

Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

DAVIE, FLORIDA

SEPTEMBER 2016

EITHER OAR

Rev. Amy Carol Webb



Watching Olympic rowing this summer, we couldn't always hear the coxswains' calls – but we could see them. Men, women, pulling in rhythm, gliding smoother, faster, steadfast and unwavering over the water just under the hull. It's a visual symphony of strength, determination, collaboration, and cooperation. It's each taking their part and giving it the best they've got. Doesn't matter which oar they grasp, or which position in the boat. Without any one of them, it won't go. Without all of them, it can't reach their goal. And whether they medal or simply celebrate the feat of getting there, being there, competing and finishing, for most, the accomplishment achieved working together means more.

Watching them, I thought of us – this River of Grass Congregation and the river we row. It's a fair parallel and moving metaphor for the way we do things here. Each person's part matters. Each person's place along his or her journey matters. Each with an oar joined in covenant with every other to keep this boat we share, this life, this quest for meaning we seek, side by side moving forward.

I thought of the cooperation, collaboration and commitment that are hallmarks of this Beloved Community. The way we see what needs to be done – and do it. From the practical – the way our meeting space converts to concert space and back in a matter of minutes. To the philosophical – with folks from virtually every faith tradition, and none, and on a myriad of spiritual paths, gathered in this place for common cause. Sometimes it can feel like magic, this River of Grass. Though we know, like any other human enterprise, underneath is deep devotion and determination to make it work. That we get good things done here is no more magic than Olympic rowers crossing the finish line. It's teamwork. It's dedication. It's giving the best we have in body, mind and spirit.

As we launch our beautiful boat into the waters of this new congregational year, we can hear the coxswain's calls – "Justice! Peace! Compassion! Kindness! PULL!" – and vow that the world will see them in us. To be sure, the waters we row this season may be choppy, the world a storm beneath our hull, that it sometimes seems hard enough just to stay afloat. Still, pulling together in rhythm we dare to keep rowing smoother, faster, steadfast, and unwavering, resolved to live together the dream of a world transformed.



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OUR SUNDAY LOCATION

11850 W. State Road 84, Suite 1, Davie, FL 33325

EVERY SUNDAY

Worship Service: 10:30 to 11:30 am. **Hospitality Hour:** 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Faith Development Classes: 11:00 am to 12:00 noon

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

There is plenty of parking outside the sanctuary, but please leave the closer parking spaces for our guests and physically challenged worshippers.

All meetings are held at 11850 W State Road 84, Suite 1 in Davie unless otherwise noted.



River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Phone 954-723-7877

www.riverofgrassuu.org

office@riverofgrassuu.org

Minister **Rev. Amy Carol Webb**
minister@riverofgrassuu.org

Newsletter

Editor Monica Dyer

Layout Brit Lundell

Copy Editor Diane Diaz

Board of Trustees

board@riverofgrassuu.org

President Zena Tucker

Vice President Scott May

Secretary Toni Cattell

Treasurer Brit Lundell

Trustee Kristine Barkley

Trustee Emilie Sayward Henry-Richardson

Trustee Dave Katz

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Committee Chairs

committee contact info at

www.riverofgrassuu.org

Caring Deb Kitner
& Kristine Barkley

Community Awareness Sheryl Cattell

Concert (Café) Robby Greenburg
& Aaron Stang

Facilities Management Jon Kitner
& GL Franklin

Facilities Rental Ingrid Furlong

Faith Development Tanya Gustafson

Finance Pam Schrimsher

Green Sanctuary **Open**

Hospitality Bennett Lorman
& Drea Kelly

Membership Leana Bresnahan
& Deb Kitner

Personnel Lynn O'Brien
& Dave Katz

Service & Social Justice Rick Tucker

Shared Ministry Diane Lade
& Janet Schwartz

Stewardship **Open**

Worship Kathy Jens-Rochow

Other Resources

contact info at www.riverofgrassuu.org

Office Administrator Sandy Blair Chibnick

Faith Development Coordinator Deb Ely

Choir Director Gayle Giese

Pastoral Care Riley Cothran
& Pat Katz

Web Designer Marjorie Loring
& Esther Sampol

OUR PRINCIPLES

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

STAY CONNECTED!

