

Announcements

Faith Development: 12:30: Pre-K - 1st graders; **1:30 pm:** 2nd - 6th graders; **3:00pm:** Teens. Our 3rd UU principle inspires us towards “Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations.” On Sunday in our Faith Development classes for children and youth, we'll continue our March theme of Commitment and explore what it means to be committed to change, and how our 3rd Principle asks us to keep learning, growing and changing as we work to create our beloved community. If you'd like more information about our Faith Development program for children and youth, contact our Director, Karen Gonzalez at ReligiouEducator@RiverOfGrassUU.org.

The River of Grass Annual Pledge Drive (APD) Kicked-Off last Sunday, March 14th and runs through Sunday Service on April 11th. We are almost through the first week of the River of Grass Annual Pledge Drive (APD) where we generate over 80% of the total annual operating income for next fiscal year, starting on July 1st, 2021. We are off to a great start having generated about \$70,000 in pledges with almost all pledges being increased by an average of about 8% over last year. This means that we have generated about 1/3 of the \$210,000 that we need to operate next year with a balanced budget. You can commit to your pledge during the month-long drive by going to our website at <https://riverofgrassuu.org> scrolling down the homepage until you see the 2021-2022 Annual Budget Drive notification link “[2021-2022 Pledge Card](#)”. Click on the link and then just fill in the blanks of the “River of Grass UU Congregation 2021-2022 Pledge Form” and Click “Submit”. Make sure to fill in all fields with an asterisk and use the field “other” to give us any additional information, if needed. For example, you need to tell us if you plan to fulfill the pledge through a single annual, quarterly, or monthly payments (required field), which can be set up online or with the help of our office manager. It is that easy! Save postage and a trip to the post office! Otherwise, please fill out the enclosed form that you as a member should have recently received in the mail with an Annual Pledge Drive brochure.

Your financial contribution is essential to helping us to continue to love River of Grass into being. We are tremendously grateful for your current and past support for our Beloved Community!

Rob Giblin-Davis, RoG APD Chair and Treasurer, Treasurer@RiverofGrassUU.org

Rev. Amy's upcoming sabbatical: Rev. Amy's sabbatical began on Saturday, March 13, 2021, and will end on Sunday, May 9, 2021. She will be back with us for the Annual Meeting on May 9th, and back in the pulpit on May 16th. For more information about her sabbatical, please read the information that Rev Amy prepared. It is listed on our website: [Rev. Amy's Sabbatical Page](#).

Registration for Unit One of Building the World We Dream About is now open: The registration link can be found on our website, on our Facebook page, and [REGISTER HERE FOR BUILDING THE WORLD WE DREAM ABOUT](#).

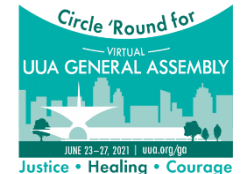
In these first 12 90-minute sessions, we'll focus our gaze inward as we learn about ourselves

and begin the work of becoming an antiracist / antioppressive / multicultural faith community. Specific dates and times will be determined by those who register.

Building the World We Dream About is a Unitarian Universalist Association program that seeks to interrupt the workings of racism and transform how people from different racial/ethnic groups understand and relate to one another. The full program consists of 24 workshops, with Taking It Home activities, reflections, and readings to be done between workshops. The program creates opportunities for participants to practice dreaming our world otherwise, and then commit to new, intentional ways of being.

As Unitarian Universalists, we hope developing antiracist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural habits and skills will lead us to build the multicultural world of the beloved community we dream about. Contact Karen Gonzalez at ReligiousEducator@RiverOfGrassUU.org for more information or to sign up for this transformational experience.

Why Virtual General Assembly? General Assembly (commonly referred to as GA) is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalists, where we conduct business of the Association, explore the theological underpinnings of our faith, and lean fully into our mission and principles. That remains true even when we cannot gather physically. Last year, GA had more than 4,900 registered attendees participate from remote locations around the world. Although we give up the face-to-face interaction and hugs that are prevalent when we meet in-person, we retain our dedication to community and make our experience more accessible and more environmentally sustainable.



This year River of Grass will fund our three voting delegates, as well as others who are interested in attending. This is a major time commitment but so worth it. Go to <https://www.uua.org/ga> to view agendas and programs being offered. Only voting delegates are expected to attend the business meetings, but all are encouraged to attend. Last year we paid the registration fee for five attendees. With many ROGers attending, we can cover most of the workshops. Attendees will be expected to write a report to the Board. If you are interested in attending, please contact Kathy Jens-Rochow at president@riverofgrassuu.org.

