

# River of Grass

## Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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

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

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## River of Grass Weekly Update – November 3, 2022

### As Above, So Below: Ancestor Sunday

#### Ancestor Sunday 2022

That which is above is like to that which is below,  
and that which is below is like to that which is above.

--The Emerald Tablet

Those who have did have never, never left  
The dead have a pact with the living

—Ysaye Barnwell

In this season of the thinning veils, join us to honor the ancestors and those who have joined them from among our midst with our annual Ancestor Sunday – the first in-person since 2019. **Bring a photo or memento for our Remembrance Altar, or send a photo to include in our visual remembrance, to [minister@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:minister@riverofgrassuu.org)**, as we seek to harvest the wisdom of those who came before, even as we sow seeds of hope for those who will come after.

Come as you are – either in-person at University of Florida IFAS Satellite Building or virtually on Zoom. We welcome you on Sunday morning at 10:30. Come a bit before and we can Chat prior to the service... See you then!

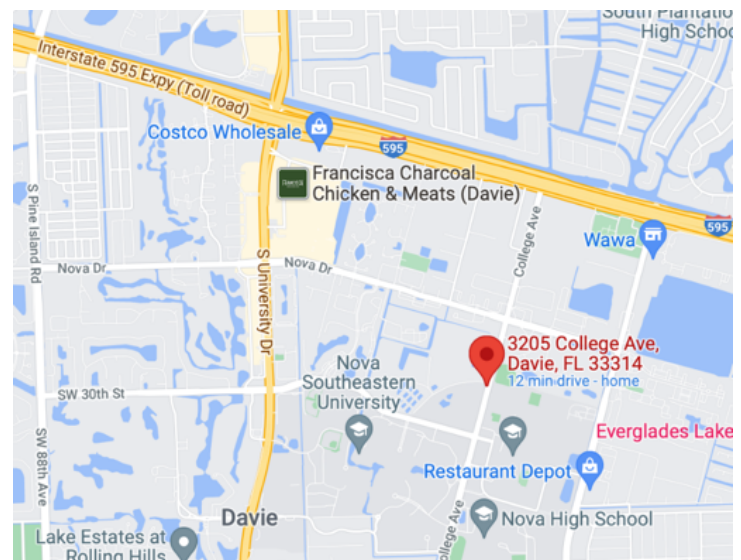
#### University of Florida - IFAS (Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center )

3205 College Avenue, Davie, FL 33314;

Directions: <https://flrec.ifas.ufl.edu/about-us/>

If you Are arriving via University Drive:

- Turn east at Nova Drive (SW 24th Street), which would be a right turn if driving from the south and a left turn if driving from the north.
- Drive east on Nova Drive to the first stoplight, which is College Avenue.
- Turn right onto College Avenue and drive south ¼ mile to the first entrance on the right side of the street. Look for a large blue monument sign with University of Florida on it. The entrance is 600 feet past this monument sign.



Use the Zoom link below to gather with us virtually in Zoom. Catch us on Facebook live on our [facebook page](#).

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 In-Person or Virtual Events - This Sunday:*

#### **Sunday, November 6, 2022**

**River of Grass UU Congregation** – As Above, So Below: Ancestor Sunday – Rev. Amy Carol Webb

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

**Faith Development** - The theme for November is change. In our Faith Development class for kids on Sunday, we'll talk about how we're changing the way we look at Thanksgiving. Our Wisdom Tale will remind us that gratitude can be felt all year long and that indigenous people have much to teach us, still. In class, we'll learn about the 3 sisters' planting practice and how this interdependent tradition benefits the plants, the soil and us. We'll share our artwork with the adults during hospitality time! Our middle school OWL kids will be meeting in our office. For more information about our programs, contact Ms. Karen at [ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org).

### *Volunteer Opportunities*

- **90 minutes every 4-5 weeks:** The Worship Team needs **three new Zoom Hosts** to rotate with two other volunteers running our Worship Service through Zoom on Sunday mornings. It also includes a FB promo at 5:00 pm when Rev. Amy and Faith Development tell our FB friends about the upcoming service! Training is provided. Once every four or five weeks is the commitment for 1-1/2 hours. If you want to jump into volunteering, here is an opportunity! Please contact Rita Cherubini at [worship@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:worship@riverofgrassuu.org) for more information.
- **November 12 from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm - LifeNet4Families...** Good news! LifeNet4families is looking for some volunteer assistance during the holidays. This is a great way for us to be involved in a really worthwhile community organization. Volunteers are usually needed to work in the kitchen or dining room, or help sort and pack individual food boxes as part of a team. We can use a few folks from 9-12 on November 12 and we are awaiting other available dates. If you are interested or have questions please contact Linda Morgan Crain at [SSJGT@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:SSJGT@riverofgrassuu.org) (That's the Service and Social Justice Green Team) OR I'll be at church this Sunday with a clipboard!