In between issues of *Reflections* you can stay connected to the River of Grass Congregation the following ways:

- ◆ Sign up for our **weekly email** with events and news that changes each week: send an email to office@riverofgrassuu.org
- ◆ Visit our **Facebook page**: www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu
- ◆ Follow us on **Twitter**: [@RiverOfGrassUU](https://twitter.com/RiverOfGrassUU) or www.twitter.com/riverofgrassuu

Visit our **calendar**: www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html

(or go to: www.riverofgrassuu.org – click on Events – Calendar.)



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Zena Tucker



Since I was young, I have admired those who kept vigil for the people, things and places they love. Mother checking my forehead in the middle of the night for fever. Father, tending the fire through the cold night when the ice storm blasted the power lines



and closed the roads. Grandma asking the hour of my arrival from a long journey so she could have my favorite food hot and ready, regardless of the time. The ship's captain navigating around the rocks in dark night to the safe harbor. The meteorologist comparing models and analyzing the trends to alert us to foul weather. The operations center technician by the telephone at 2 am with recall rosters and checklists at the ready for any disaster. The cook in the kitchen, chopping, stirring, baking to present the food at the perfect time to the eager diners. The soldier with his rifle in one hand and his coat in the other, studying the fence line for any sign of trouble. The child who gently pets her cat and speaks tender words to its ear when nobody's watching. All these vigils are signs of love and generous spirits.

I enter my second year as President of the Board and I realize, I am on vigil, on watch, with you dear members, for our Beloved Community. Our lives, while short, burn brightly awhile on our watch with the River. Why do I do it? Because this generosity makes me happy and brings satisfaction when less worthwhile things would fail. Because of your generosity, I am inspired to do more myself. Because I am honored for my turn on "watch" for the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

*Just as a normal man can climb
a high mountain
and on a clear day
see for many miles around,
Hafiz can stand on a blessed peak
inside his heart
and see for hundreds of years
in all directions.*

KEEPING WATCH

In the morning
when I began to wake,
it happened again—
that feeling
that you, Beloved,
had stood over me all night
keeping watch,
that feeling
that as soon as I began to stir
you put your lips on my forehead
and lit the Holy Lamp
inside my heart.

~ Hafiz



BOARD MATTERS

Toni Cattell, Board Secretary

Our August 11 River of Grass UU Board of Trustees meeting was a busy one, as we welcomed Kristine Barkley as a new Board Trustee on the 2016-2017 Board, Scott May took over as Vice President, and Brit Lundell officially took over Treasurer duties. We're off to a great start!

We took official action to set the date of the next River of Grass UU Annual Congregational meeting on the first Sunday of May (May 7th, 2017), and voted to establish the first Sunday of May each year as the designated annual meeting date going forward. Please mark your calendars!

We approved a plan, with an expenditure of up to \$250, for the Faith Development Team to create another youth classroom, without making permanent changes to walls, or windows, etc. They'll take a look at some flexible options to split the multi-purpose room into 2 classrooms. We hope this will meet the need for classes, choir practice and the occasional need for the larger multi-purpose area, without making permanent changes. The changes would be re-evaluated after the first month, to determine if needs are met, or if we need to look at more permanent solutions.

Just in case you were planning to drop in for the regularly scheduled September 8th Board of Trustees meeting, the meeting has been postponed to Saturday, September 17th, after the Leadership Retreat. Of course, members are welcome to attend Board of Trustees meetings.



FAITH DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Deborah Ely, Faith Development Coordinator

We have an exciting new year planned for Faith Development! Our students will start Sunday School classes on September 11, when each class will be discussing and setting the covenant that will be practiced throughout the year. The primary and secondary classes are focusing on social justice and the 5th principle of Unitarian Universalism: All people have a voice. We will also begin the curriculum for the year: *Chalice Children* for the early childhood class and *In Our Hands: A Peace and Social Justice Program* for the primary and secondary classes. Our intergenerational service this month is the Water Communion, which takes place on September 18. Please join us to celebrate growth and new beginnings, and to reflect on what water symbolizes for you.

WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY AT 10:30 AM

September 4: *Labor Day*, Rev. Amy Carol Webb

September 11: *We Are Family*, Kathy Jens-Rochow & Family

September 18: *Water Ingathering*, Rev. Amy Carol Webb
6pm: *Neshamah*, Evening Meditative Service

September 25: *Fall Equinox*, Rev. Amy Carol Webb

GO TAKE A HIKE! OR PADDLE A KAYAK! OR RELAX AT THE BEACH!

Submitted by Diane Lade



Full Moon Daughters, the River of Grass outdoor spirituality group for women and girls, is starting a brand new year in September. And we would love to have you join us. Our ministry is building bonds through a shared love of nature.

From September through June, Full Moon Daughters get together once a month to enjoy the best South Florida has to offer: lovely skies, lush landscapes and turquoise water. We will be going on two ladies only camping trips in 2016-17: Bahia Honda State Park in the Florida Keys on Nov. 11-13; and Jonathan Dickinson State Park on March 24-26. But we also do things much closer to home: sunrise meditations on the beach, moonlight kayaking trips, nature walks and a winter holiday party by a campfire.

The group is open to all River of Grass females, their friends and family. And we plan outings for all activity levels. You don't have to be a marathoner, or even like camping, to come have fun with us. If you appreciate a good sunset, you're in.

Come get to know us better, and see if Full Moon Daughters is for you, at our Brand New Year Brunch on Sept. 24 at River of Grass. We gather at 9:30 am for a delicious potluck breakfast, then plan our activities for the year. Watch for an announcement poster and potluck sign-up sheet during hospitality hour on Sundays. If you can't make the brunch but want to be on our email list, just notify us at: fullmoondaughters@riverofgrassuu.org.

See you on the water, along the trail and under the stars.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Debbie Kitner, Membership Co-Chair

Another River of Grass year is just beginning, and the membership committee is planning a great year of membership growth and new member involvement.

We will start the year off with a **Welcome Back Picnic** also known as the "fall fling"—the date has been set for Sunday, October 16 – the time to be announced soon. John and Liz Perez have again graciously offered their beautiful home for the picnic. More information to follow soon.



We will be offering our Explorers Class and Pathways Class in the autumn months. If you are interested in becoming a member of our beloved community, or know someone who is, watch the calendar and weekly email for dates for these classes.

The Membership Committee is always looking for new ideas and energy to grow our River of Grass family. Please consider becoming part of our committee to help us grow. Contact Leana Bresnahan or Debbie Kitner for information.

We hope everyone had a wonderful summer filled with fun, friends and family.



FILM VIEWING AND Q&A SESSION

Submitted by Rick Tucker

On Sept. 14th from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm, SSJC will host an event at River of Grass sponsored by the Broward County chapter of The League of Women Voters.

The evening will begin with the viewing of *Making a Killing: Guns, Greed, and the NRA*, a film produced by Brave New Films, a socially conscious documentary film production company. Here is a synopsis of the film, from the production company's website:

Making a Killing: Guns, Greed, and The NRA tells the stories of how guns, and the *billions* made off of them, affect the lives of everyday Americans. It features personal stories from people across the country who have been affected by gun violence, including survivors and victims' families. The film exposes how the powerful



gun companies and the NRA are resisting responsible legislation for the sake of profit - and thereby putting people in danger.

The film looks into gun tragedies that include unintentional shootings, domestic violence, suicides, mass shootings and trafficking - and what we can do to put an end to this profit-driven crisis. Through this film and campaign, **Brave New Films** will work with partners to fight for a country where public safety is more valued than profit.

Following the film, guest panelists will answer questions from the audience about the film and its core subject. Local candidates in the upcoming elections have been invited to attend as well.

The League of Women Voters will also have an information table and will be prepared to register potential voters.

This event is free, and we invite all River of Grass members and outside guests who wish to attend. We'll have coffee and other refreshments. For questions and information about this event please contact the SSJC or Rick Tucker.

SAVE THE DATE!

On Saturday, October 29, we will be having a Halloween Party! This is open to the entire congregation, friends and family! Costumes optional, but greatly encouraged. There will be dinner and dancing with a DJ.

