

UNIFIRE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YAKIMA

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



December 2022



Unless otherwise noted, UUCY services will be held **in person** at 407 N. 1st St. on Sundays at 10 a.m. Proof of COVID vaccination will be required for entry to in person services. Masks are optional.

December 4: Wonder

Getting lost in the image of a star-filled night, or an endless ocean, or the depths of a child's eyes may leave us with a sense of wonder that can overwhelm and humble, even make us feel small. Our religion calls us to lean in a little more. Wonder isn't so much about feeling small as it is about feeling connected to a larger story and to each other. Susan Kaphammer shares thoughts and readings welcoming and celebrating wonder.

December 11: Apple Brunch Seasonal Celebration

We will gather together to capture parts of a once annual tradition with some possible new twists. Share food and fellowship with gratitude for one of the Valley's richest bounties. A presentation and sharing regarding this ritual feast will be followed by a potluck

What to bring: Foods containing apples are encouraged but not required. Please bring finger foods or dishes that will easily self-serve and are not likely to spread or spill from a plate. **Please note: there are no outlets for crock pots, etc., at the table.**

December 18: Watch What You Watch

Rev. Dr. Marlin Lavanhar

How to be present? We are all dealing 'with stuff.' How to pay attention to what we are doing, to be intentional and skillful at what we are doing. Join us today for our monthly Tune In Together, as we listen to Rev. Lavanhar from Tulsa, Oklahoma All Souls Unitarian Church. The service starts out with a Story For All Ages and then moves into the sermon. Rev. Lavanhar helps us to find those moments of intention and pleasure.

Saturday, December 24: Christmas Eve Service

Join us for a brief respite from the hectic part of the holiday season. Find time for reflection, story, song, light and sharing at our Christmas Eve service. This will be an in-person service, **5:30 p.m.** at 407 N. 1st St., our UUCY home.

Winter is Upon Us

by Mike Gempler

Happy winter holiday season! As you probably know, the dark, cold time of year led to the creation of many special celebrations in numerous cultures in the northern hemisphere. Celebrations of light; celebrations of hope for the turning of the earth to new light; and celebrations of hope for a better future.

Many people don't like winter's cold and snow and short dark days, and I understand how they must feel, but I was raised in the wintery north as a child and so I have fond memories of snow and skating and snow-encrusted mittens and hot cocoa. I also have wonderful memories of a traditional Christian Christmas celebration and holiday.

Although I no longer subscribe to the Christian faith, I recognize what made those childhood and adolescent winter holidays so enjoyable and powerful for me: our family kept our own schedule, and the things we did had meaning. We avoided the anxiety-producing commercial schedules (better buy now! Only 30 days until Christmas!), we focused on creating experiences in which we all participated, and we tried to bring meaning and reverence where we could.

Anyone can do this. But it takes the ability to ignore the noise, and screen out the false pressure to meet other peoples' or businesses' expectations and schedules. And I know how hard that is because we are bombarded with commercial messages about the holidays 24/7. You can control your own experience to a great extent. Turn off all advertising, make intentional plans for a get together with family and friends, appreciate the beauty of a candle or fire in the darkness, read some good poetry about winter and hope to each other.

I hope you enjoy your own winter holidays. You ARE in control.

Mike Gempler is the President of the UUCY Board of Trustees for 2022-2024, and can be reached for discussion and comments at any time. Reach out to the office for his contact information.



Auction Action Needed NOW!

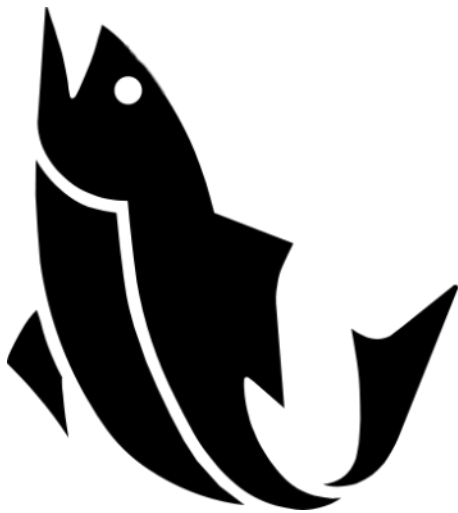
The kimchi class on November 26 was great fun! Are you sorry you missed out? Let us know if so. It might be offered again if there is enough interest.

**It's not too late to sign up
for the haiku workshop
on December 3!**

Beyond that, we need more auction action!

What enthusiasm or talent would you enjoy sharing with others? Do you bullet journal? Mend things? Iron? Clear clutter? Bake bread? Love to make (and eat!) Indian food? Offer a meal at your home or a simple meal to be delivered to the buyer's home, or teach a class in something you love to do.

Email uucyauction@gmail.com with your ideas. We are all waiting eagerly for the next opportunities!



Seven Fishes Dinner for Valentine's Day

February 11 at the Dindias', 4 p.m.

Another delicious and traditional seven fishes dinner hosted by Phil and Gean Dindia. \$50 per seat, six seats available. Come hungry!

Email uucyauction@gmail.com to
claim your seat!



UUCY Game Night

**NEXT GAME NIGHT AT UUCY
IS DECEMBER 30!**

Did you miss the first (and second) game night? By popular demand, game night will be happening the last Friday of the month— *every* month! Be sure to get it on your calendar— it can be your warmup (or replacement!) for New Year's Eve revelry.

