

# Reflections

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

MAY 2020



## IN THIS GREAT TURNING

Rev. Amy Carol Webb

*We light this flame  
For the art of sacred unknowing.  
Humbled by all that we cannot fathom in this time,  
We come into the presence of what we do know,  
Perhaps the only thing we can ever know:  
That Love is now and forever  
The only answer to everything  
And everyone  
In every moment.*

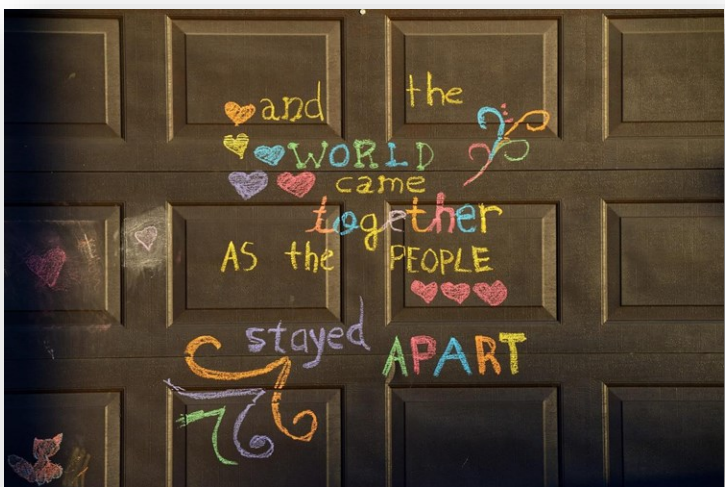
**B**eloveds – when I wrote this chalice lighting to bless and hold your River of Grass Board of Trustees in their emergency March 12 meeting to make some deeply difficult decisions as COVID-19 began to bear down on our part of the world, none of us understood what was to come. As this entire Beloved Community at River of Grass went into heroic motion to get everything we do that can be done on-line moved on-line, to be sure every member and friend was contacted, to set up offices in our homes and ask all of you in turn to open your homes to us through Zoom on Sunday morning with all of your beautiful faces in those little windows on our screens, we could not have predicted we'd be heading into Summer still carrying on this way, knowing we must continue to stay apart now in order to be together again another day.

It is one thing to bless the Sacred Unknowing when we expect it to be temporary. Quite another when we look up again to realize it's not temporary, and that some of parts of our life as we knew it may, in fact, never return at all – in our individual lives, the life of our community, life in this country, and even upon this Earth we share. Some of those things will be well left behind. Others we will grieve together, as grieve we must.



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Wise Ones have told us for some time now that a Great Turning was coming. And here we are. Of course, we want it to be over already. And of course, it cannot be. It is the nature of great turnings to continue to turn, to demand we remain willing to live in Sacred Unknowing until the turning comes 'round where it will, regardless how we may plead with it to stop.

As we cross the threshold into whatever comes next, let us hold fast to one another in this Sacred Unknowing. Let us be humble, and open, and teachable, and patient – with the process, with one another, with ourselves – as we set our hearts on the only thing we can perhaps ever know, as the chalice lighting remembers:

(Continued on page 4)

**KEEPING OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY SAFE:**

**VIRTUAL SUNDAY SERVICES NOW!**

COME JOIN US VIA **ZOOM** FOR OUR VIRTUAL SUNDAY SERVICE AT **10:30 AM**

Come - join with us! The medium may be virtual, but this faith we share, and the love that holds us gets more real every day.

Following the service, we will share virtual Hospitality time with a live chat where we can relish each other's beautiful faces and voices together – bring your beverage!

If you miss our Sunday Service live, you can watch the recorded version [here](#).

**FAITH DEVELOPMENT CLASSES**

*Kids are invited to a Faith Development Meetup on Zoom on Sunday.*

Look for an email from Karen or reach out to her at [religioueducator@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:religioueducator@riverofgrassuu.org).

*These meetups require passwords.*

**12:00 noon:** Mockingbirds (Grades 3-6)

**1:00 pm:** Fireflies (Ages 3-5)

**1:30 pm:** Dragonflies (Grades K-2)

**2:30 noon:** Teens (Grades 7-12)

**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](mailto:office@riverofgrassuu.org)
- ◆ **Visit our Facebook page:** [www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu](http://www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu)
- ◆ **Follow us on Twitter:** @RiverOfGrassUU or [www.twitter.com/riverofgrassuu](http://www.twitter.com/riverofgrassuu)
- ◆ **Visit our calendar:** [www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html) (or browse to: [www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org) – click on Calendar/Events)



by Judy Gallagher

River of Grass

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

Phone 954-723-7877

[www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org)  
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Trustee ..... Riley Cothran

Trustee ..... Linda Morgan Crain

Trustee ..... Marilisa Lawless

Trustee ..... Rick Tucker

Youth Representative ..... Marina deMoraes

**Committees**

contact info at [www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org)

