

# River of Grass

Unitarian Universalist Congregation

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WELCOME TO OUR RIVER OF GRASS FAMILY. WELCOME TO OUR WARMTH. WELCOME HOME!

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## River of Grass Weekly Update – March 26, 2020

Beloved River of Grass Community – greetings in this time we learn new ways to connect, comfort, and encourage one another as we respond to COVID-19. Let us grant ourselves and each other much grace and patience as we navigate this “New Normal” to stay virtually connected and spiritually grounded. We hope you are staying safe, and have necessarily supplies to sequester yourself and your families to stop the spread of the virus. Your healthy and wellbeing in body, mind, and spirit is paramount to us. How can we help?

As this Weekly Email attests, life of this congregation goes on, just outside the building, as your leadership has moved all operations to their homes for the foreseeable future – which we are humbled to know is not much foreseeable at this moment. Now is a good time for us to remember that 23 years ago River of Grass was born of vision and determination, a willingness to flow with the changes, and fierce love that never quits. It is that love we inherit, that love we live into all the more deeply now as we are compelled to reimagine our future once again.

Little did we know way back on March 1, when we wrote “Thank You” notes to River of Grass for the treasure we’ve found here that we would shortly be given such a stark and startling lesson in what this Beloved Community means to every aspect of our lives. We’ll share more about that interactively in our second virtual service, this Sunday, March 29 – remembering only the medium is virtual; the connections are real. 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 once again – bring your beverage!

This week, please be mindful we’ll likely hit our 100-window capacity once again – (NOTE: We’re reconfiguring our Zoom so that WON’T happen on April 5!) – so please conserve windows by gathering those in your house to log in on just one device. Or, if you’d like, we’ll be simulcasting on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/riverofgrassuu/>. Tune in there for the service, then log onto our Zoom link for hospitality time afterward.

Either way, we’ll be watching for you, so head on over to The River (even in your pajamas) – on your computer, your tablet, your phone (with video or only audio if you like, we’ll miss your face!) -- just click or dial into our RoG Meeting Room at the link or numbers below.

### **Topic: Worship March 29, 2020**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/8671641414>

Meeting ID: 867 164 1414

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,8671641414# US (Chicago)

+16465588656,,8671641414# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 867 164 1414

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ac7ckp4jlv>

### ***Upcoming Virtual Events -This Sunday:***

#### **Sunday, March 29, 2020**

**Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am** – This Treasure We've Found" <https://zoom.us/j/8671641414>

**Faith Development** – Karen Gonzalez, [ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:ReligiousEducator@RiverofGrassUU.org)

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

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

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

**12:00 noon:** Teens (Grades 7-12)

*Kids are invited to a Faith Development Meetup on Zoom on Sunday. Look for an email from Karen or reach out to her at [religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org). These meetups require passwords.*

**Young Adults are meeting Sunday, Mar 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm virtually on Zoom** – Millennials, Gen Xers, and Gen Zs, are welcome to tune in to the YUUnG Adult Virtual Coffee Hour on **Sunday, Mar 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm**. We are an intentional community of young adults that uplift and inspire each other. We seek to grow together while enjoying life to the fullest. Please email [youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org) if you have any questions and to obtain the zoom details.

### **APD CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF THIS SUNDAY, MARCH 29!**

**Rita Cherubini and Kathy Jens-Rochow, Co-Chairs**

**Annual Prosperity Drive 2020-2021**

- Bringing you up to date in a broad way; the Capital Campaign has been postponed until the fall! This will give us ample recovery time to proceed when we know more.
- As we still have to pay our bills and plan for the next fiscal year, your pledges for the Annual Prosperity Drive are still needed to keep the River of Grass solvent. As its rooms remain vacant, the bills still go on!
- You will be receiving your usual pledge packet by next week. Please open it and read the words of what River of Grass means to many who gave us their feelings quoted in this brochure. Those haven't changed and now need steadfast commitment of all of those promises and expectations by you, our Members and Friends.

**So, have you been thinking of how you will support River of Grass with your new 2020-2021 pledge?** We hope you have. And in consideration of your thinking, a Steward, one of your friends at ROG, will be contacting you to discuss your Annual Prosperity Pledge. Please welcome their call.

Also, right on our website is a digital pledge card! Go to [www.riverofgrassuu.org](http://www.riverofgrassuu.org). Under Donations, Click "Annual Prosperity Drive," fill in the blanks and Click "Send" and it heads out to the appropriate person at The River. Save postage, delay and a trip to the post office!

**Remember, Virtual Worship will be available this Sunday at 10:30. Stay tuned on how to connect!** ...you are never alone at The River! Be safe and well.

### ***Faith Development – Parents Having Coffee Online:***

Parents will join together to share their woes, joys and ahas in a Zoom Room on **Saturday morning, Mar 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am**. Look for an email from Karen Gonzalez or reach out to her at [religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:religiouseducator@riverofgrassuu.org).

### ***COVID-19 Response Update***

Our River of Grass faithful is actively responding to COVID-19. All face-to-face gatherings of any kind are suspended or moved on-line, and our building is closed. Numerous meetings and gatherings have transitioned online via Zoom, and last Sunday, Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> was our first virtual Worship Service. Welcome to our new norm!

We are grateful that many many members and friends are in self-quarantine, doing their part to protect themselves as well as reduce the spread of the virus, and only venturing outside when absolutely necessary.

Our extended Caring Team has coordinated a 'network of contacting' to help ensure our community is communication and cared for..... and our Covenant Groups are a large part of this.

There is deep gratitude for the way our community cares for each other, remains flexible, and is diligent in responding to this unprecedented situation!