**Membership Matters!** For more information on any event AND TO SIGN UP/VOLUNTEER, contact Leana Bresnahan at [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org).

- Please join us for the fifth session of the Faith Forward Inquirers' Sessions, which will be held this **SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP SERVICE** from 11:45 am – 1:00 pm. The topic is: MEMBERSHIP 101 AND CONGREGATIONAL LIFE (INCLUDING GOVERNANCE), led by Kathy Jens-Rochow, our Board President, and Leana Bresnahan, our Membership Committee Chair. It will be Multi-Platform (In-Person + Zoom). **The Zoom link for the Inquirers' Session is** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85480603146?pwd=NIIRYzI4MG9IVk11MHA5djIwZHc0Zz09>
- Our fall picnic **for the entire congregation** will take place on **Sunday, November 13, 12:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.** Members Liz and John Perez have once again generously opened their home in Plantation. They have a yard for the kids to run and play, and a pool for them to swim! This picnic is for everyone, ALL AGES...for members,

friends, AND especially for those new to River of Grass. Rev. Amy will be there, just back from her sabbatical! **The picnic is a “bring your own everything...”** including (to be green) your own plates, cups, and cutlery, but we will provide desserts and goodies! No sign-up required! But we do need some help for set-up and clean-up, so please volunteer. Please email [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org) or [office@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:office@riverofgrassuu.org) for directions; or call Leana at 954-258-6315.

### *Heritage and Hope*

#### **November 17<sup>th</sup> is National Take A Hike Day**

**Heritage - Richard Evans Schultes** ( January 12, 1915 – April 10, 2001) was an American biologist. He may be considered the father of modern ethnobotany. He is known for his studies of the uses of plants by indigenous peoples, especially the indigenous peoples of the Americas. He worked on entheogenic or hallucinogenic plants, particularly in Mexico and the Amazon, involving lifelong collaborations with chemists. He had charismatic influence as an educator at Harvard University; several of his students and colleagues went on to write popular books and assume influential positions in museums, botanical gardens, and popular culture.



Schultes' botanical field-work among aboriginal American communities led him to be one of the first to alert the world about destruction of the Amazon rain-forest and the disappearance of its native people. He collected over thirty thousand herbarium specimens (including three hundred species new to Western science) and published numerous ethnobotanical discoveries including the source of the dart poison known as curare, now commonly employed as a muscle relaxant during surgery. In his travels he lived with the indigenous peoples and viewed them with respect and felt that tribal chiefs were gentlemen; he understood the languages of the Witoto and Makuna peoples. He encountered dangers in his travels, including hunger, beriberi, repeated bouts of malaria, and near drowning.

“The ethnobotanical researcher... must realize that far from being a superior individual, he - the civilized man - is in many respects far inferior...” - Richard Evans Schultes

Source: The Schultes Center

**Our Hope - Katie Sivani Gelfand** is the Director of Religious Exploration in the congregation that raised her, the First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans.

Excerpts from her article “Faith in the Forest”

*As a lifelong Unitarian Universalist, it was a stirring experience to learn how to uphold my truth while isolated from that community. UUs proudly shape our faith around service to the community: from promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every person to Standing on the Side of Love on critical justice issues to volunteering on a committee to simply sharing a song together. But where does faith shine in the solitude of the forest?*



*Hiking the 100 mile wilderness in Maine, one of the last legs of the Appalachian Trail, wound up being the greatest challenge of a long journey. Maine is the only state on the trail where there are no bridges across rivers, so it is necessary to ford all waterways, of which there are many. Despite all of the treacherous factors, this section of the Appalachian Trail proved to be the most majestic, the most mystical, the most invigorating of the entire journey. Every day we passed a glacial lake that was more breathtakingly gorgeous than the one the day before. Autumn was coming up and the trees transformed into brilliant rainbows across the sky. I had to trust the forest, the covenant, and my intuition. Living through each obstacle I found grace and gratitude.*

