

Reflections

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION
DAVIE, FLORIDA NOVEMBER 2019

THIS IS OUR GREAT PROMISE

Rev. Amy Carol Webb



*Love is the spirit of this congregation
and service is its law.
This is our great covenant:
to dwell together in peace,
to seek the truth in love,
and to help one another.*

*El Amor es el espíritu de esta congregación.
El servicio su ley principal.
Esta es nuestra gran promesa:
Vivir juntos en paz, buscar la verdad a través del amor,
Y ayudarnos mutuamente.*

Every Sunday here at River of Grass, we repeat together in unison this covenant written by the Unitarian minister, James Vila Blake (1842-1925), while he served the congregation in Evanston, Illinois, just before the turn of the last century.

This covenant. This promise we say aloud together. This vow we make for ourselves and with one another. This aspiration we would speak into being by the very power of our voices – and make real with our lives.

What is covenant, and what does it mean to us as Unitarian Universalists and members of the Beloved Community at River of Grass? What does it mean that Unitarian Universalism is a “covenantal religion,” and that we re-affirm our covenant every time we gather? Some mistakenly presume “covenant” means “contract” – that it commands adherence rather than invites belonging, that it confirms transactions rather than affirms relations. While some fear that covenant enforces conformity, the Reverend Victoria E. Safford, Unitarian Universalist minister and poet insists, rather, that covenants are “declarations of interdependence.”

*A covenant is not a contract. It is not made and signed and sealed once and for all, sent to the attorneys for safekeeping or guarded under glass in a museum. A covenant is not a static artifact and it is not a sworn oath: Whereas, whereas, whereas. . . . Therefore, I will do this, or I'll die, so help me God. A covenant is a living, breathing aspiration, made new every day. It can't be enforced by consequences, but it may be reinforced by forgiveness and by grace, when we stumble, when we forget, when we mess up.**

Our Unitarian Universalist faith requires no creed – we bind ourselves to one another in love and service. Traveling the path of hope together, we cannot see whether the way will



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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 (7th - 12th grades): 10:00 am to 11:00 am

Faith Development Classes (K - 6th grades): 11:00 am to 12:00 noon

FRIENDLY REMINDERS FOR OUR MEMBERS

There is plenty of parking outside the sanctuary, but please leave 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.

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!

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: send an email to office@riverofgrassuu.org
- ♦ **Visit our Facebook page:** www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu
- ♦ **Follow us on Twitter:** @RiverOfGrassUU or www.twitter.com/riverofgrassuu
- ♦ **Visit our calendar:** www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html (or browse to: www.riverofgrassuu.org – click on Calendar/Events)



Tom Corser www.tomcorser.com

River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

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Finance Rob Giblin-Davis

Membership Kathy Jens-Rochow & Zena Tucker

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Dir. of Faith Development Karen Gonzalez

Office Administrator Sandy Blair Chibnick

Teams and Small Groups

contact info at www.riverofgrassuu.org

Adult Faith Development Open

Annual Giving Rita Cherubini & Kathy Jens-Rochow

bUUKies Susan Juncosa

Café Robby Greenberg

Caring Deb Giblin-Davis & Georgette Lewis

Communication Zena Tucker

Congregational Leadership Open

Facilities Riley Cothran

Facilities Rental Ken Bresnahan

Full Moon Daughters Diane Lade

Future Home Scott May

fUUndraising Open

Hospitality Kathy Jens-Rochow

Interfaith Outreach Linda Crain

Music Gayle Giese, Linda Lathroum, Brenda Parker, Anne Smith, & Aaron Stang

Pastoral Care Riley Cothran & Pat Katz

Personnel Rev. Amy Carol Webb & Janet Schwartz

Planned Giving Kip Barkley

Security Rick Tucker

Service, Social Justice & Green Team (SSJGT) Steve Jens-Rochow

Shared Ministry Diane Lade & Janet Schwartz

Web Design Esther Sampol

Welcoming Congregation ... Kathy Jens-Rochow

YUUnG Adult Group Linda Lathroum



FROM THE PRESIDENT

“TO LOVE ANOTHER PERSON IS TO SEE THE FACE OF GOD”

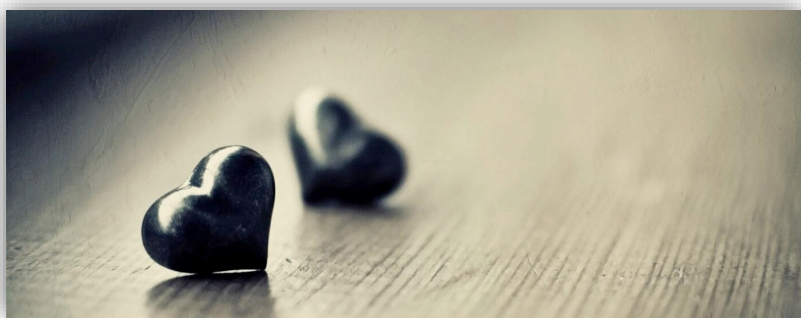
Scott May

I recently attended a Les Misérables performance at Broward Center and was struck by the words “To love another person is to see the face of God”, written by Victor Hugo in the 1860s. These words have lingered with me for weeks, as I ponder the literal and implied meaning. And then I ponder why I keep pondering....

