

River of Grass

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485, Sunrise, Florida 33345

WELCOME TO OUR RIVER OF GRASS FAMILY. WELCOME TO OUR WARMTH. WELCOME HOME!

River of Grass Weekly Update – February 3, 2022

Democracy in the Balance

4th in our 2022 Bending the Arc/Intersectional Justice Series

“Your vote – your voice!” We’ve all heard the chant, but is it really true? And why are some people working so hard to make it harder for some of us to vote at all? Our Fifth Principle of Unitarian Universalism calls for the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. UUs historically have been and still are in the struggle for democracy, and yet, while many of us have taken the democratic process for granted, too many others within our society are at risk of losing the sanctity of their vote, their voice in our democratic process – or never had it fully secured at all. Join us this Sunday to consider how we are called to action at this intersection toward Justice in our time.

Come as you are to gather with us for this Sunday’s love-streamed service, remembering only the medium is virtual; the connections, the love, the spirit are real. Following the service, we will share virtual Hospitality time with a live chat and small groups where we can relish each other’s beautiful faces and voices together once again.

Follow the link below to join us in Zoom – or if you’d like, we’ll be simulcasting on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu/>. Tune in there for the service, then log onto our Zoom link for hospitality time afterward.

We welcome you on Sunday morning at 10:30. Come a bit before and we can Chat prior to the service... See you then!

Topic: Worship February 6, 2022

Join Zoom Meeting

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

Meeting ID: 961 564 350; Password: 873805

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ab3E9JRtb9>

Worship Then – Worship Now – Worship NEXT: Reimagining Sunday Gathering at River of Grass

It was 102 Sundays ago in the Before Times that we turned on a dime with COVID breathing down our necks to move the life of this Beloved Community into a virtual world we knew little about, but knew we must venture into to keep safe and stay connected at the same. The “we” was so many people with the skills, courage, commitment, and love who rose to challenge. The Sunday worship we knew and loved “then” was all of us in a room in a building at the same time every Sunday. Then, as COVID took over our known world, we did 89 Sundays in a row fully virtually, for despite our plan to begin a new way with First Sundays Blended Worship (in-person + virtual), plus Three Virtual, COVID challenges prevented us being together safely until December, and keep us virtual even now

as the Omicron variant winds down (Broward's COVID stats are better, but still outside our COVID policy for large gatherings).

Beloveds, now it is time for "Next!" Weighing the myriad factors that affect what we need in Beloved Community as we navigate our changed world, we're drawing together a plan for in-person Worship Pods for River Folk to gather in small groups to experience Zoom worship together! This can happen in parks (with wi-fi or 4G/5G phones), members' patios, backyards and other places safe to gather in small groups on Virtual Sunday mornings to connect and re-connect as we make our way forward through our new realities!

So, this Sunday, as we hold Zoom worship and our young'uns gather in person for their classes (Karen has the details below), we invite you to reach out to folks you might gather with to share Zoom worship in person! And watch for more specific organization of River Worship Pods in the weeks to come!

Upcoming Virtual Events - This Sunday:

Sunday, February 6, 2021

Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am -

Democracy in the Balance - Rev. Amy Carol Webb -

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

Faith Development for Children and Youth, in-person - 10:30 - 11:30 on Sunday, Feb 6th!

Families are invited to bring their kiddos to our on-site rental location at the UF IFAS building (3245 College Avenue, Davie). Check-in begins at 10:15a. Parents are welcome to participate in the worship service on their devices (and earbuds) in the garden or join the children in their exploration where they will be welcoming-in Black History Month by "Widening their Circle" of knowledge about important Black figures in American and our Unitarian history. Contact Karen Gonzalez at ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org for more information.

Monthly Family Fun, Outdoors!

Mark your calendars for two fun events for families -

Saturday, Feb 19th - gather at a member's home for an outdoor movie

Saturday, Mar 19th - gather at Bergeron Park for playground fun

Contact Karen Gonzalez at ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org for more information.

Faith Development is for Adults, too!

Would you like to know more about our Unitarian and Universalist histories? Or, need some help in articulating your faith? Maybe you're wondering about the origin of our UU Principles or just how our Unitarian and Universalist ancestors decided to become one faith. Our Southern Region staff of the UUA is hosting an online series to help you to grow your understanding. This is a self-paced online program which culminates with one group session. We can also arrange a River of Grass study group for those taking the course. Contact Karen Gonzalez at ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org if you're interested in being connected to others on the journey. [Learn more or register here.](#)

INTERESTED IN FILM?