Faith Development ..... Diane Lade

Finance ..... Rob Giblin-Davis

Membership ..... Kathy Jens-Rochow

& Zena Tucker

Nominating ..... Esther Sampol

Worship ..... Rita Cherubini

**Staff**

contact info at [www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org)

Choir Director ..... Gayle Giese

Dir. of Faith Development ..... Karen Gonzalez

Office Administrator ..... Sandy Blair Chibnick

**Teams**

contact info at [www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org)

Adult Faith Development ..... *Open*

Auction ..... Ahysa Boutron, Scott May,

& Carolyn Sant Angelo

Capital Campaign/  
Stewardship ..... Rita Cherubini

Caring ..... & Kathy Jens-Rochow

..... Kristine Barkley, Deb Giblin-Davis

& Georgette Lewis

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Facilities ..... Riley Cothran

Facility Rental ..... Ken Bresnahan

Future Home ..... Scott May

FUUndraising ..... Ken Bresnahan

Interfaith Outreach ..... Linda Morgan Crain

Music ..... Gayle Giese, Linda Lathroum,

Brenda Parker, Anne Smith, & Aaron Stang

Pastoral Care ..... Deb Giblin-Davis,

Pat Katz & Marilisa Lawless

Personnel ..... Rev. Amy Carol Webb

& Janet Schwartz

Second Helping ..... Kip Barkley

Security ..... Rick Tucker

Service, Social Justice,

& Green (SSJGT) ..... Steve Jens-Rochow

Shared Ministry ..... Diane Lade

& Janet Schwartz

Welcoming Congregation ... Kathy Jens-Rochow

YUUngh Adult Group ..... Linda Lathroum



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### BEING PRESENT

Scott May, Board of Trustees President

Our lives happen in the present moment. All of our memories are events that occurred in a previous present moment, and the future is uncertain. The present moment is truly all we actually have.

With 70,000 thoughts per day, on average, it's easy for our attention to wander and get carried away by thoughts. The mind's nature is to time travel, reliving the past and planning the future. And this can serve us at times, yet tends to create unneeded regret and worry. There is much research on this - check out the Ted Talk by Matt Killingsworth.

When we cultivate our awareness of the present moment, it helps enable us to see life as it is. It helps strengthen our ability to accept ourselves as we are - the good, the bad and the ugly. Aware of our thoughts and emotions, even when they include fear and grief, as well as joy and hope. All of these are part of our life experience, and awareness and presence offer the gift of embodying each, as they happen.

Three days ago my 90 year old father had a heart attack. Yesterday morning he was moved into hospice. Early this morning I was with him at his bedside, as he took his last breath. I'm deeply sad to see him go, yet I know he is at peace. I'm grateful that I was there to help make sure he knew he was loved, it was ok to transition, and that he will live on inside so many of us.

This was my experience in that present moment. Full awareness of him, his situation, and the love felt for him by many. Full awareness of the enormity, and permanence, and fluidity of that moment. Full awareness of the flaws both of us have, yet the deep bond and love we share. Full awareness of his transition as it unfolded.

May we all be present in each moment. May we all be open and receptive to life's unfolding experiences and mystery. May we live and love with compassion - for ourselves and for each other. This is the moment we have. May we be present for it, as best as we're able.

be.  
here.  
now.

## THE ANNUAL PROSPERITY DRIVE 2020-2021 HAS COME TO A CLOSE!!

Rita Cherubini and Kathy Jens-Rochow, Co-Chairs, Annual Prosperity Drive



Beginning on March 29, the Annual Prosperity Drive got off to a great start with 18 Stewards reaching out to our Members and Friends for the pledges needed to begin the fiscal year 2020-2021. Though our Kupcake Kickoff was not available to us, enthusiasm and acceptance for a new way to reach our congregation was provided by our Stewardship Team. Through our caring members and friends, the pledge dollars received total:

\$196,223

We are so grateful for your welcoming spirit that greeted our Stewards and your generosity and financial ministry to our beloved River of Grass UU Congregation. If you missed this pledging process, you can still find our

pledge card in digital form at [www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org) under Donations and then Stewardship. Scroll down for the pledge card, fill it out and click SEND and it's on the way.

Be well, be safe and we continue to look for you at Zoom Worship with Rev Amy!





**LGBTQ**

**Welcoming Congregation**

**A**re you looking for something to expand your understanding and connection to our community?

**Consider taking the “Transgender Inclusion in Congregations” course.**

River of Grass UU congregation has made a commitment to opening its doors to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We became a UUA recognized Welcoming Congregation on June 4, 2002. Throughout this past congregational year, the Welcoming Congregation Renewal Team has taken intentional steps to renew our commitment to the welcoming and inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, through Sunday services, recognition of important days of remembrance, and we supported the Fort Lauderdale Gay Pride Center during its “Wicked Manors” Halloween Party.