You may know that I was raised UU, and the word “God” has not been a typical part of my conscience nor vocabulary. I’m not a devout atheist, I just don’t feel a connection to God nor a need. Yet, Victor Hugo’s phrase struck me. What do these words tell me.... about life, about love, about each other, about myself?

Assuming for a moment that God is real, if I could see the face of God, what would the experience be like? How would it feel? Would thunder sound? Would tremors roll through my body? Would I be in awe?

Even as a non-believer, just the thought “to see the face of God” is intriguing, and consuming.



Hugo’s words link “seeing the face of God” to something easier for me to understand: loving another person. Wow, could something as simple as loving another be as powerful, as impactful, as inspiring as seeing the face of God? And if so, what type of love is Hugo referring to? Love between partners? Love between parent and child? Love between friends? Love of pets? Love of faith? As I reflect, I’m feeling that Hugo is referring to all forms of love. Any, every, and all.

Whenever we love another, we give of ourselves in a selfless compassionate way. And when we offer our love to another, Hugo is telling us that we are reaching the pinnacle of life ... our highest aspiration ... heaven on earth. And I believe this extends to our love for River of Grass – our mission, our worship services, and the good work we do together. And that feels transformational.

May we all be encouraged to love, to love unconditionally, and to love more. And may the love we share enable us to reach the pinnacle of life, and our highest aspiration.

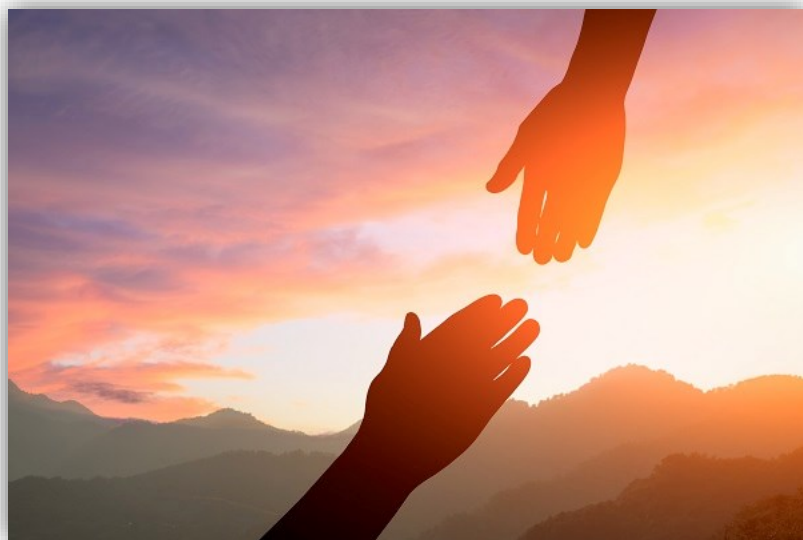
THIS IS OUR GREAT PROMISE

(Continued from page 1)

be smooth before us – we aim to dwell together in peace. Yearning to make meaning of our lives, we adhere to no rigid doctrine – we seek the truth in love together. Setting out on our journey of transformation, we may not know what awaits us farther down the way – we vow to help one another through, whatever may come. We do not demand, “trust me!” We declare, “I will trust you, and strive to earn your trust.”

This is our great promise.
Esta es nuestra gran promesa.

[**Bound in Covenant.* UU World, Summer 2013]



FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Karen Gonzalez



WHO ARE THESE BIG KIDS?

You may have noticed that we're seeing a lot more of our youth these days. It's nice to have them worshipping with us again! (Thank you for reserving the next to last row of seats in the sanctuary for them to quietly slip into, when they enter at 11:00.) What you may not know is just how interesting and amazing this group of kids is. I'd like to introduce them to you and perhaps you can learn more about them during hospitality time.

Marina is not only the youth representative on our River of Grass Board of Trustees, she also serves on the board of the Southeastern Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute (SUUSI). Her sister, Lara was the star volleyball player in the SUUSI vs Western Carolina University staff game this past summer and she sews her own clothes! Their sister, Gabriela, is on the cheer squad for varsity football at Cypress Bay. Josh is also a sports enthusiast, playing on 6 different sports teams for his high school. Pablo is an award-winning diver and the youngest student in a Stock and Options online course. Ella, along with her sister, Helena is a dancer at the Mai Kai Polynesian restaurant every Sunday night. London plays baritone and trombone in his school's marching band. Grace also marches in her school's band, playing the clarinet, when she's not playing soccer or rocking out to 80s classic rock and pop. Miel sings with her school's choir. As you can see, they are already quite accomplished in their young years! Wouldn't you like to get to know them better?

