

# UNIFIRE

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YAKIMA

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

### MARCH 2025

#### **March 2: Deep Listening—The Art of Reflection**

Join Jessica Blair as she shares some techniques involved in the art of deeply listening to others. According to Carl Rogers, “We think we listen, but very rarely do we listen with real understanding, true empathy. Yet listening, of this very special kind, is one of the most potent forces for change that I know.”

#### **March 9: Living Love Through the Practice of Trust**

Our practice of trust reveals much about ourselves as we look inward to trusting ourselves and look outward to trusting others. The practice of trust is entangled with our views of others, our degree of self-assurance, and our willingness to be vulnerable. Susan Kaphammer shares readings and thoughts exploring the topic of trust and the role of trust in our spiritual values.

#### **March 16: Holding Power**

Holding power with an open heart allows us to lead with empathy, understanding, and a deep sense of responsibility, ensuring that the changes we make benefit all and reflect our shared humanity. As individuals and collectives, we must not shy away from wielding power to create meaningful change in our communities and world. However, this power should not be driven by fear or ego, but by a commitment to justice and compassion. Join us in discussing the importance of embracing power as a tool for positive transformation.

#### **March 23: Spiritual Practices for Activists and Everyday Life**

We'll listen to Rev. Marlin Lavanhar (All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Tulsa, Oklahoma) share steps to take care of ourselves during these times: cool down, heat up, physical conditioning and shadow work. Following the viewing we will share in discussion led by Andrew Whitmont.

#### **March 30: Coffee and Conversation**

Join us on the casual 5th Sunday as we enjoy a favorite beverage while engaging in rich conversations. Susan Kaphammer is our welcoming host.

## *Perspectives from UUCY President...* **ROOM FOR EVERYONE**

UUCY continues to work to provide “Room for Everyone” in every way. From our Board, to our committees, to our Sunday service presenters, to our project volunteers, to our coffee and craft-time participants, to our members, friends and visitors on Sunday mornings – a palpable buzz of positive energy and warm community animates our times together. We are committed to providing a place for the increasing numbers who identify with our mission: “We are a welcoming church of open-minded, compassionate people of all ages. We celebrate life, affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all people, seek wisdom and work for justice in the Yakima Valley!”

The search continues for a “church home” that better meets our growing space needs. Planning to share space with another church congregation is emerging as the most viable option at this time. The Englewood Christian Church at 511 N. 44th Ave. welcomes our interest. They are offering dedicated office space, use of their Fireside Room for committees and small group activities, use of a children’s classroom, access to their expansive kitchen, some storage space, and “sanctuary” space in their Fellowship Hall.

We are finding practical, philosophical and spiritual congruence with the Englewood Christian Church. They are, as their name indicates, clearly “Christian” while Unitarian Universalism encompasses members from various faiths as well as agnostics and atheists. Yet note the similarity between their identifying statement and our mission listed above. “Englewood Christian Church is a loving, social justice-oriented, open-minded community committed to following Jesus.”

Our Board of Trustees at their March meeting will be considering impacts of a sharing arrangement with another church, specifically with the Englewood Christian Church. One challenge would be probable compromises for the scheduling of our services and events. Upsides could include opportunities to unite on shared initiatives. For example, our members and theirs have already run into each other at immigration rights events. Their minister, Rev. Christie Love, has taken the lead for a Yakima Joint Interfaith Immigration Statement which addresses a social justice priority for us as well.

Soon, the UUCY congregation will be invited to visit Englewood Christian Church to picture for ourselves how we might be at home there. Then UUCY members and friends will be asked to meet to discuss the proposal. Our leadership will share information and welcome input leading, we hope, to a broad consensus; the decision to move requires a majority vote of UUCY members.

In addition to looking for space to provide for new and continuing members of UUCY, actions of our Board and members address conscious acknowledgement and welcome for the diversity that enriches our Yakima Valley.

First is the articulation of a “land acknowledgement.” This will be part of our oral welcome at each service, as well as appear in our UniFire. The statement:

*Why do we do this? A land acknowledgement is a step toward correcting stories and practices that erase indigenous people’s history and culture, and it honors the truth.*

*This facility and our community rest on the ancestral lands of the fourteen confederated bands and tribes of the Yakama Nation. The Yakama people inhabited more than twelve million acres across much of central and eastern Washington. Today we honor the native peoples who are tied to this land through history, legend and culture. We thank these caretakers of the land who have lived here since time immemorial. Recognizing that an acknowledgement without action rings hollow, we vow to, as we are able, take action to support and restore this land and our diverse, interdependent community.*

*(continued on next page—keep reading!)*

## *Perspectives from UUCY President...*

Thanks to Chuck Forster for his work in drafting the statement.