One of the very important steps in the renewal process is participation in a Welcoming Congregation Module. We have arranged for individuals in our congregation to complete a 6-session module **“Transgender Inclusion in Congregations.”** This course is for individuals, groups and congregations who want to take their knowledge and skills to the next level in terms of trans identity and how to create congregations that are fully inclusive and affirming of the full breadth of gender diversity. Over 6 session you will deeply explore the intersection of trans identity, spirituality and faith community and gain the grounding, context and skills to transform yourself and our congregation.

Please take advantage of this “stay at home” time to take this course. For more information and the link to connect to the sessions, contact Kathy at [Welcoming@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:Welcoming@riverofgrassuu.org).

At the end of May, we plan on having some small group discussion (via Zoom, of course) about this course and how to apply our new awareness to congregational life, as well as your own.



## IN THIS GREAT TURNING

*(Continued from page 1)*

*That love is now and forever,  
The only answer to everything,  
And everyone,  
In every moment.*

And in knowing this, we find the courage to practice the art of sacred unknowing as long as it takes, as long as we are together.

I love you.



## YUUNG ADULTS COME TOGETHER VIRTUALLY DURING COVID-19

**Bruce Ngo, Linda Lathroum, and Jorge Rodríguez**

**T**he YUUNG Adults are an intentional community that uplifts and inspires each other. We seek to grow together while enjoying life to the fullest. In this time of social distancing, we have been meeting weekly on Zoom, getting to know each other on a deeper level and being supportive of each other. Discussions during this time have understandably revolved around how each of us is holding up in these trying times, and how we can contribute to each other’s wellbeing as well as that of the larger community. Since the beginning of the lockdown, the YUUNG Adults have exchanged and distributed important information related to COVID—19, created masks for individuals at greater risk, and even 3D-printed face shields for healthcare workers.

In the past we have had fun events such as, “Yummy Thai,” “Bowling Fun,” and “Movie Night!” They were all wonderful ways to get to know each other more deeply while having fun! While we’d all prefer to meet in person to speak face-to-face, the YUUNG Adults have adapted to our new, obligatorily-virtual interactions. Recently, we have promoted a viewing of “Little Miss Westie” as well as having a virtual group viewing of CNN’s “Road to Change: America’s Climate Crisis.”

With these changes we are even more excited to plan future get-togethers! As it stands, we are planning on having more virtual activities and games while we look forward to having physical outings in the future such as Karaoke night, camping, and kayaking. For more information about upcoming events, please email [youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org).

## LIFENET4FAMILIES NEEDS OUR HELP

Judi Oltmans

As you may know LifeNet4Families has suspended their volunteer program until further notice. The staff continues to hand out about 300 hot to-go meals a day, Monday-Friday, as well as providing showers, food boxes and bags. Even though we can't volunteer, there are still things that we can do to help.

If you would like to help, LifeNet has provided a list of items they need. We are not allowed inside, but the items can be dropped off **outside** the gate at LifeNet from 8:00am to noon, Monday-Friday. **Let the security guards there know that you have a donation and then leave it outside the gate** (or security can get a staff member to come out). Email us at [ssjgt@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:ssjgt@riverofgrassuu.org) if you have questions.

LifeNet4Families is in need of:

- ◆ Hygiene products (deodorant, toothpaste, soap/shower gel, razors, shaving cream, lotion, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- ◆ Specific menswear (t-shirts, shorts, belts, underwear, socks, sneakers)
- ◆ Masks for clients (homemade or store bought)

Another option! If you would like to support them with a **financial donation** there is a fundraiser to provide housing assistance for LifeNet clients. Please contact Scott May at [scottmayrog@gmail.com](mailto:scottmayrog@gmail.com) for more information.

### Location and Directions:

Lifenet4Families

1 NW 33rd Terrace, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

On Broward Blvd. just east of 441 on the north side of the road.

Landmark: there is a Mobil gas station at the corner of 33rd Terrace and Broward Blvd.

## STONEWALL REMEMBRANCE



June 28 marks the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. The 1960s were not welcoming times for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans. LGBT individuals flocked to gay bars and clubs, places of refuge where they could express themselves openly and socialize without worry. However, the New York State Liquor Authority penalized and shut down establishments that served alcohol to known or suspected LGBT individuals, arguing that the mere gathering of homosexuals was “disorderly.”

Stonewall Inn was an important Greenwich Village institution. It welcomed drag queens, who received a bitter reception at other gay bars and clubs. It was a nightly home for many runaways and homeless gay youths, who panhandled or shoplifted to afford the entry fee. And it was one of the few—if not the only—gay bar left that allowed dancing.

On the morning of June 28, armed with a warrant, police officers entered the club, roughed up patrons, and, finding bootlegged alcohol, arrested 13 people, including employees and people violating the state's gender-appropriate clothing statute

Fed up with constant police harassment and social discrimination, angry patrons and neighborhood residents congregated outside of the bar rather than disperse, becoming increasingly agitated as the events unfolded and people were aggressively manhandled. At one point, an officer hit a lesbian over the head as he forced her into the police van— she shouted to onlookers to act, inciting the crowd to begin throw pennies, bottles, cobble stones and other objects at the police. The protests continued in the area for five more days.

