

UniFire

July 2020— *UPDATED*

Services Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

*We celebrate community and
promote spirituality,
justice, responsibility,
and compassion.*

UUCY · 225 N. 2nd St, Yakima, WA 98901
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admin@uucyakima.org

How to 'ZOOM' to UUCY Sunday Services!

Anyone with a computer, tablet, smart phone or regular phone can join for free (except with regular phone you won't see everyone, but you can hear and speak.) You need to download the Zoom app first for either PC or phone at <http://www.zoom.us>, or however you download your apps.

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ZOOM LINK POLICY: In order to maintain the security and sanctity of our online meetings, the 'Zoom' links will only be available via our Weekly Update email. If you are not already on our email list, please contact Genevieve at admin@uucyakima.org and she will be happy to help.

Sunday, July 5th: No Sunday Services

Sunday, July 12th

Sunday Services on Zoom: Tribal Culture: Alternative to Capitalism?
Join UUCY Member Dan Baris as he brings his considerable experience working with a variety of extended family cultures to this question.

Sunday, July 19th: No Sunday Services

Sunday, July 26th

Sunday Services on Zoom: Theological Stones

UUCY Member Andrew Whitmont presenting. First in a series of five. What are the theological underpinnings of the "free and responsible search for truth and meaning," which we covenant and promote? Did you know there are Unitarian/Universalist theologians who have articulated a well thought out theology in this regard? Join us today to gain insight into the theological background of this covenant and to learn how it applies in today's mixed-up world of uncertainty and "fake news".

UUCY President's Report

“Joy”

One of my favorite movies from the past decade is Joy, written and directed by David Russell and starring Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper. (These three have teamed up in some other great movies, such as Silver Linings Playbook and American Hustle.)

Joy is based on the life of Joy Mangano, a real life inventor and entrepreneur best known for her first invention, a mop. (!) But the title of the movie refers to a lot more than just her first name -- it also describes the way she lives her life, as she is portrayed by Lawrence. Besides having a real talent for design, Joy is the primary support for an extended family that is, at best, dysfunctional. They insist on “helping” her with her mop making business, and she tolerates their bungling interference because they are her family and she loves and cherishes them. And in doing so she demonstrates an irrepressible *joie de vivre*. This is Hollywood, so of course she eventually succeeds against all the odds, and becomes rich, but never forgets the lessons she’s learned along the way, etc., yada, yada, yada. The ending is guaranteed to bring a tear to your eye (it did to me.)

But mostly I loved Lawrence’s portrayal of a person whose life, despite many ups and downs, was suffused with joy. It reminded me of the joys I’ve experienced in my life – all of them based on relationships with family and friends – including with my extended spiritual family at UUCY. And I want the presidency of UUCY to be a joyful experience like those. I do intend to work hard on the many problems we face right now, some of which threaten our very existence, but I also intend to have a good time doing so, with lots of laughs and joyful moments along the way.

In his last report to the congregation, Ken said that we rely too heavily on paid staff to do the work of the church, and I think he is right. I’d go a little further and say that we have tended to follow an authoritarian model of decision making, rarely questioning the judgment of the minister (and president, for that matter.) This must stop, if we are to attract new members who are younger and reflect the diversity of our city – and we need to do so if we want to see our liberal spiritual community survive in Yakima. It’s important that we survive – this town needs us.

The pandemic has got me sheltering in place like everybody else, so I’ve got a dangerous amount of time on my hands. I intend to use it to keep in touch with all of you – to find out what you’re thinking and, even more important, to get your help in achieving our goals. I intend to spread the joy around!

Peace,
Bill

Bill Jacobs is the President of the UUCY Board of Trustees for 2020-2021, and can be reached for discussion and comments at any time. Reach out to the office for his contact information.

All In The Family: The Lambert Family

Jack and Kathy Lambert are currently in Seattle for medical care, and thank their UUCY family for their cards and kind words. Please contact Genevieve in the UUCY Office for their current mailing address.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF UUCY FROM YOUR 2019-2020 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

You are most probably aware if you are a UUCY Member, friend or frequent visitor to UUCY that for the past several years, we have been in discussion on what to do with this church building, one which has been a part of UUCY since the late 80's.