Another action of the Board is approval of signage displayed to the exterior of our space to make public our open welcome to all, including those from the LGBTQ+ community. Paula Nordwall Blaine recounted the efforts of her North Dakota UU congregation, and brought the suggestion to us. She also volunteered to procure a sign to make this happen. Thank you, Paula.

These initiatives – the land acknowledgement and visible welcome to LGBTQ+ -- help us live our principles to, “Affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person; justice, equity and compassion in human relations; acceptance of one another...; respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

Final notes from the February Board meeting – Hannah Born, our UUCY Administrator, and myself as your president, submitted the annual Congregational Certification to the Unitarian Universalist Association, our umbrella national administration. The point-in-time report for the end of January, 2025, reveals for our congregation:

Previous church year total pledge income of \$47,606, from 43 individual and family “pledge units.”

Previous church year total expenses of \$54,766. (Pledges supplemented with non-pledge income and fundraising.)

Value of endowment and reserves of \$394,824.

Official membership of 51, with estimated 12 additional individuals involved as friends.

Weekly participation varying between 26 and 50, including up to 7 children.

These numbers confirm our congregation as a growing, active community committed to making “Room for Everyone”!

Take care,

*Susan Kaphammer*, president

### **DATES TO NOTE:**

**Tuesday, March 4 — 10:30 a.m., Sunday Services Committee meeting**

**Friday, March 7 – board agenda drafted; committee reports due**

**Tuesday, March 11 — 1:00 p.m., Finance Committee meeting**

**Thursday, March 13 – 1:00 p.m., board meeting — open to all members**

*Susan Kaphammer is the President of the UUCY Board of Trustees for 2024-2026, and can be reached for discussion and comments at any time. Reach out to the office for her contact information.*



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## MANY WAYS TO BE A CHANGEMAKER



These times of swift and worrisome changes in our political and social structures call to us to “DO SOMETHING.” For some, this call may be energizing and exhilarating; for others, it may engender feelings of frustration and/or exhaustion. Most of us probably feel some aspects from both ends of the spectrum. To help us consider how to make a difference, author and activist Deepa Iyer, in her book [\*Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection\*](#) shares the above “Social Change Ecosystem Map.” This graphic identifies various roles for people working toward the central goals of equity, liberation, justice and solidarity with whatever specific social justice action with which we engage.

The graphic “map” illustrates how people of diverse personalities, strengths and gifts can all contribute to positive change. Perhaps while you admire the “frontline responders,” your inclination may be to be a “storyteller,” or a “caregiver.” As Iyer writes, “When we recognize that others are playing different roles for the

same cause, we can focus on our own and not feel that we must do it all.”

Consider what social justice issue calls to your heart and your spirit. Then find a task within the effort for your own valuable participation.



## GAME NIGHT MARCH 7

After February's game night was canceled out of concern for the weather, we're that much more eager for March! Next Friday, March 7, bring a game or take potluck with whatever other people bring—there are always plenty of choices. Treats are welcome, but entirely optional. The fun starts at 6:30 p.m.

Photo by [Tim Foster](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## COFFEE MATTERS



Whether you like coffee, tea, or just a glass of water, join the Community Coffee group on Wednesday mornings at 9 a.m. for casual conversation. We gather at **Catalyst Coffee** (102 N. Naches Ave.)



Lisa Dyer shows off her completed needlework project!

## CRAFTERNOONS

***Tuesdays, 3-5 p.m.!***

Every Tuesday afternoon from 3 to 5, crafters come together at UUCY to do handwork in good company. Some sew, some bead, some knit, some embroider, some crochet—all are welcome!

## STORIES OF OUR LIVES RECAP

On Saturday, Feb. 22, 13 of us met for a 3 hour workshop writing about our lives. There were serious reflections, a few tears, much laughter and appreciation for the time spent examining our own lives and sharing with others.

Comments included: "it was an invitation to be vulnerable," "what a delightful day," and "it was a very fulfilling experience for me."

Many thanks to co-facilitator Mike Gempler, coffee maker Joy McKinney, treat bringer Aurora Walker and all attendees who not only wrote their thoughts but spoke with courage and humility and listened deeply to others.

## LIFESPAN LEARNING MEETING

**MARCH 2 AFTER SUNDAY SERVICE**

We will meet at the front of the room right after the service and will discuss children's programming first and then move on to adult programming.

If you have ideas to share, comments to make or just want to know how this works, this is the place for you!

## ANTIRACISM LEARNING CIRCLES

*Organized by First Unitarian in Portland*

You are invited to join an **Antiracism Learning Circle** this winter/spring. It's on Zoom, so you can join from anywhere! First Unitarian in Portland is the organizer. The first Circles start the week of January 16th.

Full descriptions, schedules & registration information are [HERE](#).