Though the Stonewall uprising didn't start the gay rights movement, it was a galvanizing force for LGBT political activism. Most people don't know that transgender women of color had a huge impact on gay rights and are finally being recognized for their work. The movie “Pay It No Mind” pays tribute to these women.

## ANNUAL MEETING

Dear River of Grass Members,

In accordance with our Bylaws, this notification provides all members with the subjects and motions that will be voted on at the Annual Meeting of the River of Grass UU Congregation which will be held on **Sunday, May 31, 2020** **virtually via Zoom from 12:15-2:30 pm.**

Members are eligible to vote as follows:

- ◆ All new members who joined this year and signed the membership book by April 1, 2020 (60 days prior to the Annual Meeting).
- ◆ All members who joined before this year and are a member in "good standing" (as defined in our policies Section 9E) as of May 16, 2020 (14 days prior to the Annual Meeting).

40% of eligible voting membership is required to be in attendance at the meeting to constitute a quorum. Absentee ballots can be taken for the election of the Board of Trustees only (see #2 below).

Contact [secretary@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:secretary@riverofgrassuu.org) soon if you cannot be at the meeting and wish to vote on these positions.

Following are the subjects for which a congregational vote may be called on May 31, 2020:

1. Approval of Minutes from last year's Annual Meeting held May 19, 2019
2. Elections for Board of Trustees and Nominating Committee
3. Approval of proposed 2020-2021 Annual Budget
4. Approval of the renewal of the congregation's Welcoming Congregation status
5. Approval of proposed Policy Amendments

A formal agenda that includes all supporting documents will be sent two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting date.

I hope that we can count on your attendance at this very important meeting.

In community

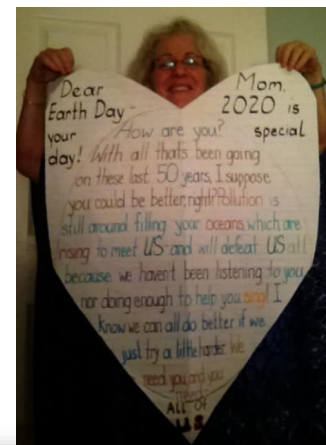
Scott May  
President, Board of Trustees



## VIRTUAL EARTH DAY 2020

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

What do you do when you cannot demonstrate in person due to the COVID-19 shutdown? Around the earth on Earth Day 2020 students and everyone else made a sign, took a photo of themselves, and posted it online. Locally, Steve Jens-Rochow, Judi Oltmans, and Kat Holland send their virtual demonstration photos to 350.org South Florida, where they were pasted into a giant Florida map.



### CLIMATE ACTION IN A TIME OF CRISIS







## RIVER OF GRASS BAND

### MONTHLY MEMBER FEATURE: ALLEN GIESE

An interview by Gayle Giese

**Gayle:** How did you become interested in the violin?

**Allen:** We had a really strong music program in our elementary school and all the cool kids played in it. My sisters played in it ahead of me and the teacher was really cool ... Tom Buchauser. He was my school music teacher from elementary, through middle school and into high school. He later conducted the Youth Orchestra.

**G:** You grew up in Madison, Wisconsin?

**A:** Yes

**G:** What opportunities did you have to play as you were growing up there?

**A:** There were many. I played in recitals for my teacher's studio. When I started

studying with Tom Moore who was the violin professor at the University of Wisconsin, he let me play in the University master class with his students there. I also played in the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra from ages 13 through 18. My senior year I was concert master and won a competition to play as a Chair in the Milwaukee Symphony under the great Conductor Kenneth Schermerhorn.

**G:** As a high school player, what were your most memorable moments?

**A:** The first time I played a concerto, which was the Bach A minor Concerto with my high school symphony. The first time I played for a musical ("My Fair Lady") in the pit orchestra. When I met Itzhak Perlman when he did a solo concert in Madison. I was the local kid chosen to carry out his violin, because Perlman has polio and uses crutches. He was super nice backstage and played some fiddle tunes for me.

**G:** You started college at the University of Wisconsin because your teacher was there, but how did you end up at the University of Miami?

**A:** I started my freshman year at UW, but in February, my teacher said he had been hired as the violin professor at University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. He said they wanted me to come too and they would cover my tuition and housing for the next four years because they were building a string program. I had walked three cold miles to my lesson that day, so when Professor Moore said, "Miami," I said, "Yes!"