Poetry Service - Apr 25th! Do you enjoy poetry? Members are invited to submit a poem for our annual poetry reading service. The theme is "Becoming". Poems must be brief (no more than 4 minutes reading time) and in keeping with our UU principles. All poetry must have permission of the author or no known copyright restriction. Send submissions to Zena Tucker or email membership@riverofgrassuu.org. **All poems must be received by Mar 30th.**



Free "Mindfulness for Today's World" weekly online sessions:

Thursdays 6:00 - 7:00 pm for adults, [zoom link for Thursday night at 6 pm](#)

For more information or to register contact Carolyn@InsightInstituteLLC.com or Scott@InsightInstituteLLC.com, or visit <http://www.insightinstitutellc.com/>

Flowing River Sangha - We meet every Tuesday at 7:00 pm. Our next gathering will be on Tuesday, Mar 23rd via zoom. <https://zoom.us/j/201911385>. We will meet from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. This is an open-ended, drop-in group for all levels of meditation experience. Gary Gonzalez meditation@riverofgrassuu.org.

Have you heard about our Faith Forward Inquirers Series? We meet on Wednesdays from 7:30 – 8:30 pm on Zoom, see the schedule below! Faith Forward Inquirers Series is a rotation of seven 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 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! Our next class is scheduled for **Mar 24th and is FF Inquirers #6: Social Action & Community Service**. For more information, email Zena Tucker, membership@riverofgrassuu.org. Zoom link for our session is: [ZOOM Link for RoG Inquirers](#).

Date	Time	Event
3/24/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#6: Social Action & Community Service
3/31/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#7: Pastoral Care and Small Groups
4/7/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#8: Membership 101 & Congregational Life
4/28/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#4: Faith Development for Children and Adults
5/5/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#5: Worship & Liturgical Year
5/12/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#1: Q&A with Minister
5/26/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#6: Social Action & Community Service
6/2/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#7: Pastoral Care and Small Groups
6/9/21	7:30 - 8:30 pm	FF Inquirers#8: Membership 101 & Congregational Life

Young Adults are now meeting on the 2nd Sundays, at 7:30 pm virtually on Zoom – Millennials, Gen Xers, and Gen Zs, are welcome to tune in to the YUUnG Adult Virtual Coffee Hour on **Sunday, Apr 11th at 7:30 pm**. Our group’s purpose is to foster an inclusive, diverse and intentional community that inspires spiritual growth and connection. Please email youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org if you have any questions and to obtain the zoom details.

River of Grass New Mailing Address - We have our post office box and are forwarding all of our mail there now. Our new mailing address is listed on our website as a footer on each page and in the [contact us page](#) if you need to look it up.

River of Grass UU Congregation, 3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485, Sunrise, Florida 33345

SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week: Bring your own reusable bags to the grocery store. Avoid the disposable plastic bags offered at checkout, as over 500 Billion of them are used each year, often ending up in landfills and waterways...as they are not biodegradable. Be green! :)

Capital Campaign Contributions: We have set up several methods for you to make your pledges/contributions to the Capital Campaign. The table below details the various methods, including charges that the River accrues when this payment method is used. We are here to help with any questions you may have. Feel free to contact our office administrator, Sandy Blair Chibnick, via email at office@riverofgrassuu.org.

Monetary Donations		
Method	How	Processing fees paid by River of Grass
Check	Write CC on memo line Mail to River of Grass: 3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485 Sunrise, FL 33345	\$0
Checking account via Vanco	Set up payment on our Donations page . Designate on the Capital Campaign line	\$0.45 per transaction plus processing fee 1%
Credit Card via Vanco	Set up payment on our Donations page . Designate amount on the Capital Campaign line.	\$0.45 per transaction plus credit card processing fee: American Express: 3.5% Visa/MasterCard: 2.75%
PayPal	https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/my/profile In the notes write "Capital Campaign"	Varies based on method of payment
Zelle	Use your bank to set up \$ transfer. Send Zelle payment to CapitalCampaign@riverofgrassuu.org .	\$0
Securities	<p style="text-align: center;">Any questions contact Northstar Financial Planners: <i>Allen Giese, Steve Tepper, or Stacy Saavedra at (954) 693-0030</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Securities should be transferred per instructions from the donor's brokerage or advisor using the following DTC and A/C numbers as the destination</p> <p style="text-align: center;">#0188 - TD Ameritrade Institutional A/C #944110334</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION, INC.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The donor should notify the CC Team and the Office Administrator of the details of the donation by emailing CapitalCapaign@riverofgrassuu.org.</p>	

River of Grass in Pandemic: One Year Later

Rev. Amy Carol Webb, March 01, 2021

One year since River of Grass moved everything we'd do in person on-line to do our part to keep ourselves, one another, and our community safe COVID-19 changed virtually every aspect of our lives -- what a year of profound change, adaptation, learning and unlearning, creating a new normal that became, well, just "normal" before long, with all our coping and adapting and grieving and planning and dreaming and missing people we love to the bone and finding ways

to stay connected driven by love that never gives up and renewed gratitude for all the good that lifts its head in the hardest of times.