HOLIDAY FUN

Bring your kids to this year's auction on December 6th! There will be a special program for school-age youth with staff from the company, *Engineering for Kids*. Younger children will be welcome in the nursery for playtime. Don't forget to look for family-friendly events to sign up for or consider offering one yourself!

This year's Children's Holiday Pageant, on December 15th, will be a new production of a holiday favorite (with a twist!). It's sure to go down in history as a show full of glee! If you'd like to assist with costumes or stage managing, please see me.

Our Annual Holiday Gathering will take place on December 21st from 6 to 9pm. Bring a dish to share, sign up to host a craft, help deck the halls or join in holiday karaoke fun! Of course, our favorite jolly old elf will pay us a visit, as well.



WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY AT 10:30 AM

COVENANT

November 17 *Hunger Communion/New Member Sunday*,
Rev. Amy, Service Host: Beyssa Buil

November 24 *To Be Announced*, Rev. Amy,
Service Host: Susan Juncosa

AWE

December 1 *Pie Communion*, Rev. Amy

December 8 *UUSC Guest at Your Table*, SSJGT

December 15 *Christmas Pageant*, Rev. Amy

December 22 *To Be Announced*, Rev. Amy

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE PERSONNEL TEAM?

- ◆ Bring your HR experience to River of Grass
- ◆ Help out with recruiting and hiring
- ◆ Assist with annual reviews and merit recommendations
- ◆ Work closely with Rev Amy
- ◆ Share your gifts....

Contact

minister@riverofgrassuu.org

or

president@riverofgrassuu.org



Holly-Jolly Auction!

The time has come to celebrate our abundance and connections at River of Grass! Members and Friends are invited to join a joyous and festive holiday event "Holly-Jolly Auction!"

This is River of Grass's main fundraising event for the year and our generous tradition of service to the community continues with part of the proceeds going to LifeNet4Families.



Join the festivities on Friday, December 6th at River of Grass for a simple but elegant evening of playful winter fun and yummy buffet stations! Doors open at 6:00 PM and dinner starts at 6:30 followed by some frolicking, friendly bidding and dancing until 10:00. Bring your smiles, bravery and singing voices to perform karaoke or find a belly full of laughs as part of the audience.

Start knitting (or knot) if you want to participate in the UUgly Sweater Contest or want to compete for Most Festive Holly-Jolly Outfit! Some old favorite fundraisers continue with a Lively Live Auction (wait until you hear the prizes...WOW!), bidding on items and services, Party sign-up, 50/50 raffle, Wine & Bottle Pull, plus a few more surprises! Childcare provided and there will be wonderful entertainment for kiddos including computer stations, Minecraft and holiday fun!

Contact auction@riverofgrassuu.org if you would like to join the team of elves, gnomes and playful mischief makers working on this fun event. We could use folks to help with donations, decorating and delectables. Talk with co-leads, Ahysa Boutron, Carolyn Sant Angelo, or Scott May if you have interest.

Come celebrate with the whole family as this will be an event for ALL to find some jolliness and generosity (as you are comfortably able!) to support our River of Grass mission, service projects, meaningful teams, heartfelt worship services and valuable programs. Come be jolly...together!

NOVEMBER 20 IS TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE (TDOR)

TDoR memorializes individuals who have died throughout the world in the previous year because of anti-transgender hatred. Each November, the worldwide transgender community turns its attention to family, friends and loved ones lost to violence and prejudice. A tradition inspired by the Alston, MA vigil for Rita Hester, a trans woman murdered in 1998, this day has become the worldwide rallying point for a community long under siege.



SUNDAY MORNING EXPERIENCE TEAM

Gayle Giese

So, what happens in a monthly Sunday Morning Experience Team meeting? Wouldn't YOU like to know! We have fun and share ideas and discuss the big and little pictures that lead to creative worship on Sunday morning. Rev. Amy chairs the meetings. Rita Cherubini coordinates Worship elements, Kathy Jens-Rochow plans hospitality, Karen Gonzalez clues us into Faith Development considerations and helps us involve our kids, I bring in our Choir music, and Aaron Stang brings in Band ideas. Our Intern Minister, Beyssa Buil lends her ministerial expertise as well. Of course, our Sundays are based on WORSHIP THEMES, and sometimes, there are even WORSHIP SERIES that last several Sundays, such as our third annual "Bending the Arc Toward Justice" series starting on Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday, January 19.

Our mission is to create Sunday Morning Experiences that deepen our connections, enliven our faith, and grow our spiritual lives in body, mind, and spirit by weaving together all these aspects of our Sundays in Beloved Community. I've learned from these meetings that we are better together, that collaboration is where it's at! It's a great opportunity to think "out of the box," to imagine music and visuals and rituals and words melding together like magic to create spirituality and enhance the message. Someone says something silly and it sparks a wonderful idea! We don't always get it right, but we learn from our mistakes and keep trying to improve the experience. Those of us on the SMET get clued in early on the message, and that's very special too.