**G:** What were your goals as a violinist and how have they changed?

**A:** While at University of Miami, I wanted to be a concert violinist and do some recording. I didn't want to be an orchestral musician. I realized how incredibly hard it would be and my professor was telling me I should go to the Guild Hall School of Music in London for graduate work. I'd already been working as a musician, loved to play, but was finding that it wasn't as thrilling as I had hoped. My goals are now to have fun, play with my musical friends and my alter-ego: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmljV9PLEjA>

**G:** What have you enjoyed most about playing music at River of Grass?

**A:** River of Grass is largely responsible for me picking up the violin again. After I left the music world in my early '20s, I stopped playing for about 15 years. After that, I didn't like to play because I wasn't able to maintain the rigorous practice schedule, and didn't like what I was hearing. However, at River of Grass, there was a reason to play, and I got to play with you. Then we realized there were high-quality musicians there, and it was that much more enjoyable. River of Grass is the reason I still play today.

**G:** What are your favorite styles of music and has that changed?

**A:** Yes! I was strictly classical until I started playing at River of Grass. The reality is that bluegrass, Celtic, and fiddle tunes are easier than Bach and Mozart. I still played some classical, but it was hard to get back to a high level, but fiddle tunes, you can knock those babies down!

## **BUUKIES TACKLE *BLOWOUT* BY RACHEL MADDOW (NON-FICTION)**

**Susan Juncosa**

**T**he bUUKies have tackled some serious reading this year but May's selection is in a class of its own. Rachel Maddow's "Blowout" tackles the fossil fuel industry and the role it has in the world's politics. I particularly look forward to this in light of the historical low price of oil (as of this writing) of NEGATIVE \$37 per barrel. The world has truly turned upside down.

With her trademark dark humor, Maddow takes us on a switchback journey around the globe, revealing the greed and incompetence of Big Oil and Gas along the way, and drawing a surprising conclusion about why the Russian government hacked the 2016 U.S. election. She deftly shows how Russia's rich reserves of crude have, paradoxically, stunted its growth, forcing Putin to maintain his power by spreading Russia's rot into its rivals, its neighbors, the West's most important alliances, and the United States. Chevron, BP, and a host of other industry players get their star turn, most notably ExxonMobil and the deceptively well-behaved Rex Tillerson. The oil and gas industry has weakened democracies in developed and developing countries, fouled oceans and rivers, and propped up authoritarian thieves and killers. But being outraged at it is, according to Maddow, "like being indignant when a lion takes down and eats a gazelle. You can't really blame the lion. It's in her nature."

**bUUKies meet on the second Wednesday evenings of each month. Our May meeting is thus May 13 at 7 pm, and at this time it appears that it will be an on-line Zoom meeting. If you are not on the regular mailing list, please contact us at [bUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:bUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org) in order to get an invitation.**

bUUKies will wind up the congregational year with the light-hearted romance "Red, White & Royal Blue" by Casey McQuiston. This highly rated book dares to ask if a happily-ever-after ending is possible for the son of the US president and his prince from across the pond. The suspense!



### **FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

## **DEVELOPING OUR FAITH ALONG THE RIVER**

**Karen Gonzalez, Religious Educator**

**R**ivers rarely run straight. Healthy rivers tend to bend and swerve with the natural elements they encounter over time. This meandering around obstacles alters the flow, often making it much more fun to navigate! Having to suddenly move our Faith Development program online, mid-March, certainly changed the course of our Faith Development River, but it didn't slow us down and we've had a lot of fun along the way! We've been blessed with a dedicated crew of Faith Development teachers this year who have helped us to navigate the new bend in our river, with aplomb. This may not have been what they signed up for, but I am forever grateful to have had them along for the ride! Our Sunday Zoom classrooms have included stories, principled lessons, guided activities and even arts and crafts. Mostly, they've given our children an opportunity to keep their connections to each other and their faith community. There have also been plenty of wiggles and giggles, stuffies and pets! Please join me in thanking the following 2019-20 Faith Development Teaching Team:

Monica Dyer  
Lucy Harty  
Susan Malca  
Corinne Mann

Marilisa Lawless  
Marjie Loring  
Gary Gonzalez  
Ahysa Boutron

Devon Smith  
Tanya Gustafson  
Geri Mikulski  
Edgar Navarro

Diane Lade  
Lou deSantis  
Mallory McLaren  
Bruce Ngo

A special shout out goes to Ms. Marjie (Loring) and her puppet Dakota (Esther Sampol) for their weekly story times which have given our children another way to stay connected, have fun and learn valuable lessons. And another shout out to Ms. Carolyn (Sant Angelo) who taught us some useful ways to meditate during these unusual times.

We will continue to grow our faith online throughout the summer. Our children and caring volunteers will be exploring our National Zoo with games and activities, while making connections to our 7<sup>th</sup> Principle - valuing Earth's web of life. **If you'd like to be a part of this adventure by hosting a Sunday or two, contact Diane Lade, FD Committee Chair.**



# Getting to Know UU's

## FAMOUS UNITARIAN

Kathy Jens-Rochow



**BEATRIX POTTER (28 JULY 1866 – 22 DECEMBER 1943) WRITER, ILLUSTRATOR, NATURAL SCIENTIST, AND CONSERVATIONIST**

*“Believe there is a great power working all things for good, behave yourself and never mind the rest.”*

Potter's study and watercolors of fungi led to her being widely respected in the field of mycology. In her thirties, Potter self-published the highly successful children's book *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Following this, Potter began writing and illustrating children's books full-time.