*It was easy to connect to my UU faith whenever I felt tested, for we are a people of great perseverance who push the limits to expand our minds and our hearts. In the forests of Appalachia, I met suffering, joy, and meaning, who all helped me to learn a richer expression of my faith.*

Source: UUA.org

### ***New Members:***

**Becca Love** – Proud to be a new member of River of Grass UU. Thank you to everyone who has been so warm and welcoming to both of us. My name is Becca Love, and I am married to George Leppla. I was born in Texas and lived there most of my life, except for a few years in Louisiana; my family has been in the oil & gas business for 5 generations which explains my bouncing back and forth between these states. I have two sons, one lives in Houston and the other lives outside of Philadelphia. I was an electrologist for 35 years and I owned a day spa. In 1989 I joined Northwoods UU in The Woodlands, Texas, and I belonged to All Souls UU in Shreveport, LA for 5 years. I enjoy music, plants, traveling, aerobics, water aerobics and I want to learn how to play pickleball.

**George Leppla** – I am 72, am married to Becca Love. I was born in Brooklyn, NY and grew up on Long Island. I left NY when I graduated from High School and never went back. I lived most of my adult life in PA outside of Philadelphia until, in 2006, I moved to Texas to marry Becca Love who introduced me to Unitarian Universalism. We lived in Texas until 2021 when we sold our home and moved to Sunrise, FL. Having been members of UU congregations in TX and Shreveport, LA, it is only natural for us to join River of Grass UU.



I grew up in a traditional Protestant background (Dutch Reformed - Presbyterian) and my early life centered around the church and music. As an adult, I became dissatisfied with "organized" religion and the demands of making a living took me away from seriously being involved in music. Over the years, I sold my trombones and guitars and now once in a while I play the ukulele (badly) for fun and sing at my desk (I have a great audience of 1... Becca).

For the past 30 years, I have been a travel agent, owning a small travel agency where Becca and I specialized in selling cruises only. As we grow older, we are traveling more and working less and totally enjoying living here in South Florida. We used to come to this area for vacation and always said that if we ever got the chance, we would move here. Two years ago the stars aligned just right and we were able to make that move. We are blessed to be able to be "living the dream".

### ***8<sup>th</sup> principle Action Team announcement:***

Bold Justice is an organization of 22 religious congregations from different racial/ethnic and religious backgrounds. Their mission is to “powerfully address community issues in Broward County through a self-sustaining, interfaith, interracial, proactive organization rooted in religious congregations.”

They have won victories related to Affordable Housing, Dental Care, Juvenile Arrests, Jobs, Unemployment, and Education. Currently, they are working to end the criminalization of poverty. One example of this is to encourage the State Attorney to support a program for civil citations instead of arrests for adults with misdemeanor offenses, such as driving with an expired tag or failure to pay a fine. They are also working on climate change with a focus on extreme heat in Broward County.

The work of this group is in line with our recently adopted 8<sup>th</sup> principle - *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.* For more information, check out their website at [boldjustice.org](http://boldjustice.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](mailto:Carolyn@InsightInstituteLLC.com) or [Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com](mailto:Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com), or visit <http://www.insightinstitutellc.com/>

**RoG Men's Group: We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays each month from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.** We are now meeting in person as well as via [Zoom Meeting](#). Our meeting location is at The Transformation Project: 4431 SW 64th Ave Ste 109, Davie, FL 33314. All who are able can meet early for dinner at 5:30 pm at Uncle Al's, 8200 Griffin Rd, Davie, FL 33328. (If you're joining for dinner, please email Ken, group facilitator, so he can coordinate space.) All who identify male are invited to join. **Our Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> topic: Aggression.** 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 Zoom Meeting Room will open up at 7:00 pm and we will begin at 7:15 pm. If you have any questions please contact Ken Bresnahan; [mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org); RoG Men's Group Facilitator.

