

# River of Grass

## Unitarian Universalist Congregation

3225 N Hiatus Rd, Unit 452485, Sunrise, Florida 33345

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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 – May 6, 2021

### Justice Sunday

On Sunday, May 9, join the River's Service, Social Justice and Green Team (SSJGT) for a Justice Sunday celebration. And a special recognition of the original Mother's Day, which was a call for peace.

In times of crisis such as we are living through now, looking to moments in our shared history when we rose to the challenges before us can offer important lessons – as well as hope. Please join us for a special virtual Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) Justice Sunday Service with UUSC President and CEO, Rev. Mary Katherine Morn, as we explore how congregations have brought our Unitarian Universalist values to the fight for human rights since UUSC's founding in May of 1940.

Come as you are to gather with us for this Sunday's love-streamed service, remembering only the medium is virtual; the connections, the love, the spirit are real. Following the service, we will share virtual Hospitality time with a live chat and small groups where we can relish each other's beautiful faces and voices together once again.

Follow the link below to join us in Zoom – or if you'd like, we'll be simulcasting on our [Facebook page](#). Tune in there for the service, then log onto our Zoom link for hospitality time afterward.

We'll be watching for you!

#### **Topic: Worship May 9, 2021**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/961564350?pwd=cFpKY2RtRk4wVE5NbDczdTU5THViQT09>

Meeting ID: 961 564 350

Password: 873805

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ab3E9JRtb9>

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

#### **Sunday, May 9, 2021**

**Virtual Sunday Service at 10:30 am** – Service, Social Justice and Green Team - Justice Sunday

<https://zoom.us/j/961564350?pwd=cFpKY2RtRk4wVE5NbDczdTU5THViQT09>

#### **Faith Development: No Classes this Sunday.**

There are no Faith Development classes this week as our children and youth will be busy pampering the special women in their lives. Families are encouraged to work on their projects for Faith Development Sunday. Contact our Faith Development Director, Karen Gonzalez if you'd like more information about our Faith Development program for children and youth, at [ReligiouEducator@RiverOfGrassUU.org](mailto:ReligiouEducator@RiverOfGrassUU.org).

**Young Adults** are now meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, May 9<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:youngadults@riverofgrassuu.org) if you have any questions and to obtain the zoom details.

### **Rev. Amy's 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 and back in the pulpit on May 16<sup>th</sup>. 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](#).

### **Communications Volunteers Needed:**

Communications Volunteers Needed! Communications Team Leader, Web Designer, Zoom Hosts, Newsletter, Social Media Outreach. Interested in sharing the good news of the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation? This vital ministry needs you! Contact Zena Tucker [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org) for more details!



### **How well do you know your UUs:**

**Hilary & Julie Goodridge** - Goodridge v. Dept. of Public Health, 798 N.E.2d 941 (Mass. 2003), is a landmark Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court case in which the Court held that the Massachusetts Constitution requires the state to legally recognize same-sex marriage. The November 18, 2003, decision was the first by a U.S. state's highest court to find that same-sex couples had the right to marry. Despite numerous attempts to delay the ruling, and to reverse it, the first marriage licenses were issued to same-sex couples on May 17, 2004, and the ruling has been in full effect since that date.



Sixteen years ago, Hilary and Julie Goodridge married amid great fanfare and great protests. The Goodridges were married by the Rev. Sinkford, then president of the UUA, just hours after the state had legalized same sex marriages.

The Goodridges were the face of the movement. The lawsuit that made gay and lesbian marriages a reality bears their name: Goodridge v. Department of Public Health. Historians often divide the equal-marriage movement into "before Goodridge" and "after Goodridge."

Many years into their relationship but long before Hilary and Julie were involved in any court case, they were dreaming about having a child.

Because they were a lesbian couple, marriage was forbidden. But they wanted to do something to mark that they were a family. So, they dug through their family trees and picked a common last name: Goodridge.

A few years later, their daughter made a dramatic appearance. She was rushed to the newborn intensive care unit, and Julie, her biological mother, was also in critical condition receiving intensive care. But Hilary was stuck in the hospital's waiting room. With no legal relationship to either of them, she was unable to visit or help make medical decisions.