In all, Potter wrote thirty books; the best known being her twenty-three children's tales. With the proceeds from the books and a legacy from an aunt, in 1905 Potter bought Hill Top Farm in Near Sawrey. Over the following decades, she purchased additional farms to preserve the unique hill country landscape. Potter was also a prize-winning breeder of Herdwick sheep, and a prosperous farmer keenly interested in land preservation. She continued to write and illustrate, and to design spin-off merchandise based on her children's books for British publisher Warne until the duties of land management and her diminishing eyesight made it difficult to continue.

Potter died of pneumonia and heart disease on 22 December 1943 at her home in Near Sawrey at the age of 77, leaving almost all her property to the National Trust. She is credited with preserving much of the land that now constitutes the Lake District National Park. Potter's books continue to sell throughout the world in many languages with her stories being retold in song, film, ballet, and animation, and her life depicted in a feature film and television film.

Source: Wikipedia

## CAPITAL FOUNDATION

**Kip Barkley, Foundation Treasurer**

In spite of all the market gyrations, our capital Fund assets remain about the same. Our IRS application to receive tax-deductible gifts is still “in process.” For now, give your gifts to the church corporation. Also, Foundation Board elections are coming up in May. Running for re-election are Melissa Buehler and Kip Barkley. Looking to join the Foundation is Jacquie Velazquez. Ed Lewis, Ahysa Boutron, and Roy Schwartz will continue their second year of their two-year terms. Kathy Jens-Rochow is going off to join the River of Grass Board of Trustees.

