

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 – October 7, 2021

First Nations, Holding History

We return to a bit of our own River of Grass history with a message rooted in learning to listen more deeply to those whose history our systems of privilege and white supremacy have too often silenced – the people of the First Nations whose voices we amplify and sanctify each year on our First Nations Sunday – acknowledging again that Columbus discovered nothing. There were people already here on this continent, people with governments, and traditions, and sacred ritual; music, and language, and community bonds stretching to generations both long before and yet to come. We live on stolen land, here at River of Grass, the traditional lands of the Tequesta Tribe of Florida. On Sunday, we listen again, so that we might hold their history more deeply.

Join us as you are from wherever you are in Zoom or on FaceBook live for both our service, and Hospitality in Zoom following the service. (If you tune in on Facebook, c'mon over to Hospitality at the link below!). We can't wait to see you!

Topic: Worship October 10, 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, October 10, 2021

Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am – First Nations, Holding History - Rev. Amy Carol Webb

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

Faith Development: Dragonflies **9:30am**; Teens **12:00pm**; Mockingbirds **1:30pm**

On **Oct 10th**, the children and youth in our Faith Development program will focus on the skills of Listening and Communicating. Children will need to bring their bags of **building bricks** to class for a fun listening activity! We'll learn that listening is actually a skill that gets better with practice, along with the skill of clearly communicating your needs. Our principle of inherent worth clearly calls us to develop that skill of sticking up for ourselves and being bold about our truths. So when it comes to Cultivating Relationships, our faith clearly tells us, "Listen to others and don't be shy about expecting others to listen to you." If you'd like further information about our FD program, contact Karen Gonzalez at religiouseducator@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 YUUnq Adult Virtual Coffee Hour on **Sunday, Oct 10th 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.

Rev. Amy's sabbatical: Rev. Amy's sabbatical began Monday, Sep 27th, and will end Tuesday, Nov 30th. She will be back in the pulpit on Dec 5th. For more information about her sabbatical, please read the information that Rev. Amy prepared. It is listed on our website: [Rev. Amy's Sabbatical Page](#).

Heritage & Hope:

Heritage - Abner Kneeland (April 7, 1774 – August 27, 1844) was an American evangelist and theologian who advocated views on women's rights, racial equality, and religious skepticism that were radical for his day. Due to provocative statements he published, Massachusetts convicted Kneeland under its rarely used blasphemy law. Kneeland was the last man in the United States jailed for blasphemy.



Kneeland disdained societal mores, preferring naturalistic and personal quests for truth. He believed in equal treatment for all people, both under the law as well as by society. Kneeland applied this even when religious scripture would seem to indicate different roles. This included support of such controversial ideas as divorce rights for women, married women keeping their own names and property, and refusal to condemn miscegenation (now known as interracial marriage). Kneeland was also in favor of birth control.

Hope - WE Are the Revolution. At the 2015 GA, the Youth Caucus experienced an emotional speech from an African American activist. She had lost people she loves and yearns for justice in Ferguson and everywhere else. We marched into an intersection as a silent human wall. We gripped hands as shouting began and crowds gathered. Volunteers laid in the center of the street for four and a half minutes to symbolize the four and half hours Michael Brown lay on the street of Ferguson. After this experience, feelings of empowerment, sadness, anger, and commitment washed over us. The words “Black Lives Matter” were shouted from our collective voice, bouncing through the hallways.



October is LGBTQ History Month: LGBTQ+ History Month is a month-long celebration that occurs in October to observe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer history. It also honors the history of gay rights. LGBTQ+ History Month was first celebrated in the United States in 1994, centering National Coming Out Day, which occurs annually on Oct 11th. This celebratory month was originally known as Lesbian and Gay History Month, and additional identity acronyms were added over time to increase inclusivity of LGBTQ+ communities. GLSEN coloring book features leaders and groundbreaking events in American history that highlight people with LGBTQ identities. Download the full coloring book in [color](#) or [black and white](#). LGBTQ leaders and events are featured in the book.



National Coming Out Day - Oct 11th: Every year on National Coming Out Day, we celebrate coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ). This year marks the 32nd anniversary of National Coming Out Day!

Thirty-two years ago on the anniversary of the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights, we first observed National Coming Out Day as a reminder that one of our most basic tools is the power of coming out. One out of every two Americans has someone close to the who is lesbian or gay. For transgender people, that number is only one in 10.

Coming out – whether it is as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer – STILL MATTERS . When people know someone who is LGBTQ+, they are more likely to support equality under the law.



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: This month we reconvene the River of Grass 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 Oct 7nd topic will be "Spiritual Practice."** The Topic Description is 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.

