

# River of Grass

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE 2023 -2024

## A NEW BEGINNING!

As a Unitarian Universalist Congregation, our River of Grass Community is “self-governed.” Our congregation names its own criteria for membership, calls its Minister, and controls its own budget. We intentionally covenant to learn together, support one another, and in community aspire to be something greater than our individual selves.

The highest level of decision-making happens within our congregation and not within some higher ecclesiastical body (such as bishops, presbyters, or regional staff).

This congregation is self-supporting through the financial stewardship of its members and friends.

We, as members and friends of the River, covenant to strive to be in relationship with each other and with the larger community in ways that build a safe, healthy, nurturing environment while strengthening our common bonds.

To this goal, we ask that our members and friends make a monetary commitment (pledge) to sustain our beloved community. From these we present an annual budget for approval by our membership. This process reflects our congregation’s support and priorities.

*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.*

## WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES?

So what are your values?  
What is important to you? Your church? Your children? Black Lives Matter? Fracking? Climate Change?

*“It’s a huge responsibility, isn’t it – deciding where to put your wealth, especially when that wealth is money. In this capitalist, free market world of ours, money is power and with great power comes great responsibility. The power and responsibility of being a Unitarian Universalist is about discerning your values and then living them. Everydollar you spend is a deliberate choice. And you get to choose how to spend it. So spend it as a Unitarian Universalist...”*

*Michelle Ma*

Student at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkley

First Unitarian Church, Oakland, CA



## ANNUAL PLEDGE DRIVE CO-CHAIRS

Dear Beloved Community Members and Friends!

We have experienced many changes as we carefully emerge from the COVID pandemic and take stock of what our local and global communities most urgently need from us as Unitarian Universalists (UUs) at this moment in time. We are meeting in person again, re-learning how to be with people! We met for several months at the University of Florida and now meet EVERY WEEK in our lovely space at the Old Davie School. We continue to broadcast on Zoom and Facebook. We are weathering the shock and grief of losing so many beloved members: those who moved away during COVID and those who completed their life journeys. We miss them all terribly. Yet we are also living the joy of renewal, with the addition of 29 new members from 2020 to early 2023. And our community has expanded its reach to people who worship with us from many different parts of the country.

Thank you for who you are, all you are and for your commitment to River of Grass. Thank you for being a committed UU! We are convinced the world will be a better place when there are tens of millions more of us. We know there is more joy to be had; more life-giving work to do; more love to share...together, at this time of a New Beginning.



Rita Cherubini and Leana Bresnahan, Co-Chairs, APD 2023-2024

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## RIVER OF GRASS LEADERS

Beloved River Folk:

River of Grass has never dreamed without action, nor taken action without dreaming. As we re-emerge into a world, and ourselves, forever changed, we arrive at the threshold of a new beginning, a burgeoning opportunity to build the world we have dreamed about so long. The decisions we make today, the programs and plans we fund,



the budgets we craft as moral documents reflecting our commitments, expressing our aspirations, and clarifying our mission in this moment of our shared history – these lay fresh foundations for what comes next, and what will be home for liberal religious Unitarian Universalist community in Western Broward County for generations to come. Our call to live into the mission and vision of this Beloved Community rings louder and clearer than ever before! If ever a congregation were called to build a new way in this world, it is us. If ever there were a time, it is now. River of Grass is the place. We are the people. We dream. We give. We build. Shine on!

*Rev. Amy Carol Webb*



*We are an expression of the beloved community.  
Our bonds to one another are deep and enduring.*

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## RIVER OF GRASS LEADERS



### A New Beginning!

Here we are, on the precipice of a new beginning. How exciting...and, how scary! Change can be both fun and scary. Can we do it? You betcha! We are River of Grass! It is time to take that leap of faith and step off the cliff to make our future home a reality. With parachutes, River of Grass moves with caution and deliberation. Our safety parachutes

are always in place. One of the most important parachutes is financial. We need to be sure that this home is sustainable. Through our annual pledge, we budget to make it happen. So, how open is your parachute? Your generous pledge is so important! Together, we will move forward to make it happen!

*Kathy Jens Rochow*  
*President*

Parents and caregivers are the primary religious educators and spiritual guides for their children. River of Grass provides the support and reinforcement to nurture truth-seeking, fair-mindedness, caring and progressive moral values that shape and support our children and youth as they grow. Your generosity helps to ensure that strong programming continues for all stages of faith development here at the River.