PLANNED GIVING

Kip Barkley



Our Legacy Fund has just received \$1,234.10 from the UUA's Wake Now Our Vision program. This happened because one of our members has planned and documented a future bequest to us. We expect the UUA funding in the next eight months.

The Legacy Fund is set up to receive bequests and may later be used to purchase useful equipment and such that is outside of our budget.

For a Will, the suggested wording to give to our River of Grass UU community would be:

"I give and devise to the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation Capital Foundation, Inc., a Florida not-for-profit corporation, the sum of \$ _____ for the Legacy Fund."

In contrast, wording to give to the general congregation would be:

"I give and devise to the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Inc., a Florida not-for-profit corporation, the sum of \$ _____."

You do have a Will, don't you?



SECOND HELPING SUNDAY

Kip Barkley

November 17, after service and coffee, our very own Rev Mimi will present on "The Importance of a Spiritual Practice - The Journey of an Aspirant." You do have a spiritual practice, don't you? Actually, we all do. Some of us do not recognize this among our repeated behaviors.

Future Home Conversation

Sunday November 24 - after service

See and hear what's been done so far

Help shape the vision

Understand our options

Discuss what's next

Join the conversation

Be involved

Get excited

See you there

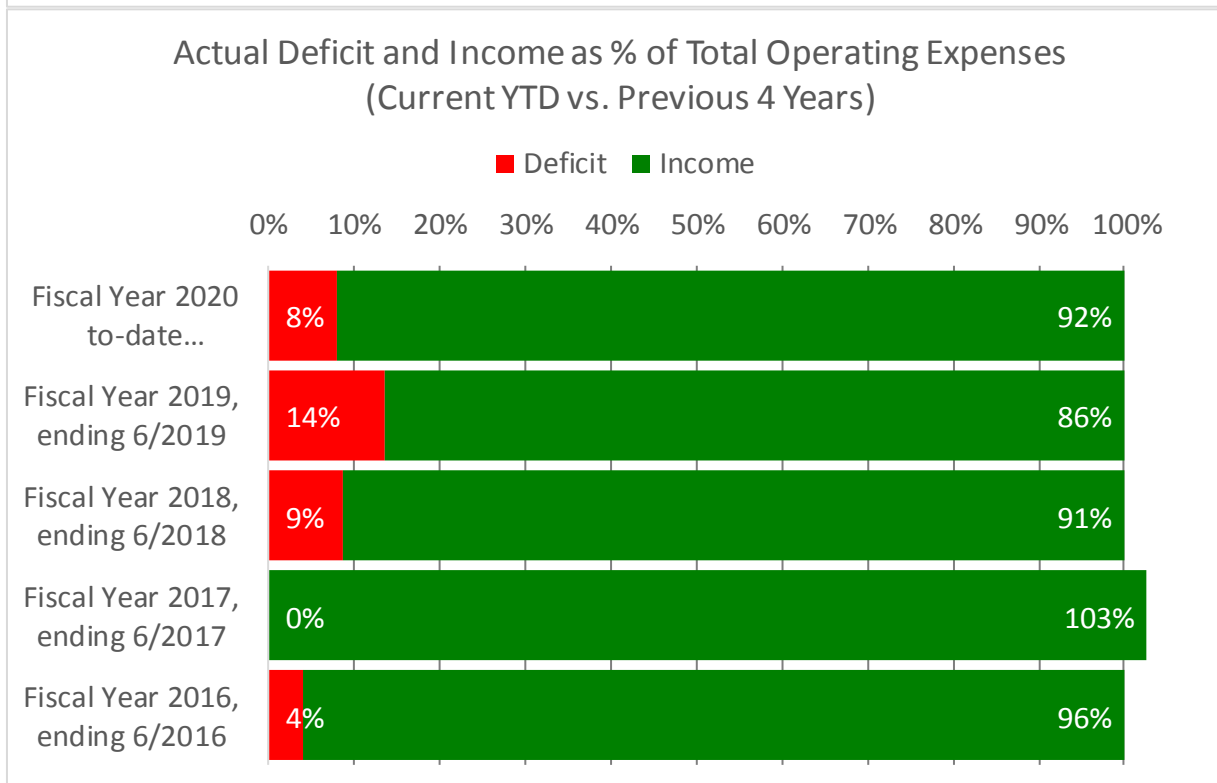
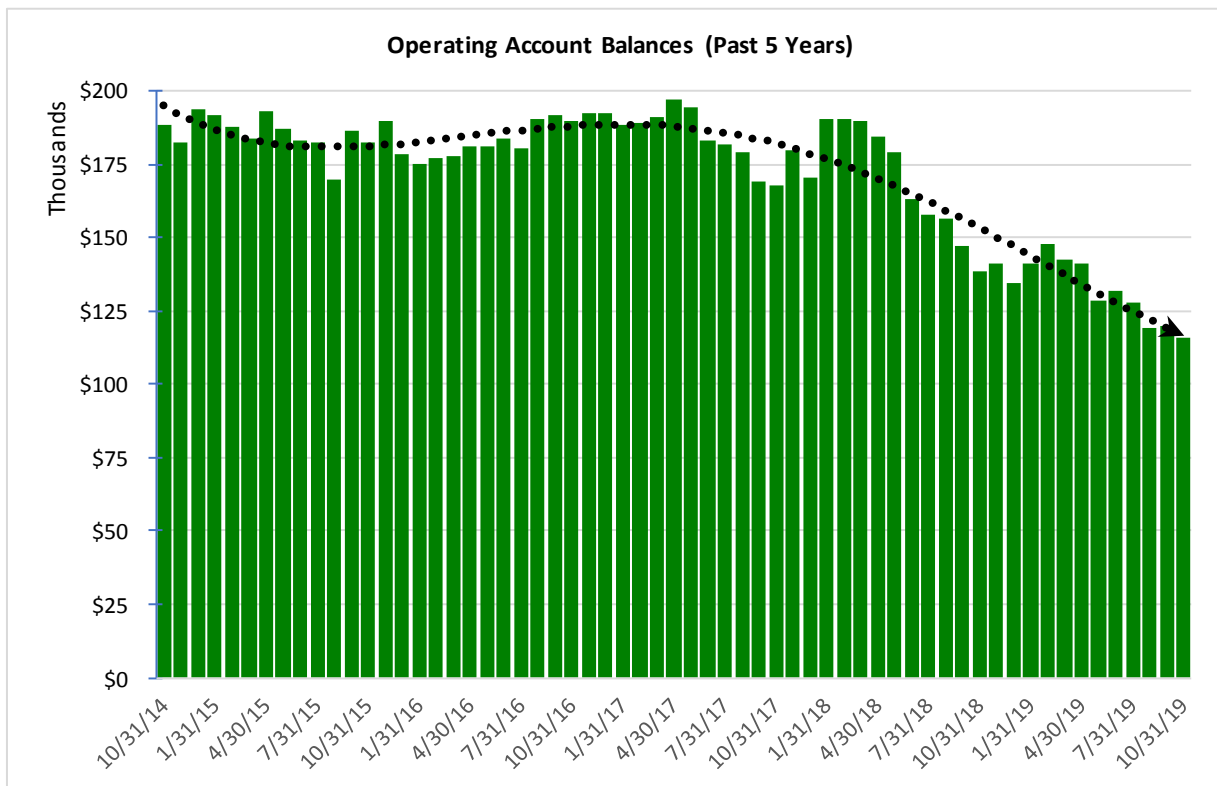
UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, Nov 15 to Saturday Nov 16		Full Moon Daughters camping trip	Fish Eating Creek
Saturday, Nov 16	7:00p (doors open) 8:00p (concert)	Dave Nachmanoff	River of Grass
Sunday, Nov 17	10:30a	New Member Sunday	River of Grass
Sunday, Nov 17	12:00p	Second Helping Sunday	River of Grass
Sunday, Nov 17	12:00p	SSJGT climate demonstration	River of Grass
Tuesday, Nov 19	7:30-8:30p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Wednesday, Nov 21	6:30p	River of Grass Board meeting	River of Grass
Thursday, Nov 21	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Saturday, Nov 23	7:00-9:00p	Celebration of Life: Maria Rivas	River of Grass