The Eighth Principle Team is starting a black film discussion group to explore race in America. We will see films on our own and meet on the second Wednesday of the month to discuss them. For our first film I suggest the current film "Passing".

"Passing", set in the 1920s, follows the unexpected reunion of two light skinned black high school friends. Claire has a beautiful dream of a life. Passing as white, she has a handsome husband who's a doctor, a pair of well-behaved children, an elegant New York City townhouse, and a maid to help keep her domestic life peaceful. By a chance encounter Irene enters that dream, disturbing its peace and threatening its careful illusions. The tension builds inexorably to the film's shocking climax.



Watch the movie "Passing" on your own (available on Netflix). We will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, February 9, at 7pm to discuss this piercing, intense drama of passing for white. The film group will choose future films. Please reply to Steve Jens-Rochow blackfilms@riverofgrassuu.org if you are coming.

8TH PRINCIPLE TEAM MESSAGE – The 8th Principle and Widening The Circle Monthly Theme

Widening the Circle means to UUs that we are including everyone! Not just who we know and are comfortable with, but those who we may not "see" and exclude. I am specifically speaking about the inclusion of Black and Brown people in our lives. We tend to choose people who are like us...look like us, live near us, are in places we frequent and join with others in neglecting our First Principle, "The inherent worth and dignity of every person". Because we as UUs have not addressed the 1st Principle, Black and Brown UUs have asked for this specific principle to bring actions into our words... At our Annual Meeting on May 15, we will be voting to adopt this principle and add to the 140+ congregations that have adopted it and to bring it forward to General Assembly 2023 for a vote for inclusion as the 8th UU Principle.

"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

Here is an excerpt from John A. Powell, Professor of Law and Professor of African American Studies at Berkeley Law School:

"The thing that's really slick about whiteness, if you will, is that most of the benefits can be obtained without ever doing anything personally... There are a whole set of assumptions that flow from being white, just like there are a whole set of benefits that flow from being male. If society is patriarchal, which many say it is, it means that the way resources are distributed in society benefits men. In the same way, in that sense, whites, too, are given the spoils of a racist system, even if they're not personally racist."

Come join the conversations either at the Black Film series, listening to the testimonials of the members of the 8th Principle Team on Sunday morning and the Potluck Conversations that will take place in March. More information on the website. Questions? 8thPrincipleTeam@RiverofGrassUU.org

8TH Principle Potluck Conversations

In preparation for the vote of the 8th Principle at the Annual Meeting on May 15th, we will be providing opportunities for members of the congregation to have some nourishment and conversations at Members' homes to discuss the many faces of racial disparity that we have been raised in and may not even recognize. We are on this journey as Unitarian Universalists to raise awareness and openness by doing this work together. We start by looking within ourselves for answers to questions we never thought to ask.

Members will be receiving invitations by email to join a discussion group in March about the 8th Principle in a safe outdoor space at a Member's home to listen and think deeply. We hope you will join each other in building the world we dream about! See Q&A about the 8th Principle [on our website](#).

8th Principle Team: Lou DeSantis, Rita Cherubini, Tanya Gustafson, Vernon Allen and Steve Jens-Rochow. Questions? 8thPrincipleTeam@riverofgrassuu.org.

Other Events:

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

Thursdays 6:00 - 7:00 pm for adults, [zoom link for Thursday night at 6 pm](#)

For more information or to register contact Carolyn@InsightInstituteLLC.com or Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com, or visit <http://www.insightinstitutellc.com/>

RoG Men's Group: We meet the first and third Thursday each month from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. We will meet on [Zoom at Meeting ID 670 022 402](#) for the foreseeable future. We gather and do check-in where we share our day. Then a discussion topic is presented. We read aloud the premise and questions and then discuss it all until 8:30 pm.

The goal is that the sharing moves from head to heart. **The Feb 6th topic is: "Living with Intent." What do you think?** The Topic Description will be online at KipBarkley.com/topic/. There we post past topics and links to the UU Small Group Ministry Network. We are a lay-led group and look to our members for future topics and the direction we take. Do come out and join us. The Meeting Room opens up at 6:30 pm before the Host arrives. If you have any questions please contact Kip Barkley; mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org; RoG Men's Group Facilitator.