First UUCY Movie Night: *Oklahoma!*

December 9, 7:00 p.m.

Join us at 407 N. 1st Street for a rollicking singalong of a movie night— lyrics (and popcorn!) will be provided!

Chalice Circles Are Back!

(or are they? Your input is needed!)

Anyone interested in restarting Chalice Circles?

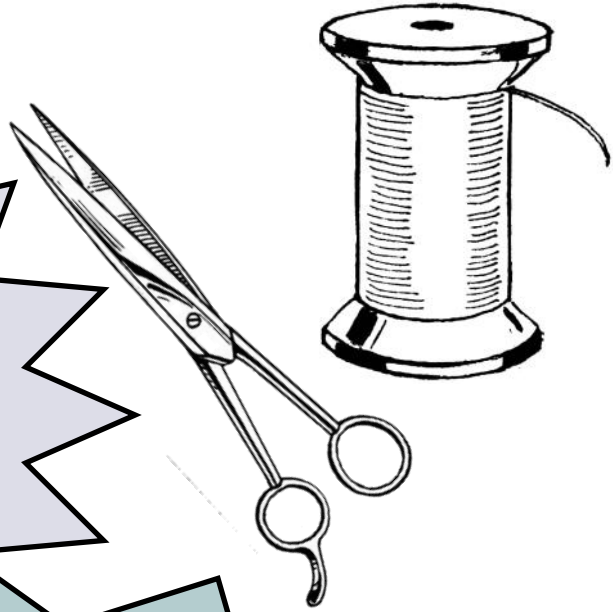
Before COVID, Chalice Circles were a gathering of 8 people to reflect on a topic every other week, lasting 6 to 8 weeks. It is designed to learn to know each other better and share each person's religious story.

We might start a circle or two depending on the interest. If you're interested, contact Gean or Phil Dindia or Emilee Solomon. The proposed starting date is after January 1, 2023.



Knitting Group

Knitters, crocheters, yarn fans of all kinds are welcome! Meetings are Tuesday evenings, 5-7 p.m. at UUCY. For more information contact Nancy Born.



Quilting & Crafting Group

The quilting group usually gathers at the church on the fourth Saturday of every month at 9 a.m. Proof of vaccination is required. However, they will not meet in December, so *the next meeting will be*

January 28, 2023.

UUCY Wednesday Coffee

What is the UUCY Coffee Chat? For some time, members of our UUCY community and friends have enjoyed getting together on Wednesday mornings at 9 a.m. at a local coffee shop to drink coffee liberally. These gatherings are in-person and indoors at North Town Coffeehouse (32 N. Front Street).

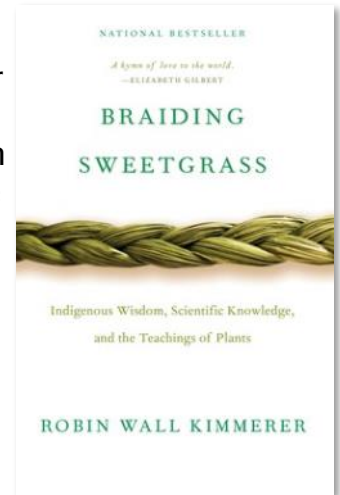


GET YOUR COPY OF *BRAIDING SWEETGRASS*

The UUCY Book Club will meet again at **6:00 PM on Thursday, January 12**, in the Ann Ingham Corner of our current home at 407 North 1st Street, Yakima, to discuss the celebrated collection of essays by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Copies from the Yakima Valley Libraries Book Club set are **now available** for up to eight of our readers! Pick your copy up at Wednesday coffee or Sunday Service, or contact Susan for arrangements. Or get your own; Inklings Bookshop offers a discount to Book Club members.

***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. (390 pages)**

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings--asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass--offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learn to give our own gifts in return.



Named a Best Essay Collection of the Decade by Literary Hub

As a botanist, Robin Wall Kimmerer has been trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Kimmerer brings these two lenses of knowledge together to take us on "a journey that is every bit as mythic as it is scientific, as sacred as it is historical, as clever as it is wise" (Elizabeth Gilbert).

Her book of wisdom, knowledge and teachings celebrates life that is both ordinary — her simple days as a working parent — and magical, filled with many gifts from good-hearted communities. Her interactions, however, are not solely with human groups but are equally and necessarily with the natural world. She introduces readers to a language of flora and fauna that is readably right in front of them, and nudges — at times, urges — her readers to recognize an inclusive reciprocity with our environment. (Elizabeth Wilkinson, *The Star Tribune*)



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

UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

SUNDAY SERVICES

Chair: Linda King

Bill Jacobs

Debra Kroon

Denise Edwards

Sunny Sonker

Susan Kaphammer

AUCTION

Nancy Born

FAITH FORMATION

Susan Kaphammer

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Phil Dindia

Carole Sahlstrand

FINANCE

Chair: Janis Luvaas

Bill Jacobs

Your 2022 to 2023 UUCY Board of Trustees is:

<i>Board President</i>	Mike Gempler	mikegempler@msn.com
<i>Board Vice Pres.</i>	Carole Sahlstrand	cjsahl@q.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Nancy Born	nancyjborn@gmail.com
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509-453-8448 • admin@uucyakima.org**

UUCY Administrator – Hannah Born (hours: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tues., Thurs., & Fri.)