Sunday, Nov 24	12:00-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #6	River of Grass
Sunday, Nov 24	12:10-1:30p	Future Home congregational meeting (lunch provided)	River of Grass
Monday, Nov 25	6:00-9:00p	SSJGT JAM meeting/potluck	River of Grass
Monday, Nov 25	7:00-9:00p	Faith Development meeting	River of Grass
Tuesday, Nov 26	7:30-8:30p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Thursday, Nov 28	7:00-7:45p	Welcome Table Communion Circle w/ Rev Amy	River of Grass
Friday, Nov 29	6:30-8:30p	Community Thanksgiving Potluck	River of Grass
Sunday, Dec 1	12:00-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #7	River of Grass
Monday, Dec 2	7:00-9:00p	SSJGT meeting	River of Grass
Tuesday, Dec 3	7:30-8:30p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Thursday, Dec 5	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Friday, Dec 6	6:00-9:30p	ANNUAL AUCTION	River of Grass
Saturday, Dec 7	9:00a-12:00p	Congregational work day	River of Grass
Saturday, Dec 7	1:30-3:00p	SSJGT presents Broward Alliance meeting	River of Grass
Monday, Dec 9	7:00-9:00p	Finance meeting	River of Grass
Tuesday, Dec 10	7:30-8:30p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Wednesday, Dec 11	7:15-9:15p	bUUKies meeting	River of Grass
Friday, Dec 13	7:00-9:00p	Drum Circle w/ Rev Amy	River of Grass
Saturday, Dec 14	9:00-11:00a	LifeNet4Families volunteer day	1 NW 33 rd Terrace Ft Lauderdale
Saturday, Dec 14	11:30-1:30p	SSJGT Presents: Citizen's Climate Lobby	River of Grass
Saturday, Dec 14	7:00p (doors open) 8:00p (concert)	Amy Carol Webb concert	River of Grass
Sunday, Dec 15	12:00-1:30p	Faith Forward Inquirers Series #8	River of Grass
Sunday, Dec 15	12:20-2:20p	Leadership Roundtable Meeting	River of Grass
Tuesday, Dec 17	7:30-8:30p	Flowing River Sangha	River of Grass
Wednesday, Dec 18	6:30p	River of Grass Board meeting	River of Grass
Thursday, Dec 19	7:00-9:00p	Men's Group	River of Grass
Saturday, Dec 21	6:00-9:00p	Holiday Party	River of Grass
Sunday, Dec 22	6:00-9:00p	Full Moon Daughters Solstice party	TBA
Monday, Dec 23	6:00-9:00p	SSJGT JAM meeting/potluck	River of Grass
Tuesday, Dec 24	6:00-10:00p	River of Grass Christmas Eve service	River of Grass
Thursday, Dec 26	7:00-7:45p	Welcome Table Communion Circle w/ Rev Amy	River of Grass