## PLANNED GIVING

**Kip Barkley, not a tax Professional**

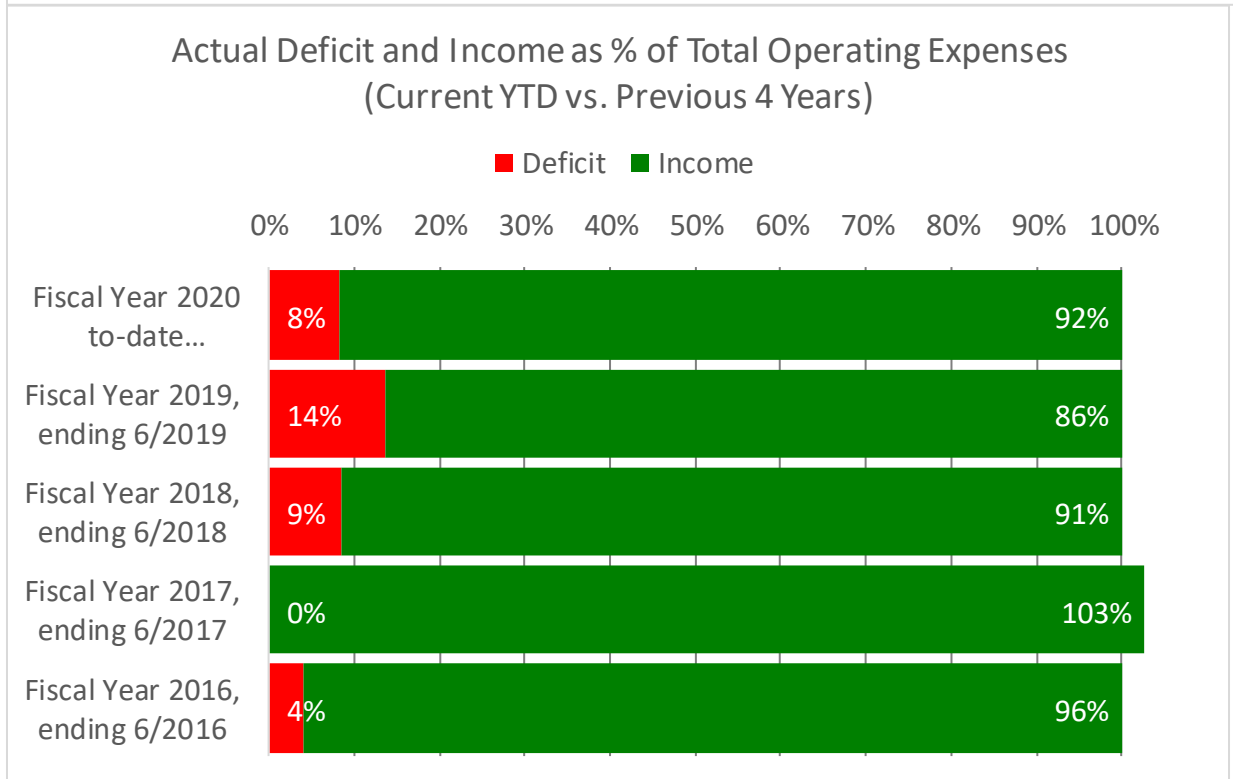
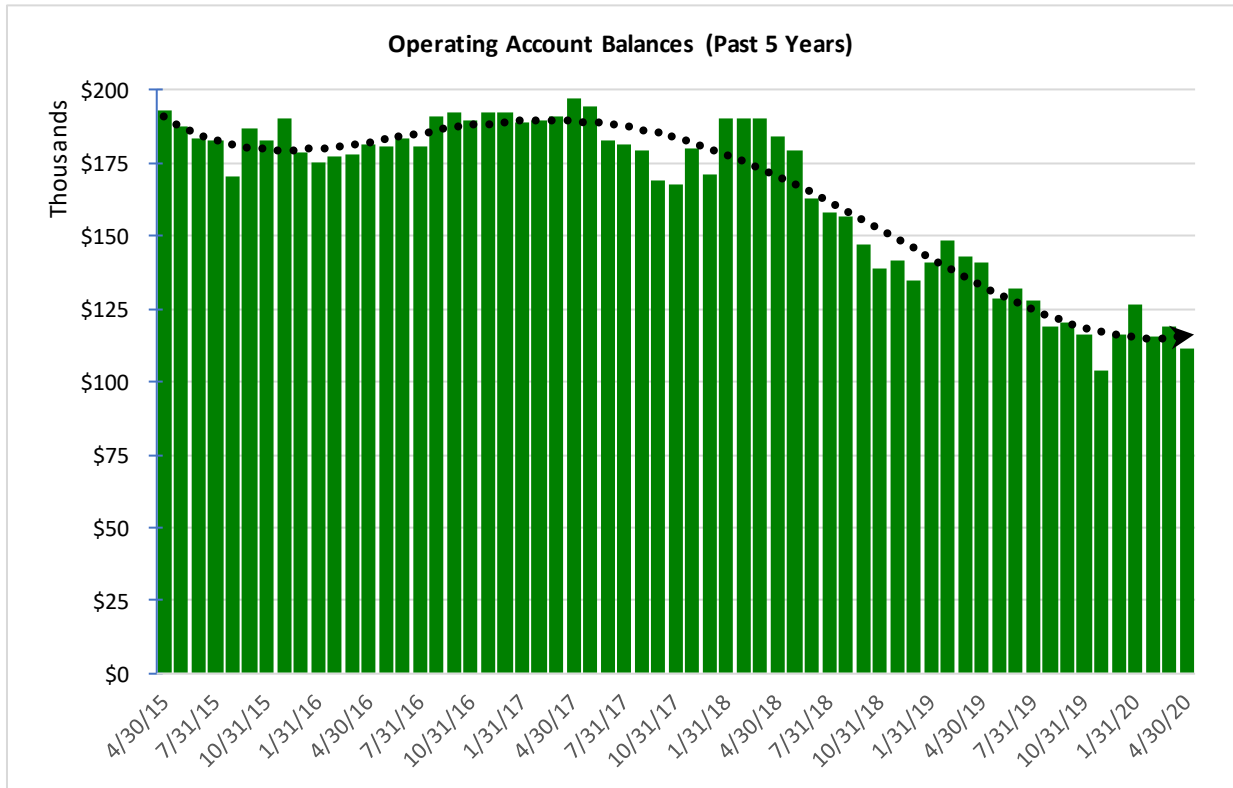
With the pandemic raging, we have postponed our next Will Writing and Estate Planning Clinic, so as not to panic anyone. For those contemplating a gift of securities, perhaps the Fall would be a better time. Kip's IRAs are down 20+%. However, this might be a great time to consider converting part of a Traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. Yes, there would be taxes, but you are converting securities and not cash, and securities are down. Does all this make no sense to you? Ask your financial or tax professional. Always ask your professionals about whatever you might hear from me.



## 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) as of the end of **April 2020** 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.



## THE IMPACT OF MULTI-USE CORRIDORS OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE (M-CORES)\* ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Karen Holland and Judi Oltmans

Florida's governor and legislators approved a toll road, called M-CORES, on the west side of the state from about Naples to Tallahassee but with NO analysis of environmental impacts. Usually DOT recommends new roads based on studies of population and travel patterns, but this did not happen. This project will have serious environmental impacts on our water quality, natural springs, wildlife (including the Florida panther) and other natural resources as well as bringing urban sprawl to small rural towns. There's still time to give public comments! Please email your comments and concerns to [FDOT.Listens@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:FDOT.Listens@dot.state.fl.us)

The following is Karen Holland's views on her participation in the M-CORES webinars.