UU Social Justice Activists - GreenFaith's Faiths 4 Climate Justice global multi-religious day of action is Monday, Oct 18th. Join interfaith climate activists from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm at the Boca Raton office of BlackRock, 2255 Glades Road, Boca Raton, FL 33431, just west of I-95. Protestors will gather in the parking lot just west of BlackRock at 11:45am. BlackRock’s leadership needs to listen to the people of Florida who face rising sea levels, devastating hurricanes, damaging flooding, and sinking property values while the asset manager is investing in companies that contribute to the climate crisis. BlackRock oversees over \$8.5 trillion in assets around the world, including many pension funds. Their management includes stocks in some of the most climate damaging companies on the planet. **Sign up using the link for our local action on Oct 18th in Boca Raton: [Faiths call out Boca BlackRock to stop fueling the climate crisis!](#)**

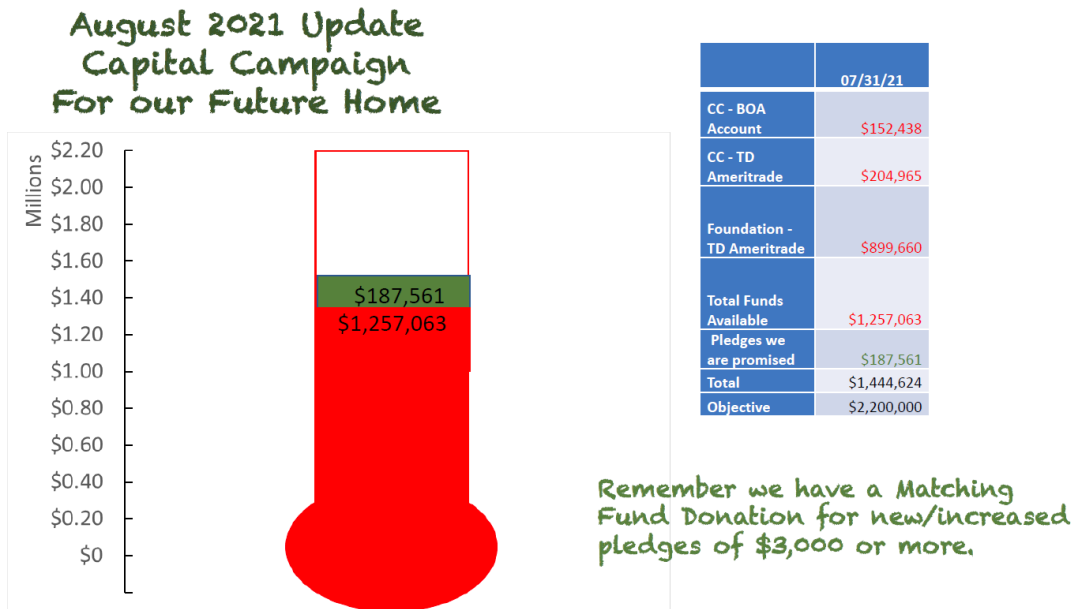
Buukies are reading “While Justice Sleeps” by Stacey Abrams. Stacey Abrams was the 2021 Ware Lecturer for the UUA’s General Assembly. She served 7 years in the Georgia House of Representatives as Minority Leader and ran for Georgia Governor in 2018. She has written 2 bestselling thrillers. Nora Roberts describes Stacey Abrams latest, “While Justice Sleeps”, as “a taut twisty thriller, drawing the reader into the hallowed halls of the Supreme Court among the strands of a complex web of politics, raw ambition, and deadly deception.” **Buukies will meet online Wednesday, Oct 20th at 7:00 pm via [Zoom](#).** Meeting ID: 926 5701 7488; Passcode: 746613; One tap mobile +13017158592,,92657017488#,,,,*746613# US (Washington DC). If you have any questions please contact Steve Jens-Rochow at bUUkies@RiverofGrassUU.org.

SE Cluster Meeting - Saturday Oct 30th at 12:00 pm - The SE UU Cluster is excited to have Paula Cole Jones as the Keynote Speaker at our Annual Meeting on **Saturday, Oct 30, 2021 from 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm**. Paula will discuss the proposed 8th Principle for Unitarian Universalism. She is one of the principal authors of the Principle.

"8. Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountability dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."

There will be a panel discussion of congregations that have adopted the 8th Principle. To register for the meeting send an email with your name to Secretary@seucluster.org. A Zoom link will be returned to you.

SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Report smoking vehicles, as one problem car can pollute more than 100 times a standard car. Call 954-519-1499 or visit Broward.org/air.



Drive to the Finish: Capital Campaign - Thank you to all who gave us a new pledge and those who generously increased their pledge. Remember there is a Matching Fund Donor who will match any new or increased pledge of \$3,000 or more. With gratitude and hope, Your Capital Campaign Team. capitalcampaign@riverofgrassuu.org Go to our website, riverofgrassuu.org, scroll down to the Drive to the Finish information and [click on the link to make your pledge](#).

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: 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 contact 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.