Support Local Justice Work

A portion of Davie Blvd. will be getting a new name, as the City of Fort Lauderdale honors the life of a young black man who was lynched here in 1935. Rubin Stacy Memorial Blvd. will stretch from I-95 to US-441. This memorial highway is thanks to the work of local activists bringing the [Community Remembrance Project Equal Justice Initiative](#) to fruition here in Broward County. Their work continues and there is opportunity for us to become more involved. The unveiling ceremony will take place on **February 8th at the St. Thomas Aquinas Bienes Center for the Arts at 1:00pm**. See additional information in the flyer below and please let Karen Gonzalez know if you plan to attend. Let's have a strong contingency from River of Grass to show our support of this good work for justice by the City of Fort Lauderdale!

CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
RUBIN STACY MEMORIAL BOULEVARD
UNVEILING CEREMONY
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022 | 1:00 PM
St. Thomas Aquinas Bienes Center For The Arts
2812 SW 12 Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

Join the City of Fort Lauderdale and our neighbors as we gather to honor the life of Rubin Stacy and unveil Rubin Stacy Memorial Boulevard. It is now the secondary name of Davie Boulevard between I-95 and US-441.

The historical record shows that Rubin Stacy, a Black man who was about 29 years old, was lynched in Fort Lauderdale without ever being allowed to have legal counsel or a trial after a white woman alleged that he had threatened her life. Ever since the accusation and subsequent murder, a plethora of sensationalized news reports have offered conflicting accounts of the incident.

The City of Fort Lauderdale seeks to memorialize this injustice and bring awareness to the negative impacts of systemic racism on our society.

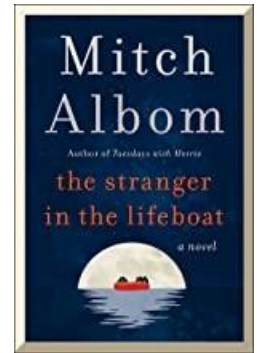
if you would like this publication in an alternate format, please call (954) 838-4755 or email ststrategiccommunications@fortlauderdale.gov.

The River BUUKies February read is "the stranger in the lifeboat" by Mitch Albom. We will meet on Wednesday, Feb 19th at 7pm.

[River BUUKies Zoom Link](#) Meeting ID: 926 5701 7488; Passcode: 746613

One tap mobile +13017158592,,92657017488#,,,,*746613# US (Washington DC)

What would happen if we called on God for help and God actually appeared? In Mitch Albom's profound new novel of hope and faith, a group of shipwrecked passengers pull a strange man from the sea. He claims to be "the Lord." And he says he can only save them if they all believe in him. Adrift in a raft after a deadly ship explosion, ten people struggle for survival at sea. Three days pass. Short on water, food and hope, they spot a man floating in the waves. They pull him in. "Thank the Lord we found you," a passenger says. "I am the Lord," the man whispers.



SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Shade windows with direct light. If you have windows facing east or west consider adding landscaping or an awning. Or consider window tinting, or simply a pull down shade. These options will keep your home cooler and reduce your electric bill, saving money and the environment.

Drive to the Finish: Capital Campaign - Our Future Home Search Team is diligently looking for our new home. There are many ways we can go, either find an existing church, find a building we can use and build out to suit our needs, or even purchase and build our church ourselves.

We need your help in order to be better prepared when the right opportunity presents itself. Those of you who made your pledge during our campaign last fall, thank you for your commitment. We have received about 65% of the total amount pledged.

In order to get a handle on our finances, **we would like to know when you plan to complete your contribution.**

And we are always open to new pledges and contributions. Go to our website, riverofgrassuu.org, scroll down to the [click on the link to make your pledge](#).

With gratitude and hope, Your Capital Campaign Team, capitalcampaign@riverofgrassuu.org.

Capital Campaign Contributions

We have set up several methods for you to make your pledges/contributions to the Capital Campaign. The table below details the various methods, including charges that the River accrues when this payment method is used. We are here to help with any questions you may have. Feel free to contact our office administrator, Sandy Blair Chibnick, via email at office@riverofgrassuu.org.