*Karen Gonzalez*  
*Dir. Religious Education*

## WHAT DOES RIVER OF GRASS MEAN TO YOU?

I give to River of Grass so it will continue to thrive and be there to support my values and principles -“love,” “service,” “justice,” and “kindness to all.”

*Barbara Ratchford*

As members for several years, River of Grass has provided us with so many life enriching experiences through its Sunday services and the many other creative and fun activities that promote the greater good!

*Aaron & Audrey Stang*



When we moved to Florida back in 2015, we knew we wanted a community of faith and social justice to help raise our son, Alex. But we got that and more; we got a family here at River of Grass. You are the people who we celebrate our milestones and joys with, who we share our pain and burdens with, who we hope and dream with, and who we see ourselves continuing learning and growing with into the future. The work this community does in the world is so important to us. But we know that to make sure that the River can continue to go and flow, it needs money. That's why we give, as we are able, until we feel we are making a difference in this community that is so essential to our family.

*Tanya Gustafson and Bruce Ngo*

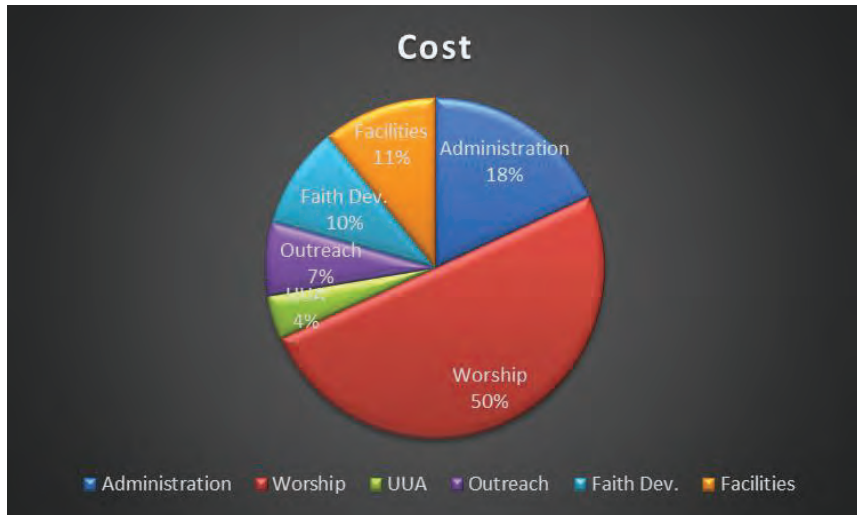
The River guides me to purpose. The River's strength shows me it can build a new course that changes what is into what can be. And that growth and transformation are real and possible - for all of us, for our children, for our world, and even for me. The River surrounds us in community and its waters bless us. I give because I believe in our River. I give because I believe in you.

*Diane Lade, Charter Member*

## WHERE OUR MONEY GOES



\*Projected



## ESSENTIAL GIFT CHART

To reach our \$220,000 pledge goal, we need:

Number of Pledges	Range	Total
2	\$15,000 to \$30,000+	\$50,000
3	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$37,500
6	\$5,000 to \$9,999	\$45,000
8	\$3,000 to \$4,999	\$32,000
10	\$1,500 to \$2,999	\$22,500
12	\$1,000 to \$1,499	\$15,000
16	\$500 to \$999	\$12,000
24	\$1 to \$499	\$6,000

Fair Share Giving Guide from the Unitarian Universalist Association												
Adjusted Annual Income	Supporter			Sustainer			Visionary			Transformer		
	River of Grass is a significant part of my life and promotes my spiritual growth.			River of Grass is central to my identity, and I am committed to sustaining our message.			River of Grass has my commitment to expand this mission and ministry.			I designate 10% of my income to River of Grass as how I live out my spiritual principles and values.		
	% of Income	Suggested Monthly Pledge	Suggested Annual Pledge	% of Income	Suggested Monthly Pledge	Suggested Annual Pledge	% of Income	Suggested Monthly Pledge	Suggested Annual Pledge	% of Income	Suggested Monthly Pledge	Suggested Annual Pledge
\$12,000	2%	\$20	\$240	3%	\$30	\$360	5%	\$50	\$600	10%	\$100	\$1,200
\$25,000	2%	\$40	\$500	3%	\$63	\$750	5%	\$104	\$1,250	10%	\$208	\$2,500
\$50,000	3%	\$125	\$1,500	4%	\$167	\$2,000	5%	\$208	\$2,500	10%	\$417	\$5,000
\$75,000	3%	\$188	\$2,250	4%	\$250	\$3,000	6%	\$375	\$4,500	10%	\$625	\$7,500
\$100,000	3%	\$250	\$3,000	5%	\$417	\$5,000	6%	\$500	\$6,000	10%	\$833	\$10,000
\$150,000	4%	\$500	\$6,000	5%	\$625	\$7,500	6%	\$750	\$9,000	10%	\$1,250	\$15,000
\$200,000	4%	\$667	\$8,000	6%	\$1,000	\$12,000	7%	\$1,167	\$14,000	10%	\$1,667	\$20,000
\$500,000	6%	\$2,500	\$30,000	7%	\$2,917	\$35,000	9%	\$3,750	\$45,000	10%	\$4,167	\$50,000

