

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 – June 17, 2021

Rising from Stillness

As we begin our Summer Series of River of Grass Classics, we will be refreshing some favorite services that took place in the past year. As Rev Amy is away for the summer months, we have ten weeks to explore some old and new experiences on Sunday morning. Some lay led, some from Rev Amy and, yes, there will be an opportunity for you to join other congregations on Sunday mornings to experience their worship services. A full schedule will be on the [River of Grass website](#) in the next week.

Our guest speaker this Sunday, Dr. Kitty Oliver, with her talk entitled “Rising from Stillness.” She is a noted race and ethnic relations author, oral historian, TV and radio producer, and performer, and also a familiar face at River of Grass with her husband Art Musson. Dr. Oliver has received national media attention for her Race and Change work collecting and sharing race and ethnic relations stories across cultures and generations for the historical archives and in public programs. Her work has been featured on CNN and PBS and she has taken her presentations to a wide range of audiences nationally, including UU congregations. She continues to build bridges across cultures with hopeful dialogues, virtually, and we can look forward to an inspiring, entertaining message in words and music.

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](#). Tune in there for the service, then log onto our Zoom link for hospitality time afterward.

We’ll be watching for you!

Topic: Worship June 20, 2021

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>

Upcoming Virtual Events - This Sunday:

Sunday, June 20, 2021

Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am – Dr. Kitty Oliver - Rising from Stillness

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

Summer Fun Program: All Ages 12:30 pm

Word Play is fun! We can make up songs with silly lyrics or create goofy names for ordinary things. But this Sunday, we will explore how new realities can be formed with powerful new words, like this one: Juneteenth. We will explore how Juneteenth, the celebration of slavery’s end in the United States, has gained public attention and now is becoming a federal holiday. Parents will receive an email with a list of needed supplies for our lesson and Zoom information. New families are welcome. If you need the Zoom info, or have any questions, please email:

ALL AGES
SUNDAYS
12:30PM

MONTH OF JUNE:
EXPLORING PLAY

6: Playing with Rainbows
13: Playing Just Pretend
20: Word Play
27: Playing with Jokes

Contact our Faith Development Team for class links or for more information on our Summer Fun Series. We can be reached at: faithdevelopment@riverofgrassuu.org

faithdevelopment@riverofgrassuu.org. (Summer Fun will be held at 12:30 pm every Sunday, except Jul 4th, through Aug 29th. [For a full schedule and more information, click here](#))

Worthy Now Prison Ministry:

A great way to put our UU values into action is by becoming an adult pen pal. The program is run by a Unitarian Universalist organization called the Church of the Larger Fellowship (CLF). The Worthy Now Prison Ministry matches incarcerated CLF members with free world UUs based on their interests. I've enjoyed getting to know my pen pal and discussing the topics that are important to both of us: Unitarian Universalism, spirituality, racism, art, nature, and music.

You complete an online application and write to your pen pal once a month for a minimum of 6 months. You mail your letters to CLF and they forward them to your pen pal (and vice versa). It's an opportunity to bring compassion and understanding to people in need of some hope.

<https://worthynow.org/pen-pals/>

From the Church of the Larger Fellowship website:

"Most CLF members in prison are new to Unitarian Universalism and learned about the CLF from friends or cellmates. With no access to the web or UU Sunday services, people who are incarcerated can only learn about Unitarian Universalism from the mailings we send them and the letters they exchange with our staff and other Unitarian Universalists like you!

The Worthy Now Prison Network staff matches CLF members who are incarcerated with UUs who live in the free world. For a minimum of six months, you will exchange friendly letters on topics of mutual interest.

The CLF's Worthy Now Prison Network provides you an opportunity to live out our Unitarian Universalist values by connecting you with a pen pal. At Worthy Now, our message is that all of us are part of the interwoven fabric of the universe. We are deeply and undeniably connected! We acknowledge that while our behaviors can vary from loving to hate-filled acts of disruption and harm, our inherent worth remains unchanged. This Universalist lens is what we hope our Pen Pals enter their relationship through."

For more information contact Judi Oltmans SSJGT@riverofgrassuu.org.

Virtual SUUSI 2021: July 17-24 (Southeast Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute)

Priority Registration ends June 18 at midnight!

Last chance for T-shirts and free surprise boxes for Youth & Middlers!

When we meet in person, all registration closes down one month before SUUSI starts so that staff can focus on getting ready for the event. Last year, we never closed registration at all. This year? You can expect a little bit of both.