MONTHLY MONEY SHOT

Brit Lundell, Treasurer

Two graphs depicting the Congregation's monthly financial state. The first shows our monthly operating account balances over the past 5 years. The second shows our actual deficit and income as a percentage of our total operating expenses for the current fiscal year to-date (i.e., since July 1, 2019) and compares that to the figures for the previous 4 years. Additional details are provided in the monthly financial reports and the Treasurer's report to the board, which are posted on the wall directly facing the business office each month. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with the Treasurer or with members of the Finance Committee.



Getting to Know UU's

FAMOUS UNITARIAN

Kathy Jens-Rochow

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT (1832-1888) WRITER, ABOLITIONIST, ACTIVIST



"Let my name stand among those who are willing to bear ridicule and reproach for the truth's sake, and so earn some right to rejoice when the victory is won."

Louisa May Alcott was an American writer who authored over 30 books and short-story collections and wrote poetry as well. *Little Women*, her most famous book, was a novel for girls. Written in 1868, it departed from the existing practice of idealized and/or stereotypical children in books meant for young readers. Instead, it offered a fully realized young heroine in the spirited character of tomboy Jo March. *Little Women* remains a beloved classic of children's literature today. Alcott is also remembered for her book *Hospital Sketches*, which she penned in 1863 based on letters she had written home while serving as a nurse in Washington, D.C., She contracted typhoid fever and was treated with mercury, which affected her for the rest of her life, causing pain, weakness and hallucinations.

Another side of Louisa May Alcott is a much more complex and interesting figure. To earn a living, she penned—under a pseudonym—lurid and even racy stories with titles like "Pauline's Peril and Punishment" for popular magazines. In addition, she wrote serious novels for adults. But she was also a lifelong advocate for social reform, championing abolitionism as well as women's rights. She was the first woman to register to vote in Concord, MA.

FINANCE COMMITTEE



The Finance Committee meets the second Monday of each month at the River of Grass office. Please consider joining us in order to learn more about the ins and outs of our finances. Previous financial experience is not necessary! Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

DECEMBER 1 IS WORLD AIDS DAY



World AIDS Day, designated on 1 December every year since 1988, is an international day dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection and mourning those who have died of the disease.

RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ

DAVE NACHMANOFF

The River of Grass Cafe is pleased to welcome Dave Nachmanoff back to our stage on November 16th. Dave has so many fans from his South Florida Folk Festival performances, his SUUSI performances and his last show at the Cafe, it would be a good idea to reserve and arrive early.

Dave Nachmanoff

Nov 16 at 8pm

Doors open at 7 for food and drink sales.

Tickets \$19 in advance at <http://riverofgrassuu.org/river-of-grass-cafe.html>

\$25 suggested donation at the door.

If you have not experienced a Dave Nachmanoff performance yet, here is a short blurb from his website:

Not many people get to realize their early dreams - Dave Nachmanoff has toured the world both on his own, and as the guitarist and opening act for Al Stewart ("Year of the Cat", "Time Passages"), at venues as far ranging as the Royal Albert Hall in London, England, to The Birchmere in Alexandria, Virginia. From performing with folk legend Libba Cotten at the age of 9, to playing in a rock band with his two brothers, Dave went on to earn a PhD in Philosophy at UC Davis and slowly built grassroots following touring all over the world. In addition, he writes and records custom songs for clients and uses his recording studio to produce other artists. A truly independent musician, Dave's career is varied and never predictable.



RIVER OF GRASS CAFÉ
2019 - 2020 CONCERT SEASON

 Rod MacDonald Sat. Sept. 21	 Friction Farm Sat. Oct. 19	 Dave Nachmanoff Sat. Nov. 16
 Amy Carol Webb Sat. Dec. 14	 Grant Peeples Sat. Jan. 18	 Don White Sat. Feb. 15
 Kiya Heartwood Sat. March 21	 Kat Eggleston Sat. April 18	 Zoe Mulford Sat. May 16

Season Tickets plus an ROG Cafe T-Shirt for \$150 available till 9/21

Tickets/Suggested Donation
\$19 Online/\$25 at the Door

Fresh food, beverages, beer and wine available for a suggested donation. Individual and season tickets available.

