  
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