| Monetary Donations | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Method | How | Processing fees paid by River of Grass |
| Check | Write CC on memo line Mail to River of Grass: 3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485 Sunrise, FL 33345 | \$0 |
| Checking account via Vanco | Set up payment on our Donations page . Designate on the Capital Campaign line | \$0.45 per transaction plus processing fee 1% |
| Credit Card via Vanco | Set up payment on our Donations page . Designate amount on the Capital Campaign line. | \$0.45 per transaction plus credit card processing fee: American Express: 3.5% Visa/MasterCard: 2.75% |
| PayPal | https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/my/profile In the notes write "Capital Campaign" | Varies based on method of payment |

| | | |
|------------|--|-----|
| Zelle | Use your bank to set up \$ transfer. Send Zelle payment to CapitalCampaign@riverofgrassuu.org . | \$0 |
| Securities | <p>Any questions contact Northstar Financial Planners: <i>Allen Giese, Steve Tepper, or Stacy Saavedra at (954) 693-0030</i></p> <p>Securities should be transferred per instructions from the donor's brokerage or advisor using the following DTC and A/C numbers as the destination</p> <p>#0188 - TD Ameritrade Institutional A/C #944110334</p> <p>RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION, INC.</p> <p>The donor should notify the CC Team and the Office Administrator of the details of the donation by emailing CapitalCapaign@riverofgrassuu.org.</p> | |

Interim Recommendations from the RoG COVID-19 Re-Emergence Team

Team: Deb Buehler Ely, Karen Gonzalez, Susan Juncosa, Jeanne Masten (COVIDTeam@RiverofGrassUU.org)

Purpose of Team: To review guidelines for congregational and smaller group gatherings in order to provide recommendations to the Board to be used for official River of Grass meetings and events.

These recommendations are:

- For: only for official, River of Grass - sponsored outdoor and indoor small group gatherings.
- Fluid: new information comes out all the time and the recommendations could change.
- Inclusive: all attendees should be able to attend physically or virtually.
- Protective: considers first those who are most at risk.
- Science-based: follow the directives according to the experts.

Sources:

- UUA: <https://www.uua.org/safe/pandemics/covid-19>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>
- Johns Hopkins: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map>
- UU Reston Covid-19 Guidelines: <https://www.uureston.org/covid>

MEETINGS IN THE TIME OF COVID

RIVER OF GRASS COVID-19 TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD: updated November 4, 2021

This is a living document that will be regularly reviewed and updated.

River of Grass COVID-19 Re-Emergence Team is monitoring Broward County's risk level of transmission. The level of risk used by the River of Grass UU Congregation shall be as measured on [Broward County, Florida \(FL\) - COVID Vaccine & Risk Tracker - Covid Act Now](#). Risk levels are **low**, **medium**, **high**, **very high**, and **severe**.

In-person/hybrid Worship services, large group concerts, fundraisers, other large events (with 50 or more participants) shall occur while the COVID risk is at low, medium, or high levels. According to the Updated Gathering Guidance from UUA.org, "In areas where transmission risk is very high or severe, suspend all large in-person (indoor and outdoor) gatherings such as worship, concerts, or fundraisers." As such, in-person worship services and other large gatherings shall be suspended if the level of risk for Broward County is and has been very high or severe for two or more weeks. The level of risk, as reported on the COVID Act Now website, will be monitored by the Re-Emergence Team, which will alert the Board and Worship Team if the risk level changes to or from very high or severe and stays at that level for two weeks.

Further, all attendees of in-person gatherings, small or large, are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated as possible based on eligibility by age. Vaccination or recent negative COVID test is strongly encouraged for in-person gatherings. Facial coverings/masks are required for large indoor in-person gatherings and strongly encouraged for other groups to protect the most vulnerable, including unvaccinated babies and young children. Small groups are

encouraged to set-up and enter into their own covenants, using the guidance herein, regarding COVID-19 safety procedures.

If protocols at rental facilities are more restrictive, their guidelines will be followed.

To see all of the upcoming events at River of Grass, please visit the calendar on our website at riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html. **River of Grass UU Congregation** is on [Facebook](#) (LIKE us) and [Twitter](#) (FOLLOW Us). For more information, please contact communityawareness@riverofgrassuu.org.

Unsubscribe - If you do not wish to receive this weekly email, please send an email and we will remove you from the mailing list, office@riverofgrassuu.org.

Announcements to be sent out in the weekly congregation-wide update should be e-mailed to WeeklyEmail@RiverofGrassUU.org by 12 pm Wednesday. All announcements will pertain to congregational life and affiliated groups and will be for activities or events occurring within two weeks of the e-mail. Outside groups and individuals, wishing to use this vehicle of congregation-wide communication, must have the approval of the Board of Trustees.