

# UniFire

## May 2021

*Monthly Newsletter of the  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima*

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

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### How to 'ZOOM' to UUCY Sunday Services and Activities!

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.)

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](mailto:admin@uucyakima.org) and she will be happy to help.

**Sunday, May 2nd, 10:00 am:**

**Sunday Services on Zoom:**

**Letter from Birmingham Jail**

Carole Sahlstrand will read and we will discuss Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail".

**Sunday, May 9th, 10:00 am:**

**Sunday Services on Zoom:**

**What Does It Mean To Be A People of Story?**

Our UU forebearers dared to believe that the story of humanity and individual stories of life, death and salvation are not predestined by God. This freedom carries the responsibility to be aware and careful as we create the stories of our own lives and the story of our country and our world. Because our stories write us as much as we write them.

Susan Kaphammer offers this message drawn from resources in the Soul Matters series.

**Sunday, May 16th 10:00 am:**

**Bridging**

Come for this special service to say farewell to a home that has served us well as we move to our future. We will hear from past ministers through video messages or through readings of their words. Sunny will provide music throughout and a ritual will help us honor our memories and our hopes at this time of transition. Attend in-person in our beloved Sanctuary (masks required) or view a livestream of the celebration (connection information forthcoming). Spread the word to all who have been with us as members, visitors or friends over the years at 225 North Second Street.

**Sunday, May 23rd, 10:00 am:**

**Tune-In Together:**

Our Tune in Together service will be from Essex Church (Kensington Unitarian) London and is billed as "A service titled 'Books that Changed Our Lives', led by Jane Blackall with contributions by Pat Gregory, Marianne Harvey, Maria Petnga-Wallace, and Hannah King. Featuring music by Abby Lorimier and Peter Crockford." Andrew will lead a brief discussion following the service and yes, it is the Hannah King who grew up in UUCY.

**Sunday, May 30th**

***Memorial Day Weekend, No Services***

# UUCY President's Report

*Please note: This is the obituary of Randy Luvaas, as it appeared in the Yakima Herald Republic. Randy was the President of the UUCY Board of Trustees for two years, Randy, you will be missed.*

Brookside Funeral Home & Crematory

As a former contributor to this paper, Randy would have likely preferred to have his name appear as a byline in any other section of this rag. But here we are. On Tuesday, April 13, 2021, Randy Luvaas departed his earthly constraints and joined the angel band. He has ended his many battles with – you name it – including seven-bypass heart surgery and glioblastoma.

Randy was born John Randall Luvaas on February 13, 1952 in Durham, North Carolina to Jay and Vera Lee (Hampson) Luvaas. After graduating from Meadville Area Senior High (1970) in Meadville, PA, he attended the College of Wooster (1974) where he studied literature because “if I’m going to do all that reading, I’m at least going to read something good.” Thereafter, his interest in writing led him to newspaper work, first for the Meadville Tribune, then, after relocating to the Pacific Northwest, to the Toppenish Review, where he was writer and editor. He then migrated to the Yakima Herald-Republic and concluded his newspaper career as editor and writer for Yakima Valley Publishing.

Randy was very active in and supportive of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima. He loved the Pacific Northwest and spending time outdoors with his family. He made sure his son Riley explored the outdoors, read good books, had a baseball and soccer coach, grew up in UU principles and teachings, cursed the Yankees and grew accustomed to disappointment with the Seattle Mariners. We’re all looking forward to the M’s inevitable World Series victory to spite Randy for all his years of fandom. Even though writing was his profession, music was his passion. He excelled at musical arranging, singing, and playing guitar in several bands, including the Yakima Fruit Tramps, the Jazzicians and Torrential Downpour.

Randy is survived by his wife of 35 years, Janis (Miller), whom he met in Toppenish in 1982, but who grew up on the same street in their hometown of Meadville. Randy would describe Janis as a long-suffering wife, which she was. But she remains eternally grateful for the love and laughter he gave her. He is also survived by his son Riley, who inherited all that was good in his father; sisters Karen Luvaas (Peter Kucera), Diane Buckius, and Amy Miller (Bill); and brother Eric Luvaas (Jennifer); brother-in-law Douglas Miller (Marilyn); numerous nieces, nephews and cousins; and many beloved and devoted friends. We are most grateful to those who shared his love of music, especially these last wonderful years with the Yakima Fruit Tramps.

**A Remembrance Event will be held on Saturday, May 15th, at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima, 225 North 2nd Street in Yakima, starting at 3:00 PM.** Please come and share your memories of this great guy. Donations in Randy’s memory may be made to Justice Housing Yakima: <https://donorbox.org/cottage-hill-village>, because, there but for the grace of God go any of us. Brookside Funeral Home is caring for the family. Memories and condolences can be shared at [www.brooksidefuneral.com](http://www.brooksidefuneral.com).