The Halloween Party will take the place of the Annual Auction this year, so everyone should plan to attend if possible. More details will be coming - but for now - Save the Date!

Please contact auction@riverofgrassuu.org for more information.

RETURN OF THE BUUKIES!

Submitted by Susan Juncosa

The River of Grass book club, the bUUKies, meets the third Wednesday of every month at River of Grass. The group met in August and selected their fall line up. The book for September is *This Chair Rocks* - a "lively, funny and deeply researched" examination of ageism." The rest of the lineup promises interesting and relevant reads, too. We expect some lively discussion!



In January, we have selected the UUA's Common Read, *The Third Reconstruction* by Rev. William Barber. Rev. Barber was a speaker at this year's General Assembly and spearheads the **Moral Mondays** in North Carolina. You may also have seen him speak at the Democratic National Convention.

All are welcome to join us for one, some, or all of our meetings and discussions. Please contact buukies@riverofgrassuu.org for more information.

- ◆ September: *This Chair Rocks* by Ashton Applewhite
- ◆ October: *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown
- ◆ November: *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly
- ◆ December: *A Dog's Purpose* by W. Bruce Cameron
- ◆ January: *The Third Reconstruction: Moral Mondays, Fusion Politics and the Rise of A New Justice Movement* by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II



BEV KAUFMAN'S BOOK PUBLISHED!

By Wendell Abern

Rural New York, 1787. Our great Revolutionary War has ended, and people have settled into the day-to-day task of everyday living.

And in Bev Kaufman's gripping post-Revolutionary War mystery, *In the Midst of Death ...* we get a close-up view of the loves, hatreds, hopes and dreams of early Americans surviving together in a corner of the world rarely explored by mystery writers.

I take great personal pride in announcing the publication of this novel to River of Grass members, because Bev and I belong to the same writers' group. Our gang listened to this tale unfold over a period of years. After Bev would read a chapter, each of us would offer a critique. The most oft-heard comment was, "Bev, you make the rest of us feel like amateurs."

And rightfully so. Bev handles words the way great outfielders track down fly balls: she makes it look easy.

The mystery (and I won't give anything away here) develops briskly through a fascinating cast of characters, headed by Ralph Folsom, a Shakespearean scholar and actor, who is eking out a hardscrabble existence as a farmer and trapper. Humor pops up unexpectedly, usually through conversations.

And while many writers struggle with dialog, it is clearly a Kaufmanesque forte. In fact, Bev's ability to capture Eighteenth Centuryspeak, with all of its quirks and idioms, had some in our writers' group believing that Bev is actually 246 years old, and grew up listening to it.

Take, for example, this amusing anecdote related by a cousin, Aaron Collins. He is describing how his mother had bought three whole bolts of red and gold brocade before the war, which she later fashioned into wedding quilts for new brides ... including Betty Barlow:

"Betty was, still is, a pros'tute keeps rooms next ta the Brown Bull. One day, she announced that she was gonna marry one of 'er customers. Mama was sick because she'd sworn that every bride in town would be blessed by her brocade. But Lord love 'er, she rallied; sent over one scrap of cloth 'bout the size o' my foot.

"The next morning, Betty did her 'counts 'n discovered that the whole of her intended's fortune would be less 'n one year's income from all 'er customers. She called off the weddin', the couple returned to their previous pecuniary 'rangement, an' as for the brocade, she cut it into ribbons and fashioned the most beautiful intricate bow, which she 'tached to the bell rope by which 'er gentlemen callers 'nounced their arrival. Mama took to 'er bed for a month."

Any historical novel, by definition, requires voluminous research. *In the Midst of Death ...* is a prime example. Footnotes abound. Obscure bits of information crop up in each chapter. By the time you finish the book, you will know what post-Revolutionary War New Yorkers studied in school; what kind of clothes they wore; what they ate for dinner, and how they fell in love.

And yes, romances play a big role in Bev's novel. Along with buried loot, long-simmering feuds, unexpected plot twists, and all the other ingredients that contribute to a thriller's thrillerdom.

At 600-plus pages, with a cover beautifully designed by our own Rick Tucker, *In the Midst of Death ...* sells for \$24. It is precisely what anyone wants from a book: a great read.