Here is the giving guideline, based upon involvement and income, proposed by the Unitarian Universalist Association.

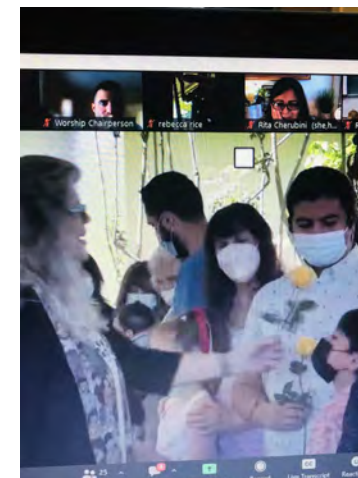
## RIVER MOMENTS

New members joined our beloved community during COVID!



## RIVER MOMENTS

Some of us have felt safe to emerge from our COVID cocoons to meet together in person again.

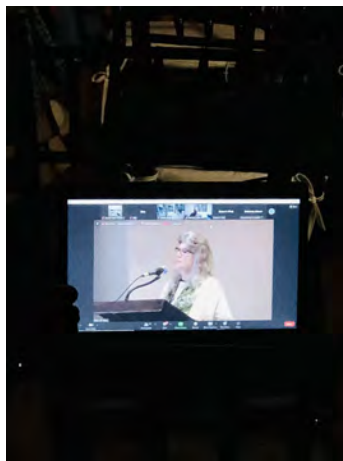


## RIVER MOMENTS

And to experience the joy of human community. Remember there is often cake involved!

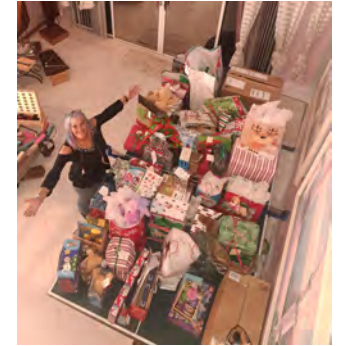


Some must guard our health and continue to cherish our love-streamed community via Zoom and Facebook Live.



## RIVER MOMENTS

Our work to create more justice goes on with vision and commitment.



Our children and youth are forever our focus, our treasure, and our future.



## RIVER MOMENTS

Remember our last 24/7 home in the 595 Park of Commerce? We miss it for sure! Stay tuned for the work of our New Home Team!

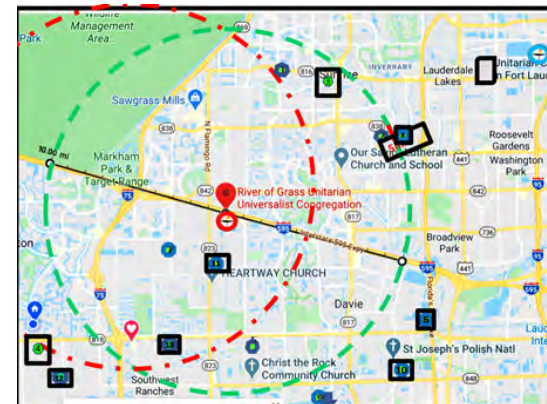


## RIVER MOMENTS

Our Church-In-A-Box (CIAB) homes in 2022 & 2023 were at UF (IFAS) and the historic landmark, the Old Davie School.



Our capital campaign has just a little way to go and our New Home Team is working hard to secure our new 24/7 home. In 2023 it could be ours!



## CELEBRATE OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY

Charter Sunday, February 21, 1999



Happy 24th Birthday, River of Grass! February 2023



## BEND THE ARC TOWARD JUSTICE

The financial support of members and friends makes the mission of River of Grass possible. Our congregation's future and the work we can do in the world are entirely in our hands.



*Please give as generously as you can to help shape the course of the River.*