“I see my light come shining, From the west down to the east. Any day now, any day now, I shall be released.” (Bob Dylan)

## Children's Faith Formation ~ May 2021

The Children and Families of UUCY celebrate spring with joy, hope, and kindness.  
Sundays at 5:00 p.m.

We are meeting outdoors; please remember to wear masks and practice social distancing.

### **May 2: Stories Remind Us Who We Are- As Unitarian Universalists**

We'll make wind powered boats using recycling items brought from home such as empty plastic bottles with lids, clean milk cartons, or toilet paper tubes.

Send a message for the meeting location.

### **May 9: No meeting planned**

### **May 16: Stories Remind Us Who We Are- As Anti-Racists**

We are doing anti-racism chalk art; chalk will be provided.

Meet at the Randall Park 48th Avenue parking lot

### **May 23: Stories Remind Us Who We Are- As Courageous, Connected People**

We are making kites and flying them if there is a breeze.

Send a message for the meeting location.

### **May 30: No meeting planned**

## **'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.

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

Virtual UUQCG carries on, and you are invited to join them for their next 'Show and Tell'! Contact Rosemary Saul for the Zoom link if needed, all are welcome, and they look forward to seeing you there.

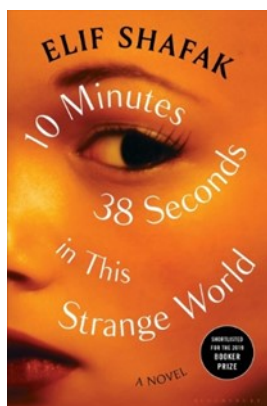
*Next Meeting: Saturday, May 22nd*

**“That’s the thing about books.**

**They let you travel without moving your feet.”**

Our UUCY Book Club knows the truth of this quote by Jhumpa Lahiri. We meet **the second Tuesday of every-other month** for another journey to a time, place and people known through our selected book. On **Tuesday, May 11 at 6 PM** we will share impressions of Elif Shafak’s novel, ***10 Minutes, 38 Seconds In This Strange World***. As always, everyone is invited to tune in to the Zoom discussion and offer thoughts, or just listen even if you have not read the current title.

Books selected are available from Yakima Valley Libraries, often in hardcopy and electronic versions. They are also out in paperback and available through Inklings Bookshop at a “Book Club Member” discount. For instructions to connect to our Zoom gathering, watch your **email for the UUCY Weekly Update sent the Thursday prior to our discussion.**



**May 11, 2021:** ***10 Minutes, 38 Seconds In This Strange World* by Elif Shafak**

Join fellow readers/travelers to find meaning in the difficult life and tragic death of Tequila Leila. While the premise seems grim, Leila’s life is filled with spirit, tenacity, loyalty and hope that inspire her diverse friends and will leave the reader thankful for having met her.

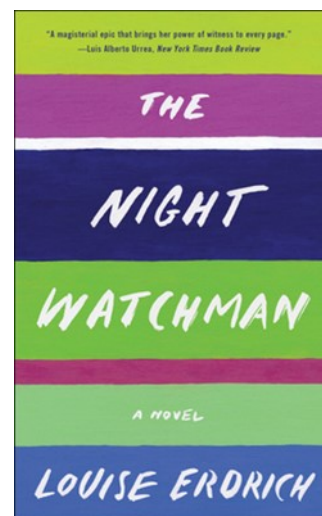
Explore the seedy side of Istanbul as Leila finds a home in the city's historic Street of Brothels. This is a dark, violent world, but Leila is tough and open to beauty, light, and the essential bonds of friendship. It is her chosen family who brings her story to a buoyant and breathtaking conclusion.

**July 13, 2021:** ***The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich**

It is 1953. Thomas Wazhushk is the night watchman at the first factory to open near the Turtle Mountain Reservation in rural North Dakota. As a prominent Chippewa Council member, he is also trying to understand what the US Government calls an 'emancipation' bill; but that instead threatens the rights of Native Americans to their land, their very identity. How can he fight this betrayal?

Pixie - 'Patrice' - Paranteau has no desire to wear herself down on a husband and kids. She works at the factory, earning barely enough to support her mother and brother, let alone her alcoholic father who sometimes returns home to bully her for money. But Patrice needs every penny if she's ever going to get to Minnesota to find her missing sister Vera.

In *The Night Watchman* multi-award winning author Louise Erdrich weaves together a story of past and future generations, of preservation and progress. She grapples with *the* worst and best impulses of human nature, illuminating *the* loves and lives, desires and ambitions of her characters with compassion, wit and intelligence.



(Book information adapted from web pages for Inklings Bookshop and Yakima Valley Libraries.)



# Thoughts from a UU on Selling Our Church Building

This congregation has met in a church building well-deserving a place on the historic register filled with light sifting through stained glass windows. We've installed ministers, celebrated child dedications, honored weddings, and mourned deaths. The Congregational Christian Church welcomed us into their building as their members aged and the attendance dwindled. It was generally an easy alliance, although not always comfortable for some of their members, as we shared similar liberal social views. When the Congregational Christians decided to move on, we were able to purchase the building that already had been our home for many years. Now it is our time to move on.