You can purchase a book from Bev personally (she'll autograph it for you), or from her website, www.bevkaufman.com.

BEV KAUFMAN



In the Midst
of **Death...**
A Post-Revolutionary War Mystery

RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ KICKS OFF THE 2016-2017 SEASON WITH REV. AMY'S CD RELEASE CONCERT!

Scatter Seeds

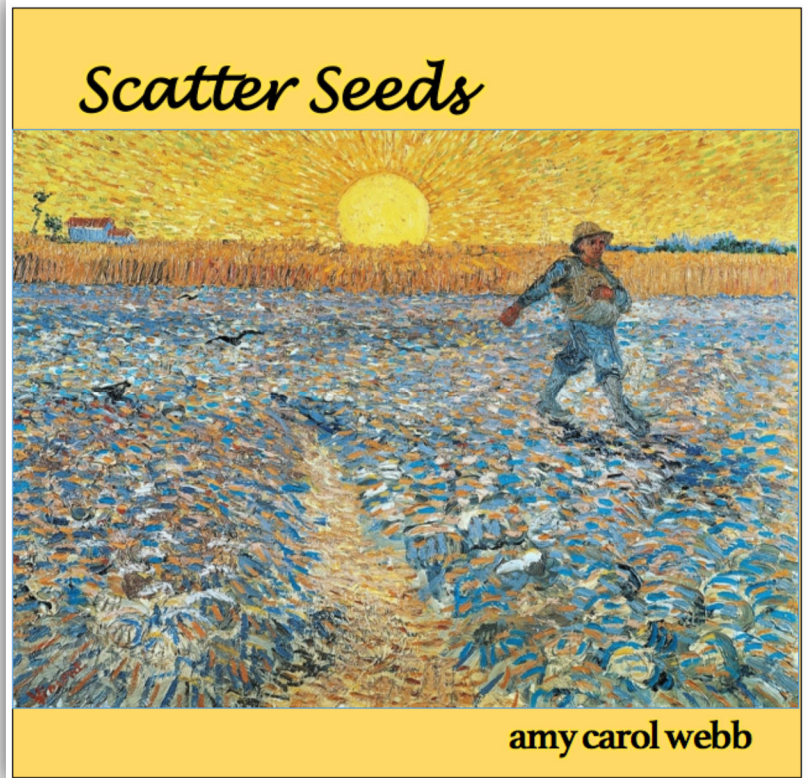
River of Grass Café, Davie, FL
September 17, 2016 • 8 p.m.

“Some music grows on you,” Rev. Amy says, “and some grows in you. Some song seeds sprout at once, others incubate in the soil of life experience awaiting the perfect combination of sun and rain, earth and time, to sing out into the world at just the right moment.” So it is with Amy Carol Webb’s 11th album, SCATTER SEEDS, coming to harvest September 17th at River of Grass Café! With her 11th CD, she gathers the fruits of music both freshly blossomed and long on the vine – some songs newly written, some tucked away like the acorn in Amy’s old jacket in the title song – to feed us, body and soul.

Amy Carol Webb –
Scatter Seeds – CD Release concert
Saturday, September 17, 2016
8:00 p.m.

River of Grass Café (River of Grass UU)
11850 W. State Road 84, Suite 1, Davie, FL
954.723.7877

Tickets: \$17 advance / \$23 door
<http://riverofgrassuu.org/river-of-grass-cafe.html>



MARK YOUR CALENDARS! RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ CONCERT SERIES OUR 2016 - 2017 SEASON SCHEDULE SEASON TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 16, 2016

Season Tickets For All Shows Only \$115

From Dublin to Liverpool featuring **The Rogues**

Saturday, October 15th, 2016, 8:00 pm

Roy Zimmerman

Saturday, November 19th, 2016, 8:00 pm

December and January – No shows - The Café is closed for the Holidays!

Dave Nachmanoff

February 18, 2017, 8:00 pm

Ellen Bukstel and Mindy Simmons

March 18, 2017, 8:00 pm

Kat Eggleston

Saturday, April 15, 2017, 8:00 pm

Jana Stanfield

Saturday, May 20, 2017, 8:00 pm