Get tickets now at www.riverofgrassuu.org/events

River of Grass Cafe, 11850 West St Rd 84, Davie, FL
(East of Flamingo Rd on St Rd 84. Make 2nd right into 595 Park of Commerce)



MARIA RIVAS

Leana Bresnahan

“I am a miracle of science and of faith”

Almost 30 years ago I found myself trying to thrive in a developing country as the mother of 2 young daughters. The pollution, crime, traffic, drugs and corruption in Caracas, Venezuela in 1990 were daunting. One night, however, something happened that changed not only my attitude toward Venezuela, but, as it turned out, it changed the rest of my life.

Ken and I went to a concert in Caracas’ premier concert theater to hear a famous Cuban troubadour. The opening act was a last-minute substitution, and as we waited for the concert to begin, we picked up on the buzz and anticipation. Maria Rivas was introduced – her 1st major concert – to a standing ovation! She then proceeded to blow us away. Through our then basic Spanish we could understand she was singing about crime, poverty, pollution, drugs, corruption. She repeated, “Y por eso quiero hablar,” (*that’s why I want to speak...*) and “hasta cuando ya no aguanto” (roughly, *how long are we going to put up with this?*) and then went on to call for unity and democracy, peaceful change and compassion. This young, beautiful mix of Barbra Streisand and Joan Baez, spoke about what I was feeling, and I instantly felt connected. Ken and I became huge fans, going to every appearance she made. When we finally met, Maria was excited to have such passionate ‘gringo’ fans. Our friendship was instant and profound.

Our life-long journey together was underway. The next year, the lead single of Maria’s second CD went to the top of the charts. MANDUCO turned Maria, a Latin jazz singer, into a household name and eventually a cultural icon in Venezuela. She continued building her career, while also visiting us for extended periods in each of our homes. Eventually both Ken and I began to work with her professionally. What a great privilege that was!

When we first met Maria in 1991, Venezuela, despite its disorder, was relatively stable and prosperous. After the Chavez dictatorship took power in 1998, Venezuela’s young democracy was destroyed, and civil liberties disappeared. Maria saw professional opportunities disappearing for those not aligned with “the revolution.” In 2010, Maria sadly left Venezuela to continue her career elsewhere. Over the next 10 years she moved between South Florida, Europe and Asia, always in her heart, profoundly sad for having left her beloved Venezuela.

Over her career, Maria released 11 solo CDs and collaborated on many more. She sang in Spanish, Portuguese, and English, enchanting audiences wherever she performed. The elegance of her interpretation of lyrics, her vocal range, and the pure love she transmitted were simply irresistible. She was also a talented artist, with her own distinctive style, which she called ‘curvismo.’ Her paintings and drawings can be found in private collections on four continents. In 2013, Maria was named the Latin Grammy’s Visual Artist of the Year. Her last CD, ‘Motivos,’ was nominated for a Latin Grammy in 2018. We had plans for much more music.

But in January 2013 Maria was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer which quickly metastasized. Over the next 6½ years she bravely fought it, even becoming “cancer free” for several years. Unfortunately, the cancer returned with a vengeance in late 2018. She received treatment in Spain and South Florida. Sadly she passed away surrounded by friends at Kendall’s Baptist Hospital at 19:19 (7:19 pm) on 19 September 2019. Ken and I mourn her loss each and every day. She was a true inspiration, a source of love and beauty and the most unbelievable creativity and music. Until her death, she continued to draw, even while in ICU. It was as if she was driven to give back until she just couldn’t any more. Until her last breath, Maria was the most generous, positive, humble, creative and loving friend we could possibly imagine.

Maria was raised in the Catholic faith, which gave her great comfort until her death. But she was also a Universalist, sharing Shinto, Hindu, and Buddhist beliefs as well. She was a member of River of Grass from 2014-2016. She loved the people of River of Grass, calling us always the people of Shangri-La. Every day she thanked Ken and me for taking her in and caring for her in her darkest and most difficult moments. I always told her that we were simply living our Unitarian Universalist faith, where love comes before all else. We will always treasure our time with her. QEPD, vuela con los ángeles, amada Mariasunción.

Celebration of the Life, Music, & Art
OF
MARIA RIVAS

Saturday, November 23, 2019
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.



January 26, 1960 – September 19, 2019

**River of Grass Unitarian Universalist
Congregation
11850 W. State Road 84
Davie, Florida**

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.