"It's not like that happened and we thought, 'We have to sue for marriage equality,' " remembers Hilary. But later, that was one of the memories that motivated them to find a way to formalize their relationship, she says.

As the story goes, the immediate impetus was a simple question from 3-year-old Annie: "If you love each other, then why aren't you married?"

### Other Events:

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

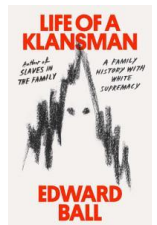
Thursdays 6:00 - 7:00 pm for adults, [zoom link for Thursday night at 6 pm](#)

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

**The River of Grass Men's Group** is open to all men. The Men's Group Men's Group meets via Zoom every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm. **On Thursday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm we will meet on Zoom** and discuss our topic: "The Work of Justice." The Topic Description is online at [KipBarkley.net/topic](http://KipBarkley.net/topic). At each session, we launch into a topic that is designed to encourage personal sharing. <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/670022402> The Meeting Room opens up at 6:30 pm before the Host arrives. For more info, please contact Kip Barkley [mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:mensgroup@riverofgrassuu.org). Please let us know if you plan to try to make it.

**Flowing River Sangha** – We will meet online on **Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</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 more information, please email Gary Gonzalez at [meditation@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:meditation@riverofgrassuu.org).

**bUUKies - May 12<sup>th</sup>** We are reading "Life of a Klansman" by Edward Ball. "A haunting tapestry of interwoven stories that inform us not just about our past but about the resentment-bred demons that are all too present in our society today . . . The interconnected strands of race and history give Ball's entrancing stories a Faulknerian resonance." —Walter Isaacson, The New York Times Book Review. We will discuss this book **on Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm**. Send an email to [bUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:bUUKies@riverofgrassuu.org) to get a Zoom invitation. All are welcome!



**The Faith Forward Inquirers Series meets on Wednesdays 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 **May 12<sup>th</sup> and is FF Inquirers #1: Q&A with Minister.** For more info, email Zena Tucker, [membership@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:membership@riverofgrassuu.org). Zoom link for our session is: [ZOOM Link for RoG Inquirers](#).

Date	Time	Event
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

**SE Cluster Virtual Meeting Saturday, May 22, 2021, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm** - "Cultivating Empathy, Inspiring Justice: Widening the Circle of Concern" Engaging with the UUA's Commission on Institutional Change. Keynote Speakers: Natalie Briscoe, Lead, UUA Southern Region and the Rev. Marcus Fogliano, Project Manager to the Office of the UUA President. Interactive Breakouts, New Tools, Ritual, Music. How can we move forward in addressing the perennial problem of racism and white supremacy in the Association? [FREE \(Registration Required, click here\)](#)

**SSJGT, Service and Social Justice Green Team, Green Tip of the Week:** Check your attic insulation. Over time insulation can compress and redistribute, limiting its effectiveness. A quick inspection may identify spots where a radiant barrier and/or additional insulation is needed. The small inspection fee may easily be offset by reduced electric bills, and you are helping our planet.

### 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](mailto: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 <a href="#">Donations page</a> . Designate on the Capital Campaign line	\$0.45 per transaction plus processing fee 1%
Credit Card via Vanco	Set up payment on our <a href="#">Donations page</a> . 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	<a href="https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/my/profile">https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/my/profile</a> In the notes write "Capital Campaign"	Varies based on method of payment
Zelle	Use your bank to set up \$ transfer. Send Zelle payment to <a href="mailto:CapitalCampaign@riverofgrassuu.org">CapitalCampaign@riverofgrassuu.org</a> .	\$0
Securities	<p>Any questions contact Northstar Financial Planners: <i>Allen Giese, Steve Tepper, or Stacy Saavedra at (954) 693-0030</i></p> <p>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><b>#0188 - TD Ameritrade Institutional</b> <b>A/C #944110334</b></p> <p><b>RIVER OF GRASS UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION, INC.</b></p> <p>The donor should notify the CC Team and the Office Administrator of the details of the donation by emailing <a href="mailto:CapitalCampaigh@riverofgrassuu.org">CapitalCampaigh@riverofgrassuu.org</a>.</p>	

### 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 and indoor 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

#### Small Group Meeting COVID Requirements

The CDC has released guidelines which allow meetings of fully-vaccinated\*\* people. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

In accordance with these guidelines, Official River of Grass meeting protocols have been updated to reflect the differences in the make-up of meeting attendees. \*\*People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19  $\geq 2$  weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or  $\geq 2$  weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson (J&J)/Janssen). This meeting protocol has been developed and can be found on our web ([RiverofGrassUU.org/teams-committees--small-groups.html](http://RiverofGrassUU.org/teams-committees--small-groups.html)). Contact Susan Juncosa at [vicepresident@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:vicepresident@riverofgrassuu.org) for more information.