At the May Board of Trustee's meeting, we voted (5 yes, 1 abstention) to place the building on the real estate market. This recommendation was then presented to the membership at the Congregational Meeting on June 14. This group voted affirmatively to put this proposal to a vote of full membership. With that in mind, in mid-July, all members, the legal stakeholders in this process, will receive a mail-in ballot upon which to enter their vote. This vote will determine the action to be taken.

*The following represents much of the thinking of the
Board of Trustees as we reached our decision:*

Two plus decades ago, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima became the proud owners of a beautiful old, historic church building here in downtown Yakima. Many in the congregation were financially involved in this purchase, which allowed this congregation to operate mortgage free for these 20 some years. Parents raised their families here. People were joined together in annual events such as the Thanksgiving Dinner, and we supported vibrant social justice activities with much personal involvement.

But things change. The membership has grown older and would prefer a more accommodating and accessible space; one which is more "older" friendly. Financial resources have dwindled. Those of us who are older--which is most of us--are not able to be active in the hands-on justice activities, even if we totally support them in our hearts.

Young people today are coming from a different, more secular perspective. They are seeking less religious orientation. This results in a different priority, especially if they are raising children. Presently, we have few parents committed to a conventional LRE program, which means that there is less on-going program and more activities that are specifically focused.

We can no longer cook full "June Busch" dinners because our kitchen doesn't meet present fire codes. And even when we have other events involving food, Scott Holman needs to choreograph the plugging in of small appliances! Since we do like to gather together with food as a catalyst for good conversation, this is an important consideration.

Many of us still feel awe when we enter our sanctuary. It is so light and airy and there is nothing like it when the sun shines in through the stained glass. But it is also a place where many people feel a lack of intimacy and closeness; where we are put off by the signs of Christianity. Do we want our minister in a pulpit like an authority figure? Or would we be happier in a more secular setting.

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And take a good look at our once beautiful building which needs a new paint job, new concrete steps in front, and the north portico redone. And that is just the outside. There are many other issues of deferred maintenance and needed renovation projects inside....all are expensive. And we have no deep pockets.

What do we have? We are part of a small group of people who love our UUCY Principles. People who care about the world, about the local community, about others. We like questions and learning and changing. We are people who are interested in justice for all. People who appreciate liberal religion in Yakima and Yakima County. People who care deeply about the Mission of UUCY. We are people with experience and wisdom who want to be in a place where their strengths are recognized.

And more than anything, we have a community with members and friends who care about each other. We enjoy spending time together: discussing a book, sharing our ideas at adult LRE, enjoying Circle Suppers, joining in sharing about ourselves at Chalice Circles, or just sitting around a table in real or virtual time having coffee and good conversation. We are activists, whatever that looks like at this stage of life. We are diverse and cohesive at the same time---joined by our shared values and beliefs.

We do not need this big church for these things.

We need to reset. We need to divest ourselves of this building. We need to view this as a period of new opportunities. To stop spending so much time and energy on managing the building, and to get back to our main focus: that of being a spiritual community.

What we need is a smaller, more intimate space which better fits our demographics, both physically and in our re-focus on our principle. We need not be burdened by the trappings of Christianity, which visitors might not find to be welcoming. They might even decide to stay! We need to continue on with our justice work, not tied to our space or building. And we need to re-evaluate what it means to be spiritual.

Yes, this will be a profound change. But as we re-define our mission and we celebrate our community, very probably in new ways, we may find that there is a rise of energy and enthusiasm in our members and friends. Some may return to the fold, so to speak. We may find new folks to join us on our journey.

The Board of Trustees has considered all of these things and has recommended that we put this building on the market. We hope that you will be there with us, and will vote YES.

Please consider these words by author Lois Farfel Stark:

“Our angle to the situation can make all the difference.
What if we learn to see uncertainty as a possibility?
What if we learn to experience upheaval as potential?”