It never is easy to move, even when it by choice rather than necessity. There are pulling long-forgotten things out of cupboards, sorting, organizing, packing, and a thousand decisions to make. We also are saying goodbye to places that spark feelings, whether it is from 35 years ago or two years ago. Each of us may have something different to recall, whether it is words from the pulpit, the stained-glass ceiling, or the rainbow painting on the annex hallway; we are leaving the building behind and are unlikely to return other than in memory. As we move forward into uncertainty St. Andrew's Presbyterian comes into this building with joy and certainty.

Our faith as Unitarian Universalists calls us to affirm and promote principles and purposes drawn from many sources. UU congregations endeavor to practice radical hospitality and respect all faiths. Sometimes, however, the line seems to be drawn at conservative Christian theology. St. Andrew's is a mission church of the Presbyterian Church of America, which adheres to a strict orthodoxy of faith, understanding of the bible, and conservative social moirés. These beliefs may give some of us the willies, but perhaps no more so than the Congregationalists turning over their beloved building with the stained-glass windows depicting Jesus to a hoard of unbelievers. They knew we were good people despite our lack of belief; we have our principles to guide us as St. Andrew's takes our place.

*We, the Member Congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, Covenant to Affirm and Promote: (three of seven)*

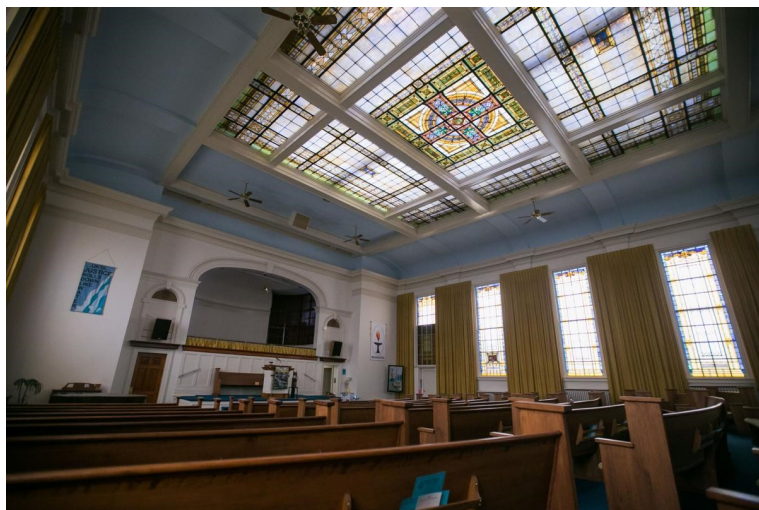
- ◇ *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
- ◇ *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;*
- ◇ *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;*

As Unitarian Universalists we do not have required articles of faith, but most use these statements as guiding principles. There also is acknowledgment in the Sources of the Living Tradition that we draw from *Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves* along with other sources that make us *grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith*.

As we consider our successors, I hope we remember that Rev. Craig and all his flock have inherent worth and dignity, that they are seeking spiritual growth, and that they are searching for truth and meaning in their lives. St. Andrew's stated mission is "To introduce people to Jesus as we love God, make disciples, serve Yakima and multiply the church." Thus far they seem to be good progress toward fulfilling that mission.

We wish St. Andrew's congregation well despite our theological differences. What now is our path forward? When Rev. Sarah Schurr, our primary contact from the UUA Pacific Western Region joined us at Wednesday morning coffee she said the Region and UUA talk about being in liminal times, that is being in transition or the initial stage of a process. She called on us to be clear about our mission and to make decisions about our future based on that mission. It has long been said that Unitarian Universalism has a saving message, but we seem to be a bit murky about that message. We now have a year, not in limbo awaiting a decision, but as Sarah suggests using the time of transition to come to an understanding of our mission and our message of hope in a fragmented world.

Jean Gonzales, UUCY Member



Fabulous photo of our Sanctuary by  
Amanda Roy for the Yakima Herald  
Republic

## UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

SUNDAY SERVICES
Chair: Linda King
Susan Kaphammer
Debra Kroon
Susan Gallegos

AUCTION
Nancy Born
FAITH FORMATION
Jean Gonzales
Susan Kaphammer
Yalisha Case

SOCIAL JUSTICE
Phil Dindia
Carole Sahlstrand
FINANCE
Chair: Janis Luvaas
Bill Jacobs

### Your 2020 to 2021 UUCY Board of Trustees is:

<i>Board President</i>	Bill Jacobs	wsjacobs99@aol.com
<i>Board Vice Pres.</i>	Ray Yates	raycyates@gmail.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Phil Dindia	gpdindia@yahoo.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Jack Lambert	johnmlam@msn.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Carole Sahlstrand	cjsahl@q.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Mary Brunelle	brufam@q.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Nancy Born	nancyjborn@gmail.com

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