On Wednesday's session regarding the Treasure Coast toll road, I listened and watched the entire slide presentation, and afterwards came the participant/public commentary. Mallory watched the live stream as well. Thanks, Mallory! I heard the names of some people I knew; Drew Martin, and Matt Schwartz, and then my own name! - I forgot I signed up for it, but I spoke! - I was totally unprepared, so I spoke from my heart (I usually do that anyway). I immediately got a text message on my phone from Susan Steinhauser, and then she spoke - she was well prepared! She gave me a shout out - I was so happy that I sounded okay... *and* got to speak up!

It was such a good experience, so I signed up for the Thursday session on the Northern toll road. The presentation was slightly different from the other. I didn't see any slides, (I admit to falling asleep) however, more "Task Members" spoke about the project.

There were a many well-spoken citizens who stepped up, and one (only one) who was for the project. Students spoke up, residents, long time Floridians, and Matt Schwartz. People who represented Sierra Club, as well as a host of other environmental organizations. Each point of view was clear, and the majority did not want the roads to be built – for a wide variety of reasons. The students wanted to be able to explore the vast pristine wild lands, the Science teacher wanted her students to experience and know about the springs and aquifer. There were farmers and regular folk who thought the money could be better spent on the current pandemic, or the infrastructure. Some landowners didn't want to have to move or see the value of their property diminish. Questions were brought up about hurricanes and seas rising that would impact the roadways, and some folks, like myself, mentioned the wildlife, animals lost and threatened, being completely gone due to corporate greed.

It was informative. The slides looked like all the above concerns were taken into account - roads were mapped around some "touchy" natural parks and "areas of concern" but... an impact study wasn't performed. People also mentioned that the public session/discussion should've happened BEFORE the toll road bill was passed. There were also numerous technical problems that arose from trouble with getting mics to work and a cumbersome and unclear registration process.

For more info about M-CORES: [FloridaM-CORES.com](http://FloridaM-CORES.com)

*\*The Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) program is intended to revitalize rural communities, encourage job creation and provide regional connectivity while leveraging technology, enhancing the quality of life and public safety, and protecting the environment and natural resources. The program was [signed into law](#) by Governor Ron DeSantis on May 17, 2019.*

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Dear Friends,

*UBarU needs your help.*

*UBarU Camp and Retreat Center has always been a place where people have been able to come to reflect, learn, heal, and return to their homes refreshed in body as well as spirit. In this unprecedented era of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with all of the other businesses that have been asked to close their doors to visitors, UBarU cannot at this time offer any of our full range of in-person retreats and youth camp programs.*

*The Board of Trustees is working with Executive Director Robyn Stout to determine when we may safely reopen our campus. Sadly, we have suspended all programming through July which includes 3 weeks of Summer Youth Camps and the Human Sexuality camp. This decision has been made with heavy hearts. Our camps for children and youth have been the centerpiece of UBarU's programming for many years. To know we won't be seeing our children at camp this summer is a real loss for many of us because of the lost experiences for our campers, and sad because summer camps generate most of our revenue for the year.*

*Like all small businesses and non-profits, though programming may be temporarily suspended, ongoing expenses continue. For example, our small, dedicated staff has accepted a temporary 50% reduction in pay, and we have taken measures to cut utilities to the bare minimum. We need your help because we are doing everything possible to keep our wonderful staff.*

*You will be pleased to know we have actively sought financial assistance in the form of forgivable loans through the Small Business Administration and Economic Injury Disaster Loan programs. We join the thousands of other businesses nationwide awaiting final approval and funding. Even if approved, these funds may cover only a few months of payroll, the eligible use of this money. It is important to understand that while in recent years UBarU has been fortunate to receive grants for special projects and capital improvements, these funds are restricted to the specific project and no other use. UBarU relies mostly on income from usage fees (camps, retreats, events, and rentals) for its operation and maintenance with a lesser amount from the UBarU Membership program. It receives no financial support from the UUA or any other outside source (UU or otherwise) for its operations.*

*With this in mind, I want to personally ask you to help UBarU financially in any way you can, and there are several ways. First, if you are currently in the Membership program or a Ranch Hand contributor, we ask that you renew your membership or join at the highest level possible. Second, if you or your children are currently registered for a retreat, summer youth camp or Star Party, please consider donating your registration fee to UBarU or accepting a credit for a future event in lieu of a refund. Of course, if you need a refund, we will be glad to provide it. Third, simply make a donation in any amount to UBarU. Any financial assistance provided will be gratefully accepted. All donations may be made through our website [UBARU.org](http://UBARU.org). If you wish to donate a current registration or receive a future credit for yourself or a child, please e-mail Robyn at [Director@UBARU.org](mailto:Director@UBARU.org).*

*It may be heartening to know that at this time of social distancing and online meetings, the hummingbirds and the spring wildflowers have returned to UBarU and it remains a unique refuge in the Texas Hill Country that will again welcome you to a place of peace and community.*

*Thank you for your confidence and your generous support. And best of health to all.*

*Gratefully yours,  
Michael West  
Board of Trustees*