Priority Registration ends at midnight on June 18. Priority registration comes with the following advantages:

- You can order a T-shirt, which will be shipped to your home.
- Any Youth and Middlers in your registration group will receive a free box of materials in the mail, with supplies needed for various activities and workshops.
- Your 13-year-old can participate fully in the Coming of Age program.
- Your Teen can participate in TWOB (auditions were on Jun 12th).
- You can sign up for workshops that include supplies mailed to you.

Once Priority Registration closes (midnight, Jun 18th), Late Registration will remain open until the final day of SUUSI. Under Late Registration, you can participate in all-SUUSI events such as worship services and concerts. You can sign up for and participate in any workshops, nature events, or games that still have open spaces. Your children can attend age-group programming but will not receive supplies in the mail. There will not be a late T-shirt order this year.



If you register now, you can always return to your registration later to add (or drop) workshops, nature events, and sports & games activities. However, you will not be able to add T-shirts to your order after Priority Registration closes.

[Register now in SOLIS!](#)

Great Plans for SUUSI Youth!

This year the SUUSI Youth program is planning to send each registrant a package full of materials and great UU-themed surprises. Please register no later than June 18th in order to receive this package of goodies! There is no cost to receive this mailing.

We know your child might be feeling “Zoom fatigue” at the end of a long school year (the longest!), so we want to assure you that we welcome your child for as much or as little as they choose. Even if they only pick one or two events to attend, we will be delighted to see them and we’re confident that they’ll enjoy connecting with friends! You’ll receive a box of crafting supplies, game pieces, SUUSI Store surprises, and even cookie decorating materials for “Cookies With Kimmer” - as long as you register by the 18th.

We are particularly excited about SUUSI Nature’s partnership with the Mainspring Conservation Trust. Jason Meador, the Trust’s Aquatic Programs Manager and project coordinator for their stream restoration activities, will lead two interactive nature workshops for SUUSI Youth. You can read more about them in the catalog - workshops #14 and #27. Other Youth activities on offer include Dungeons & Dragons gaming sessions and arts and craft workshops.

Please check out the youth section of the SUUSI catalog and let us know what activities you’re most excited about. If you have any questions or concerns, we welcome you to email us at youth@suusi.org.

[Find out more about this year's SUUSI!](#)

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/>

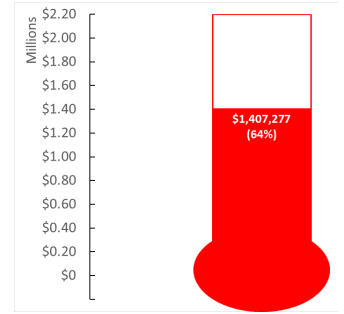
The River of Grass Men's Group is open to all men. The Men's Group meets via Zoom every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. **On Thursday, Jun 17th at 7:30 pm we will meet on Zoom.** Our Topic will be: "Play." The Topic Description is online at KipBarkley.com/topic/. At each session, we launch into a topic that is designed to encourage personal sharing. <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/670022402> The Meeting Room opens up at 7:00 pm before the Host arrives. For more info, please contact Kip Barkley mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org. Please let us know if you plan to try to make it.

Flowing River Sangha – We will meet online on **Tuesday, Jun 22nd at 7:00 pm**. Every Tuesday night we will meet via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/201911385>. We will meet from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. This is an open-ended, drop-in group for all levels of meditation experience. For more information, please email Gary Gonzalez at meditation@riverofgrassuu.org.

Young Adults are now meeting on the 2nd Sundays, at 7:30 pm virtually on Zoom – Millennials, Gen Xers, and Gen Zs, are welcome to tune in to the YUng Adult Virtual Coffee Hour on **Sunday, Jul 11th at 7:30 pm**. Our group’s purpose is to foster an inclusive, diverse and intentional community that inspires spiritual growth and connection. Please email youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org if you have any questions and to obtain the zoom details.

SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Want a cooler home? Have your AC ducts inspected to ensure you are cooling your home and not your attic. Over time, the tape covering ductwork connections can lose its stickiness and fall off, exposing gaps for the AC to escape. Sometimes even small affordable repairs can significantly reduce your electric bill, and help the environment!