Let's Reset together.

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UUCY NEWS AND EVENTS

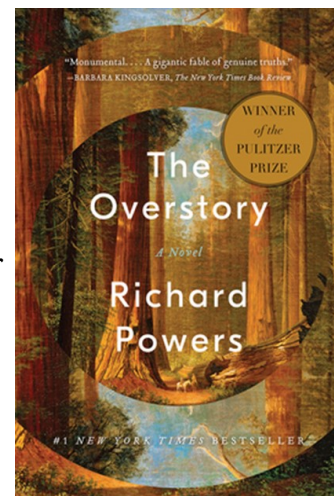
UUCY Book Club Welcomes All Readers

Fellow readers and talkers, plan on **Tuesday, July 14 at 6:00 PM** for our next Book Club discussion. Watch for the Weekly Update email, sent the prior Thursday from UUCY, for instructions to connect to the discussion.

Our July selection provides “a monumental novel about trees and people” in *The Overstory* by Richard Powers.

This “sweeping, impassioned novel of activism and resistance” brings to the reader the lives, struggles and joys of a diverse group of people for whom trees hold special places in their stories. Their separate and sometimes intersecting journeys all link to the almost mystical natural forces in forests. If trees are connected and depend on each other in unseen but powerful ways, the same must also be true of people.

Join what promises to be a considered discussion of *The Overstory*.



A change of pace is on tap for our **September 8, 2020** discussion book, *The Readers of Broken Wheel Recommend* by Katarina Bivald, a heartwarming story in which books play a role in changing lives.

Sara lives a quiet, ordinary, dependable life in Sweden as a bookstore clerk, which is fitting since she much prefers to experience stories in books than real life. But her job ends and with an uncharacteristic impulse to “do something” for once in her life, Sara travels to a very small town in Iowa to visit Amy her book-loving pen pal.



She does not realize Amy had been ill, and Sara arrives just after the funeral. But the town’s quirky residents each in their own way take her under their wings. Sara taps a spunky streak that helps her find ways to change not only her own story but the life of the entire town.

While the depiction of the town and its residents may be a bit exaggerated, anyone who has experienced small-town life will find familiar elements. Plus, I laughed out loud nearly every time I let myself into the town of Broken Wheel. (If you don’t find a copy through the library or bookstore, I have one you can borrow.)

Join the UU Quilting and Crafting Group for Virtual Show & Tell!

Virtual UUQG was a hit, and has been set as a recurring event for the fourth Saturday of the month. The Zoom information will be the same for future meetings, please see the front of the UniFire for our new policy regarding Zoom links.

Next Meeting: Saturday, July 26th

‘ZOOM’ To UUCY Wednesday Coffee!

YES, Wednesday morning coffee is still on, you’ll just have to provide your own beverage and chair! Join via Zoom– the link is in every Weekly Update, and all are welcome to join.

UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

<p>SUNDAY SERVICES</p> <p>Chair: Merrill Thomsen</p> <p>Linda King</p> <p>Susan Kaphammer</p> <p>Mike Gempler</p> <p>Debra Kroon</p> <p>Susan Gallegos</p>	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>Chair: Janis Luvaas</p> <p>Bill Jacobs</p> <p>Merrill Thomsen</p>	<p>PERSONNEL</p> <p>Linda King</p> <p>Jack Lambert</p> <p>Mike Gempler</p>
<p>FAITH FORMATION</p> <p>Jean Gonzales</p> <p>Susan Kaphammer</p>	<p>COSM: Committee on Shared Ministry</p> <p>Chuck Forster</p> <p>Emilee Solomon</p> <p>Nancy Born</p> <p>Ken Jones</p>	<p>SOCIAL JUSTICE</p> <p>Phil Dindia</p> <p>Carole Sahlstrand</p> <p>CIRCLE SUPPERS</p> <p>Jean Gonzales</p>

Your 2020 to 2021 UUCY Board of Trustees is:

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