#### Frequently Asked Questions - Small Group Meetings

##### 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 small group has some people who are not vaccinated. Can we meet in person?

- Small groups with unvaccinated attendees can meet outdoors. Follow the procedure for such meetings and sign the covenant.

+ 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. 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:

+ follow the procedure for such meetings and sign the covenant.

+ If any members of the group do not want to attend in person, provision must be made for attendance by Zoom or other application.

##### 5. What about an indoor meeting?

- Yes, see question four.

##### 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.

#### Meetings with all attendees fully-vaccinated (INDOORS AND OUTDOORS)

##### Meeting Leader will do the following:

- + send the covenant to attendees prior to the meeting;
- + determine, with group members, if proof of vaccination must be provided;
- + collect signed covenants or procure signed covenants at the start of meeting;

##### Actions Prior to a Gathering

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

- + attendee states they have been fully vaccinated and will provide card if requested;
- + attendee will comply with any contact tracing which may ensue; and
- + has not tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days and is not experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.

##### Actions During a Gathering

- + attendees will give meeting leader the signed covenant or sign a copy at the start of meeting;

- + Meeting attendees do not have to wear masks or social distance
- + Meeting attendees may share food or drink.

### **Fully-Vaccinated Small Group Gathering Covenant**

We; the members, friends, and visitors of the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation acknowledge the role we play in keeping ourselves, each other and our community safe from the spread of COVID-19. With that in mind, we agree to adhere to the following protocols when gathering in small groups in or out-of-doors:

- o We have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.
- o We have not tested positive for COVID-19 in the prior 10 days and are not experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms.
- o We will comply with any contact tracing following our gathering, if needed.

### **Meeting with some attendees unvaccinated/not fully vaccinated (OUTDOORS ONLY)**

#### **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.

### **Small Group Outdoor Gathering Covenant**

We; the members, friends, and visitors of the River of Grass Unitarian Universalist Congregation acknowledge the role we play in keeping ourselves, each other and our community safe from the spread of Covid-19. With that in mind, we agree to adhere to the following protocols when gathering in small groups out-of-doors:

- o We will wear masks at all times and keep 6 feet from persons who do not reside in our households.
- o We will not partake of food or drink.
- o We are not experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms.
- o We have not traveled out of the country in the past two weeks.
- o We will comply with any contact tracing following our gathering, if needed.

#### **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, contact 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 **indoor and outdoor** spaces depending on who is vaccinated in the group.

### **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.

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

Our River of Grass faithful is actively responding to COVID-19. Any face-to-face gatherings of any kind must follow the new small group protocols that were recommended to the Board by the COVID Re-Emergence Team. Otherwise, all gatherings are suspended or moved on-line, while we search for our forever home, continue to keep ourselves and our community safe, and prepare for congregational life after COVID.

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 contact' to help ensure our community has communication and is 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 Coronavirus***

Your leadership at River of Grass are taking every precaution against 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 – 6 feet between yourself and anyone.
3. Even if well, try to maintain a distance of 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 a healthy lifestyle with proper diet, sleep, exercise, and social contact with loved ones via email, phone, etc.
4. Avoid smoking or using alcohol and other drugs to deal with your emotions.
5. Get the facts from credible sources such as the Center for Disease Control, World Health Organization, or local/state health agencies.
6. Limit worry and agitation through lessening time you spend watching media and the 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.

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). **River of Grass UU Congregation** is on [Facebook](#) (LIKE us) and [Twitter](#) (FOLLOW Us). For more information, please contact [communityawareness@riverofgrassuu.org](mailto:communityawareness@riverofgrassuu.org).

*Unsubscribe* - If you do not wish to receive this weekly email, please send an email 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.*