And while we are grateful we've not lost a River of Grass member to the virus, none of us remains untouched by the loss of someone we love. Most of us also lost our way of life, whether from working from and schooling kids at home, or suffering mightily in isolation, while the COVID economy came down on so many as well.

Now one year later, hope rises as vaccines roll out and we can begin to see opportunity to gather in person again on the horizon – though we must yet remain patient until enough people have immunity to be safe together again.

Your leadership at River of Grass continues to take every precaution with every new stage of this process, especially as we weigh when/how/where we will gather again in person. To that end, your COVID-19 Re-Emergence Team has been at work examining data, listening to science, following guidelines as they come from science and health authorities, as well as recommendations from those who know congregational life, like the Unitarian Universalist Association and the World Council of Churches, and also watching trends and ideas being developed across religious communities as absolutely all of us are on the same ground, facing the same questions, at the same time.

Here are the Interim Recommendations from the RoG COVID-19 Re-Emergence Team

Team: Deb Buehler Ely, Karen Gonzalez, Susan Juncosa, Jeanne Masten

Purpose of Team: To review guidelines for congregational and smaller group gatherings in order to provide recommendations to the Board to be used for official River of Grass meetings and events.

These recommendations are:

For: only for official, River of Grass - sponsored outdoor small group gatherings.

Fluid: new information comes out all the time and the recommendations could change.

Inclusive: all attendees should be able to attend physically or virtually.

Protective: considers first those who are most at risk.

Science-based: follow the directives according to the experts.

Sources:

UUA: <https://www.uua.org/safe/pandemics/covid-19>

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

Johns Hopkins: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map>

UU Reston Covid-19 Guidelines: <https://www.uureston.org/covid>

MEETINGS IN THE TIME OF COVID

RIVER OF GRASS COVID-19 TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD: February 2021

Meetings in the Time of the COVID

We don't know when. We don't know where. But we are trying to provide answers for "How?" As vaccinations for COVID-19 roll out, River of Grass members are thinking about getting together. This meeting protocol has been developed and can be found on our web (RiverofGrassUU.org/teams-committees--small-groups.html). Contact Susan Juncosa at vicepresident@riverofgrassuu.org for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions - Small Groups - Outdoors only

1. Can I meet with my RoG friends?

- That is your choice at all times. These recommendations are only for official River of Grass – sponsored gatherings.

2. What's the first thing to consider when organizing an in-person event?

- Is it necessary that the gathering be in person? Can the same purpose be achieved by meeting on Zoom? Is there a reason to meet other than the fact that we want to be together?

3. My group has all been vaccinated with all shots and have waited the recommended times. Can we have an in-person meeting?

- Yes, if you take these actions:
 - + everyone signs the covenant and a list of attendees is made;
 - + everyone keeps their masks on and maintains social distance;
 - + no food or drink sharing;
 - + If any members of the group do not want to attend in person, provision must be made for attendance by Zoom or other application.

4. Seriously, Question 3? What's the point of all these precautions if everyone has a vaccination?

- Seriously. At this time, it is unknown if vaccinated people can still pass along the virus or its' variants. So yeah. Follow the precautions.

5. What about an indoor meeting?

- At this time, no official River-of-Grass indoor gatherings should be held L

6. Can children come to the gathering?

- At this time, there is no vaccine approved for children. They would have to maintain social distance and masking, etc. This might be a group decision.

Factors Considered in forming the Guidelines:

All guidelines depend on both the public and the personal.

The public – the surrounding community – must meet certain standards for daily new cases, infection rate, test positivity percentage, contract tracing in place and hospital capacity.

Personal – each individual's state of health.

Scope of Recommendations:

At this time, the recommendations are only for small gatherings in **outdoor** spaces in which social distancing protocol can be maintained.

Format of Recommendations:

The team will develop a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) document to be posted on the web site and added to the weekly e-mail, which will be updated as needed.

Meeting Leader will do the following:

- + send the covenant to attendees prior to the meeting;
- + set up space and have sanitizer/hand washing supplies available;
- + collect signed covenants or procure signed covenants at the start of meeting;
- + locations of outdoor gathering will be chosen with the physical needs of the attendees in mind and alternative Zoom links will be offered if needed;
- + review masking and social distancing.

Actions Prior to a Gathering

A covenant shall be developed and sent to attendees which includes the following:

- + agrees to follow social distancing and masking protocols; and
- + has not traveled internationally in past two weeks; and

- + attendee will comply with any contact tracing which may ensue; and
- + is not experiencing any COVID symptoms.

Actions During a Gathering

- + attendees will give meeting leader the signed covenant or sign a copy at the start of meeting;
- + Meeting attendees will follow masking and social distancing guidelines;
- + Meeting attendees will not share food or drink.

Actions after a Gathering

- + Meeting leader will keep the covenants collected for two weeks;
- + Attendees will inform the meeting leader if they have Covid symptoms and/or a positive Covid test within two weeks after the meeting. Meeting leader will inform all attendees.