Take a deep breath. Allow any feelings and thoughts to be as they are. Know you are supported. Stay safe!

## ***Basic Protective Measures Against the New Coronavirus***

River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation

Your leadership at River of Grass are taking every precaution against the new coronavirus here at River of Grass and in the wider community we share. River of Grass is adhering to the following recommendations from the World Health Organizations.

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Be aware of those in our midst with compromised immune systems.

### **Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:**

1. Regularly and thoroughly CLEAN YOUR HANDS with an alcohol-based hand-rub or washing with soap and water, especially – after coughing/sneezing; when caring for the sick; before, during, and after you prepare food; before eating; after toilet use; when hands are visibly dirty – and when they are not; after handling animals or animal waste.
2. Maintain social distancing – 5-6 feet between yourself and anyone coughing or sneezing.
3. Even if well, try to maintain a distance of 5-6 feet from others and when greeting, instead of elbow and fist bumps (no handshakes or hugs), consider placing your hand over your heart as a gesture of welcome and hello.
4. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth to avoid transfer of viruses from contaminated surfaces.
5. Practice respiratory hygiene: 1) Cough/sneeze into your elbow, 2) If you use tissues, dispose of them immediately, then clean your hands.
6. If you have fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care promptly.
7. If you feel unwell, stay home, even with mild symptoms like headache and runny nose.
8. Stay informed, and follow any guidelines from your healthcare advisor.

### **How to cope with stress during this coronavirus outbreak:**

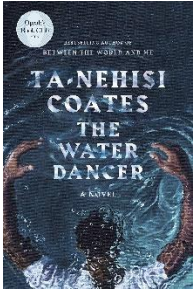
1. It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared, or angry during any crisis.
2. Talk to people you trust, and contact your friends and family.
3. If you must stay home, maintain healthy lifestyle with proper diet, sleep, exercise, and social contact with loved ones via email, phone, etc.
4. Avoid use smoking, alcohol, and other drugs to deal with your emotions.
5. Get the facts from credible sources such as the World Health Organization or local/state health agencies.
6. Limit worry and agitation through lessening time you spend watching media and internet.
7. Draw on coping skills that have helped you in the past.
8. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor, and have a plan to seek help for physical and mental health needs if required.

### ***Other Events:***

**Pause and Check-in with Yourself** – Sensing our world right now and all that we're living through, a chance to pause and check-in with your heart, body and mind... Consider joining tonight's community mindfulness online session every Thursday at 6:00 pm. <https://zoom.us/j/551319571>. Information and guided meditations can also be found at [www.InsightInstituteLLC.com](http://www.InsightInstituteLLC.com). **Note:** This is not a class, just a guided meditation time and sharing with others. Drop in any week. Contact: [Carolyn@insightinstitutellc.com](mailto:Carolyn@insightinstitutellc.com) or [Scott@Insightinstitutellc.com](mailto:Scott@Insightinstitutellc.com)

**Flowing River Sangha** – We will meet online on **Tuesday, Mar 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm**. Every Tuesday night we will meet 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. For further information, please contact Gary Gonzalez at [meditation@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:meditation@riverofgrassuu.org).

**bUUkies – The Silver Lining to Staying at Home.** Next meeting **Wednesday Apr 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 pm.** Hi bUUkies! I hope



you are all staying safe and socially distanced! If you're like me, life isn't all that different – I still have to go to work. But, I miss going out and going to River of Grass. Having extra time to read is nice but still... At this point, it looks like our next meeting will be on-line. If so, I'll send out a link the day before. Make sure to RSVP to Susan at [bUUkies@RiverofGrassUU.org](mailto:bUUkies@RiverofGrassUU.org).

The April read was one of the most anticipated books of the year, and from all reports, it lives up to the anticipation. We're reading "The Water Dancer" by Ta-Nehisi Coates. The Amazon summary says: *"Coates's novel is the story of Hiram Walker, who was born into slavery on a Virginia plantation that is owned by his white father and experiencing a slow decline. Although Hiram is gifted with a photographic memory, his mother—who was sold away when he was young—is the one thing he cannot remember. Indeed, many of the women in his life are taken away from him too early—a fact that will guide his actions later in the novel. The story blends the brutality of history with more imaginative elements: for example, white people are called the Quality, black people are called the Tasked; and Hiram possesses powers that fall into the spectrum of magical realism. As the novel moves north to Philadelphia, where Hiram grows into his own and begins working for the Underground, and eventually turns back to his southern birthplace, the fantastical elements only give greater power to the story."*

Join us and be educated and entertained in so many different ways! bUUkies meet on the second Wednesdays at 7:15. [bUUkies@riverofgrassuu.com](mailto:bUUkies@riverofgrassuu.com) for more information.

**May:** *Blowout* by Rachel Maddow

**June:** *Red, White and Royal Blue* by Casey McQuiston

**SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week:** *Avoid beef. It generates 4 times more greenhouse gases than chicken, and 13 times more than plants. Plus excess red meat is linked to many health issues. Do a favor for Mother Earth and for your body - avoid beef.*

To see all of the upcoming events at River of Grass, please visit the calendar on our website at [riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html](http://riverofgrassuu.org/calendar.html).

*Unsubscribe* - If you do not wish to receive this weekly email, please send an e-mail and we will remove you from the mailing list, [office@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:office@riverofgrassuu.org).

*Announcements to be sent out in the weekly congregation-wide update should be e-mailed or called into the congregation's office by 12 pm Wednesday. All announcements will pertain to congregational life and affiliated groups and will be for activities or events occurring within two weeks of the e-mail. Outside groups and individuals, wishing to use this vehicle of congregation-wide communication, must have the approval of the Board of Trustees.*