**Full Moon Daughters FALL CAMPING TRIP! NOV. 4-NOV. 6, 2022, Friday-Sunday:** We are going back to a favorite park – Jonathan Dickinson State Park – just north of Jupiter, home to the Loxahatchee River, and great birding. You can come for one night or two. There are hotels nearby for hotel campers who will join us during the day. Email [fullmoondaughters@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:fullmoondaughters@riverofgrassuu.org) ASAP if you are interested or have any questions. Here is a link to park info: <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/jonathan-dickinson-state-park>. See you on the water, along the trail, and under the stars! Your coordinators, Diane Lade and Deb Giblin-Davis

### **MUUVies for Change November viewing is "The Color Purple"**

An epic tale spanning forty years in the life of Celie (Whoopi Goldberg), an African-American woman living in the South who survives incredible abuse and bigotry. After Celie's abusive father marries her off to the equally debasing "Mister" Albert Johnson (Danny Glover), things go from bad to worse, leaving Celie to find companionship anywhere she can. She perseveres, holding on to her dream of one day being reunited with her sister in Africa.

"The Color Purple" Whoopi Goldberg, Oprah Winfrey, Danny Glover; Directed by Steven Spielberg; streaming on [HBO Max](#) and [Amazon Prime](#). We will discuss this film on **Wednesday, Nov 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**. Please reply to Steve Jens-Rochow [muuvies@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:muuvies@riverofgrassuu.org) if you are coming for the Discussion. Join our Zoom Meeting at 7pm: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84418593114>. Meeting ID: 844 1859 3114; One tap mobile: +16465588656,,84418593114# US (New York); Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kvL0D4l8Y>.



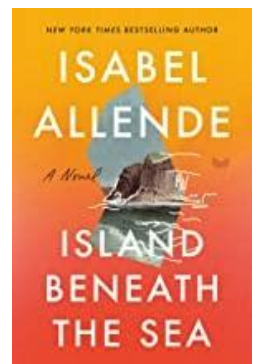
### **BUUKies November Read – "Island Beneath the Sea" by Isabel Allende. We will meet on Wednesday, Nov 16<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.**

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

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

From the sugar plantations of Saint-Domingue to the lavish parlors of New Orleans at the turn of the 19th century, the latest novel from New York Times bestselling author Isabel Allende (Inés of My Soul, The House of the Spirits, Portrait in Sepia) tells the story of a mulatta woman, a slave and concubine, determined to take control of her own destiny.

Steve Jens-Rochow [BUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:BUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org).



Please remember to **Smile when you shop at Amazon.com**. When you use the River of Grass link while shopping on Amazon, our community receives a .5% donation as one of their eligible charitable organizations. The direct River of Grass Amazon link is: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/65-0791653>. River of Grass has received \$2,079.50 since we signed up with AmazonSmile. This holiday season you can help support River of Grass while online shopping with Amazon.



*SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Use recycled paper and reduce printing whenever you can. Ask yourself if you really need a hard copy. Print double-sided whenever your printer allows. The trees will thank you!*

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

**Team:** Karen Gonzalez, Susan Juncosa, Jeanne Masten ([COVIDTeam@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto: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: consider 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 October 16, 2022**

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

COVID-19 is moving from pandemic to endemic status – it is always circulating in the community but the number of infected people varies from community to community. Individuals should take appropriate precautions based on their personal risk. River of Grass will follow the following measures for community gatherings based on CDC Guidelines and the Broward County risk levels.

Remember, you may choose to wear a mask and maintain social distancing at any time. If you have symptoms, a positive test or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should wear a mask.

Our COVID Team is monitoring the Broward County status weekly and will promptly advise if the status changes.

#### **Community Level LOW: Current Broward County Status**

- Individuals may elect to wear masks and socially distance at all times.

#### **Community Level MEDIUM:**

- Wear face masks for indoor gatherings.
- Choir will wear singing masks.
- Unmasked speakers and the Minister must test negative with a rapid test the previous evening.

#### **Community Level HIGH:**

##### In person Worship Services – Inside

- Masks required for all, special requirements for speakers
- Masks should be KN-95
- Unmasked speakers and Minister must test negative with a rapid test the previous evening
- No singing except the Minister (humming OK!)
- Social distancing between family groups
- No food or drinks
- All attendees sign in

### After service Hospitality – Outside

- Maintain social distancing

### Meetings – inside and outside

- Group leader will inquire if anyone in the group wants the meeting to be masked. If everyone is not comfortable, masking and social distancing should be maintained.
- Food and drinks – determined by the group.
- All attendees sign in.

To see all of the upcoming events at River of Grass, please visit the calendar on our website at [riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:office@riverofgrassuu.org).

*Announcements to be sent out in the weekly congregation-wide update should be e-mailed to [WeeklyEmail@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto: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.*