Drive to the Finish: Capital Campaign - The Future Home teams have estimated we will need \$2-2.2 million to purchase the property, renovate, and furnish our new home when we find it. As your Capital Campaign Team members look for creative ways to reach that objective, we have launched a Drive to the Finish to reduce the amount we will need to finance. *Great news! Any new or increased pledge of \$3,000 or more will be doubled by an anonymous donor.* Go to our website, riverofgrassuu.org, scroll down to the Drive to the Finish information and [click on the link to make your pledge](#). For more information, contact 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

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: February 2021

Small Group Meeting COVID Requirements

The CDC has released guidelines which allow meetings of fully-vaccinated** people. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

In accordance with these guidelines, Official River of Grass meeting protocols have been updated to reflect the differences in the make-up of meeting attendees. **People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson (J&J)/Janssen). This meeting protocol has been developed and can be found on our web (RiverofGrassUU.org/teams-committees--small-groups.html). Contact Susan Juncosa at vicepresident@riverofgrassuu.org for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions - Small Group Meetings

1. Can I meet with my RoG friends?

- That is your choice at all times. These recommendations are only for official River of Grass – sponsored gatherings.

2. What's the first thing to consider when organizing an in-person event?

- Is it necessary that the gathering be in person? Can the same purpose be achieved by meeting on Zoom? Is there a reason to meet other than the fact that we want to be together?

3. My small group has some people who are not vaccinated. Can we meet in person?

- Small groups with unvaccinated attendees can meet outdoors. Follow the procedure for such meetings and sign the covenant.

+ If any members of the group do not want to attend in person, provision must be made for attendance by Zoom or other application.

4. My group has all been vaccinated with all shots and have waited the recommended times. Can we have an in-person meeting?

- Yes, if you take these actions:

+ follow the procedure for such meetings and sign the covenant.

+ If any members of the group do not want to attend in person, provision must be made for attendance by Zoom or other application.

5. What about an indoor meeting?

- Yes, see question four.

6. Can children come to the gathering?

- At this time, there is no vaccine approved for children. They would have to maintain social distance and masking, etc. This might be a group decision.

Meetings with all attendees fully-vaccinated (INDOORS AND OUTDOORS)

Meeting Leader will do the following:

+ send the covenant to attendees prior to the meeting;

+ determine, with group members, if proof of vaccination must be provided;

+ collect signed covenants or procure signed covenants at the start of meeting;

Actions Prior to a Gathering

A covenant shall be developed and sent to attendees which includes the following:

- + attendee states they have been fully vaccinated and will provide card if requested;
- + attendee will comply with any contact tracing which may ensue; and
- + has not tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days and is not experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.

Actions During a Gathering

- + attendees will give meeting leader the signed covenant or sign a copy at the start of meeting;
- + Meeting attendees do not have to wear masks or social distance
- + Meeting attendees may share food or drink.

Fully-Vaccinated Small Group Gathering Covenant

We, the members, friends, and visitors of the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation acknowledge the role we play in keeping ourselves, each other and our community safe from the spread of COVID-19. With that in mind, we agree to adhere to the following protocols when gathering in small groups in or out-of-doors:

- o We have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- o We have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days and are not experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- o We will comply with any contract tracing following our gathering, if needed.

Meeting with some attendees unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated (OUTDOORS ONLY)

Meeting Leader will do the following:

- + send the covenant to attendees prior to the meeting;
- + set up space and have sanitizer/hand washing supplies available;
- + collect signed covenants or procure signed covenants at the start of meeting;
- + locations of outdoor gathering will be chosen with the physical needs of the attendees in mind and alternative Zoom links will be offered if needed;
- + review masking and social distancing.

Actions Prior to a Gathering

A covenant shall be developed and sent to attendees which includes the following:

- + agrees to follow social distancing and masking protocols; and
- + has not traveled internationally in past two weeks; and
- + attendee will comply with any contact tracing which may ensue; and
- + is not experiencing any COVID symptoms.

Actions During a Gathering

- + attendees will give meeting leader the signed covenant or sign a copy at the start of meeting;
- + Meeting attendees will follow masking and social distancing guidelines;
- + Meeting attendees will not share food or drink.

Actions after a Gathering

- + Meeting leader will keep the covenants collected for two weeks;
- + Attendees will inform the meeting leader if they have Covid symptoms and/or a positive Covid test within two weeks after the meeting. Meeting leader will inform all attendees.

Small Group Outdoor Gathering Covenant

We, the members, friends, and visitors of the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation acknowledge the role we play in keeping ourselves, each other and our community safe from the spread of Covid-19. With that in mind, we agree to adhere to the following protocols when gathering in small groups out-of-doors:

- o We will wear masks at all times and keep 6 feet from persons who do not reside in our households.
- o We will not partake of food or drink.
- o We are not experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms.
- o We have not traveled out of the country in the past two weeks.
- o We will comply with any contract tracing following our gathering, if needed.