## WHALECOAST ALASKA

### A MORE AUTHENTIC TRAVEL EXPERIENCE!

Two unique, exciting fundraising tours organized by 4 Alaska UU congregations are being offered again next summer by WhaleCoast Alaska. Experience majestic scenery, wildlife, Denali National Park, Alaska Native culture, glaciers, and UU homestays. For 31 years, WhaleCoast Alaska tours have been the BEST way to visit Alaska. Register now for this amazing experience!

Details: [www.WhaleCoastAK.org](http://www.WhaleCoastAK.org)

Questions: [info@whalecoastak.org](mailto:info@whalecoastak.org)



# HISTORICAL FICTION SET IN WENATCHEE FOR MARCH BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION

The January gathering of our UUCY Book Club, facilitated by our new leaders, Gean Dindia and Rosemary Saul, was a small but lively group engaged in discussion of a book by award-winning author Molly Gloss set in Eastern Oregon during the winter of 1917-1918 called *The Hearts of Horses*. It is an elegant, heartwarming story about the profound connections between people and animals. It's worth a read even if you did not participate in the book club discussion.

## **The Orchardist by Amanda Coplin**

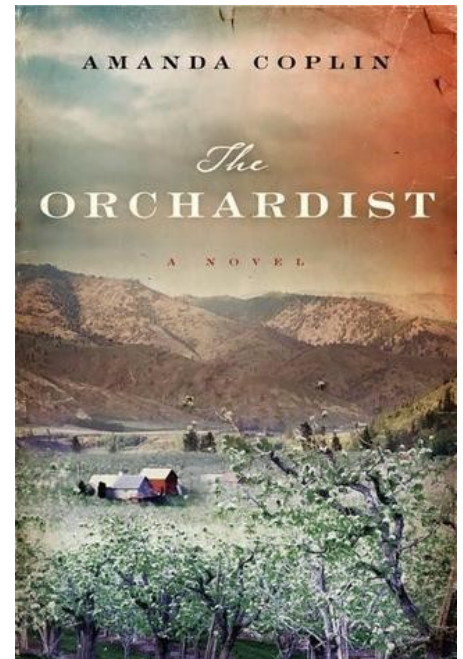
At the turn of the twentieth century in the Pacific Northwest, reclusive orchardist William Talmadge tends to his apples and apricots. One day, two teenaged girls steal his fruit and later return to his orchard to see the man who gave them no chase. Feral, scared, and pregnant, they take up on Talmadge's land and indulge in his deep reservoir of compassion. But just as the girls begin to trust him, men arrive in the orchard with guns...

It was a nominee for numerous literary awards. Some reviews:

"Beautifully written, so alive to the magnificence of the land and the intricate mysteries of human nature, that it inspires awe rather than depression." — *Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

"Many contemporary novelists have revisited the question of what constitutes a family, but few have responded in a voice as resolute and fiercely poetic." — *New York Times Book Review*

"A stunning debut... *The Orchardist* is a poetic book, but its strength doesn't lie solely in its language. Coplin's understanding of abuse and the lasting effects of fear and loss on the individual psyche are deeply resonant. As a debut novel, *The Orchardist* stands on par with Charles Frazier's *Cold Mountain*." — *The Oregonian* (Portland)



Plan to meet on Thursday, MARCH 13, 2025, at 5:00 PM at our church home at 407 N 1st Street, Suite 3 to share your thoughts and reactions to the novel, *The Orchardist*. Copies are available from those who have finished reading. Please contact Rosemary Saul to arrange pickup if you are interested. .



# UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

## SUNDAY SERVICES

**CHAIR:** Debra Kroon

Jen Berry

Denise Edwards

Bill Jacobs

Susan Kaphammer

Linda King

Sunny Sonker

## AUCTION

*CHAIR POSITION OPEN*

Nancy Born

## LIFESPAN LEARNING

*CHAIR POSITION OPEN*

Susan Kaphammer

## FINANCE

**TREASURER:** Janis Luvaas

Bill Jacobs

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Phil Dindia

Lana Barnes

Bill Jacobs

Chuck Forster

Joy McKinney

## MEMBERSHIP

**CO-CHAIRS:** Lana Barnes

& Jen Berry

Denise Edwards

### Your 2024 to 2025 UUCY Board of Trustees is:

*Board President* Susan Kaphammer [susanlkap@gmail.com](mailto:susanlkap@gmail.com)

*Board Vice Pres.* Ray Yates [raycyates@gmail.com](mailto:raycyates@gmail.com)

*Trustee* Nancy Born [nancyjborn@gmail.com](mailto:nancyjborn@gmail.com)

*Trustee* Mary Brunelle [almybrufam@gmail.com](mailto:almybrufam@gmail.com)

*Trustee* Chuck Forster [bddirtpile@gmail.com](mailto:bddirtpile@gmail.com)

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