*We invite you to join us
to celebrate the life of our beloved friend
Maria Rivas
with a bilingual (Spanish-English) evening of
music, art, and sharing our memories.*

*We would be grateful for your gift of hors d'oeuvres/
drinks for the social time before and after the service.*

*In lieu of flowers, we invite you to consider a donation to the
Maria Rivas Memorial Trust (GoFundMe: [gf.me/u/vu82tu](https://www.gofundme.com/u/vu82tu)).
Proceeds will be donated to the Baptist Hospital Pastoral Care
Program; the Grammy's Music Cares Fund; and the
Venezuelan-American Medical Association.*

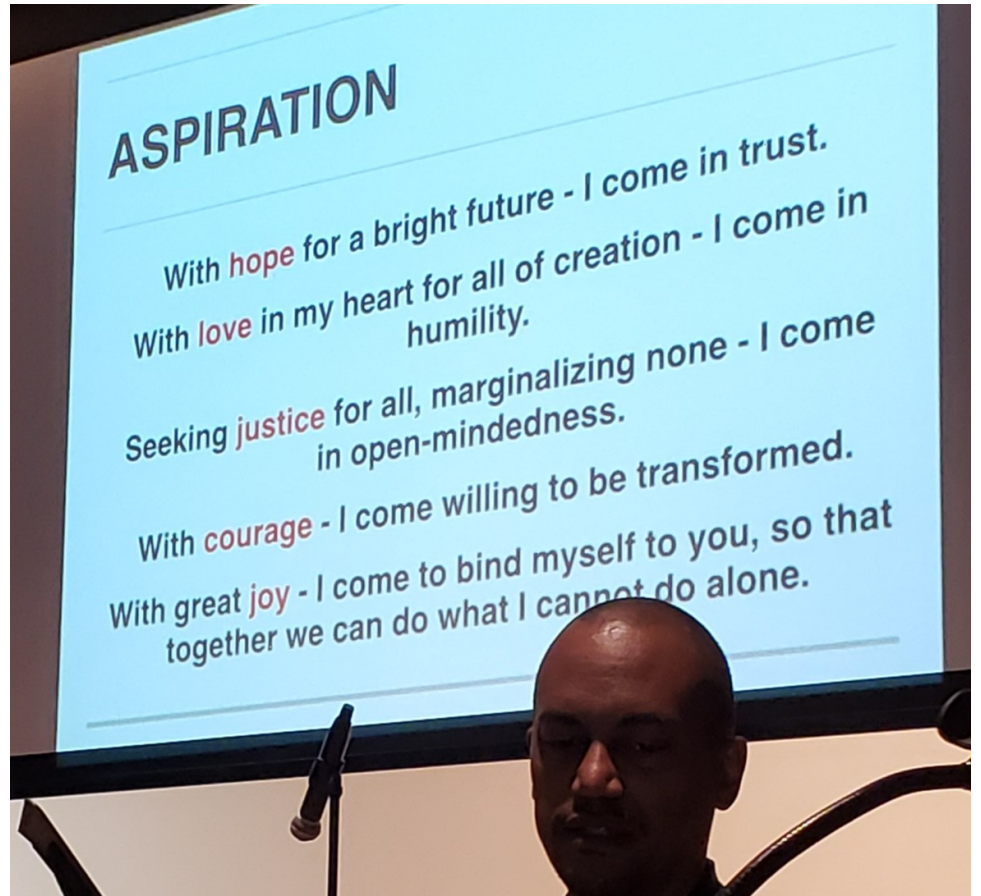


INQUIRERS SERIES

The Faith Forward Inquirers Series meets at 12pm on Sunday mornings in the Multi Purpose Room. It is a rotation of eight conversations about our congregation and Unitarian Universalism. The series is designed for visitors and newcomers who are looking for a general introduction, and yet the sessions are also appealing to

veteran members who want more information about our beloved community. New members and inquirers are encouraged to attend. Classes are not mandatory for membership but are highly recommended! For more information see Zena Tucker, membership@riverofgrassuu.org

Date	Event
9/29/2019	FF Inquirers#3: Campus Tour & Orientation
10/6/2019	FF Inquirers#2: Unitarian Universalist History, Principles and Sources
10/20/2019	FF Inquirers#1: Q&A with Minister
11/3/2019	FF Inquirers#4: Faith Development for Children and Adults
11/10/2019	FF Inquirers#5: Worship & Liturgical Year
11/24/2019	FF Inquirers#6: Social Action & Community Service
12/1/2019	FF Inquirers#7: Pastoral Care and Small Groups
12/15/2019	FF Inquirers#8: Membership 101 & Congregational Life
1/5/2020	FF Inquirers#1: Q&A with Minister
1/12/2020	FF Inquirers#2: Unitarian Universalist History, Principles and Sources
2/2/2020	FF Inquirers#3: Campus Tour & Orientation



Picture submitted by Rita Cherubini



RIVER OF GRASS UU CONGREGATION

COMMUNITY POTLUCK

November 29, 2019, 630pm



www.riverofgrassuu.org

RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Drum Circle

2nd Friday of the month
7-8pm



**No experience
necessary; we have lots
to share! Free!**

Please contact Rev. Amy
minister@riverofgrassuu.org for more information

minister@riverofgrassuu.org for more information