Factors Considered in forming the Guidelines:

All guidelines depend on both the public and the personal.

The public – the surrounding community – must meet certain standards for daily new cases, infection rate, test positivity percentage, contact tracing in place and hospital capacity.

Personal – each individual's state of health.

Scope of Recommendations:

At this time, the recommendations are only for small gatherings in **indoor and outdoor** spaces depending on who is vaccinated in the group.

Format of Recommendations:

The team will develop a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) document to be posted on the web site and added to the weekly e-mail, which will be updated as needed.

Meeting Leader will do the following:

- + send the covenant to attendees prior to the meeting;
- + set up space and have sanitizer/hand washing supplies available;
- + collect signed covenants or procure signed covenants at the start of meeting;
- + locations of outdoor gathering will be chosen with the physical needs of the attendees in mind and alternative Zoom links will be offered if needed;
- + review masking and social distancing.

Actions Prior to a Gathering

A covenant shall be developed and sent to attendees which includes the following:

- + agrees to follow social distancing and masking protocols; and
- + has not traveled internationally in past two weeks; and
- + attendee will comply with any contact tracing which may ensue; and
- + is not experiencing any COVID symptoms.

Actions During a Gathering

- + attendees will give meeting leader the signed covenant or sign a copy at the start of meeting;
- + Meeting attendees will follow masking and social distancing guidelines;
- + Meeting attendees will not share food or drink.

Actions after a Gathering

- + Meeting leader will keep the covenants collected for two weeks;
- + Attendees will inform the meeting leader if they have Covid symptoms and/or a positive Covid test within two weeks after the meeting. Meeting leader will inform all attendees.

COVID-19 Response Update

Our River of Grass faithful is actively responding to COVID-19. Any face-to-face gatherings of any kind must follow the new small group protocols that were recommended to the Board by the COVID Re-Emergence Team. Otherwise, all gatherings are suspended or moved on-line, while we search for our forever home, continue to keep ourselves and our community safe, and prepare for congregational life after COVID.

We are grateful that many many members and friends are in self-quarantine, doing their part to protect themselves as well as reduce the spread of the virus, and only venturing outside when absolutely necessary.

Our extended Caring Team has coordinated a 'network of contact' to help ensure our community has communication and is cared for..... and our Covenant Groups are a large part of this.

There is deep gratitude for the way our community cares for each other, remains flexible, and is diligent in responding to this unprecedented situation!

Take a deep breath. Allow any feelings and thoughts to be as they are. Know you are supported. Stay safe!

Basic Protective Measures Against Coronavirus

Your leadership at River of Grass are taking every precaution against coronavirus here at River of Grass and in the wider community we share. River of Grass is adhering to the following recommendations from the World Health Organizations.

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Be aware of those in our midst with compromised immune systems.

Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

1. Regularly and thoroughly CLEAN YOUR HANDS with an alcohol-based hand-rub or washing with soap and water, especially – after coughing/sneezing; when caring for the sick; before, during, and after you prepare food; before eating; after toilet use; when hands are visibly dirty – and when they are not; after handling animals or animal waste.
2. Maintain social distancing – 6 feet between yourself and anyone.
3. Even if well, try to maintain a distance of 6 feet from others and when greeting, instead of elbow and fist bumps (no handshakes or hugs), consider placing your hand over your heart as a gesture of welcome and hello.
4. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to avoid transfer of viruses from contaminated surfaces.
5. Practice respiratory hygiene: 1) Cough/sneeze into your elbow, 2) If you use tissues, dispose of them immediately, then clean your hands.
6. If you have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care promptly.
7. If you feel unwell, stay home, even with mild symptoms like headache and runny nose.
8. Stay informed, and follow any guidelines from your healthcare advisor.

How to cope with stress during this coronavirus outbreak:

1. It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared, or angry during any crisis.
2. Talk to people you trust, and contact your friends and family.
3. If you must stay home, maintain a healthy lifestyle with proper diet, sleep, exercise, and social contact with loved ones via email, phone, etc.
4. Avoid smoking or using alcohol and other drugs to deal with your emotions.
5. Get the facts from credible sources such as the Center for Disease Control, World Health Organization, or local/state health agencies.
6. Limit worry and agitation through lessening time you spend watching media and the internet.
7. Draw on coping skills that have helped you in the past.
8. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor, and have a plan to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

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 or called into the congregation's office 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.