UniFire

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YAKIMA

We celebrate community and promote spirituality,

justice, responsibility, and compassion.

September 2026

September 6: Random Acts of Kindness

A simple smile, a helping hand, or a gentle word can make a difference in someone's day and even change their life. How a simple act may have a powerful impact. Discussion led by Carol Guthrie.

September 13: Water Communion and Homecoming

Our UU community will be holding our annual Water Communion, a tradition with Unitarian Universalists since the 1980s. We celebrate coming together with our various lives and beliefs to form this precious community. Those who wish may bring a small amount of water from a place special to them to combine in a symbol of this coming together. Plan to join us for this first service of our new church year, for all ages, led by Susan Kaphammer.

September 20: Spiritual Growth — What Does That Mean to UUs?

Each week we recite our healthy relations covenant. This includes the promise to celebrate each others' spiritual growth. What does that mean? What does "spiritual" mean? How does it apply to UUs? Join us as congregational member Andrew Whitmont addresses these and other related questions.

September 27: Unitarian Universalist Shared Values

This service begins a series taking a deeper look at our Unitarian Universalist Shared Values: Interdependence, Pluralism, Justice, Transformation, Generosity, and Equity.

This service reviews the process that gave rise to these values and the role they play in our practice of living as Unitarian Universalists.

October 4: Share the Plate

Each Sunday, you hear these words recited: "Our practice of sharing the plate of Sunday contributions with local agencies is in keeping with our adopted mission: We celebrate community and promote spirituality, justice, responsibility, and compassion. This is why we come together; this is what we do." This Sunday we will hear nominations of various local organizations that members recommend for Share the Plate for our 2026-2027 year. As a reminder, our recipient for the last year has been the YWCA Domestic Violence Program. If you have a suggestion for a local organization to be our recipient for next year, please share it with Debra Kroon or any board member.

Perspectives from UUCY President...

Living in the Liminal

Liminal refers to the time and place of transition; the space between what has been and what is to come. September brings some common, shared transitions: from summer to fall, from vacation to school, from hot days and nights to at least occasional cooler breezes; from growing gardens to harvest.

At UUCY, we transition from our more informal "Coffee and Conversation" Sundays to full services with readings, prepared messages, and music! These begin with our traditional Water Communion on September 13 when participants are invited to mix a bit of water into a common bowl and speak briefly to the special meaning it represents. Thus, we celebrate the individual journeys that culminate in our coming together into our community of friendship, faith and service. Let's gather!

Special Invitation to Past and Present Members, Friends, and Visitors To Join the Celebration of our UUCY Community Sunday, September 13, 10:00 a.m.

While some changes can be clearly marked as points in time, in truth we are always in transition. The water of our Water Communion can remind us that, like a river, we individually and as a congregation are always on the move. What is before always gives way to what is next. So, we learn to "live in the liminal."

Another transition on Sundays will be initiation of our Children's Chalice program beginning September 20. Following the Time for All Ages in our services, children will leave for their own activities and learning, except for once monthly All Ages services. Opportunities remain for volunteers to learn with and from the children in their Children's Chalice program. Lessons are provided, so this is a simple way to expand your views of Unitarian Universalism by experiences shared with our young. Change continues, and it is good to remember that not so long ago, we were entirely an adult congregation. What a joy to have the vitality and future promise of young people amongst us!

Check out the Lifespan Learning article in this issue, and keep checking our Thursday updates and UniFire issues. Adult learning opportunities are being planned, including a Starting Point Retreat in November. This promises to be a day for those new to Unitarian Universalism, as well as those of us who have been around for a long time, to relax and learn together about our spiritual journeys.

Beginning during the pandemic, UUCY has intermittently arranged for Zoom attendance at our services. We find ourselves now with the equipment, but lacking the personnel to manage Zooming our services, so we will not be offering Zoom for now. **If**

Continued on the next page — keep reading!

(President's Column, continued)

you are interested, or know of anyone in or outside of our congregation who might be interested in facilitating Zooming of our Sunday services (perhaps for a stipend), contact the office or Debra Kroon. The title of "Zoom Czar" can be yours!

Recognizing that change is constant, you may hear bits and pieces of future plans for the building in which we lease space from the Englewood Christian Church. The Montessori School that occupies the downstairs and upstairs rooms down the hallway, will be moving out, tentatively at the end of 2029. ECC and community partners are planning to convert much of this space into a community center offering public services such as mental health.

What does this mean for UUCY? Nothing for right now! Our current lease continues through December 2027, with the Fellowship Hall for our Sanctuary on Sunday morning, the exclusive use of the office, and shared meeting spaces that can be scheduled. Several of our members – Debra Kroon, Rosemary Saul, Mary Brunelle, and Linda and Rick King -- recently toured the lower level to determine if we might want to lease that space instead, but the strong consensus is that it would not work for us.

ECC has assured us that we are not and will not be asked to move out as they pursue the vision of a community center. Yet it is in our interest to seek options. While not formally in the search for a home, we expect to keep our ears and eyes open for what might serve as the home for UUCY. Contact a Board member, listed with emails on the last page of this newsletter, with your thoughts.

While changes can be challenging, my hope is that we live fully and joyfully in the liminal!

Take care,

Susan Kaphammer

UUCY Board President

NOTE: Look every week for our Thursday update, sent by email, for Sunday service information, upcoming meetings, and scheduled activities! Contact the office to get on the email list.

Dates to Note:

Friday, Sept. 11 – **items for Board agenda and committee reports due**

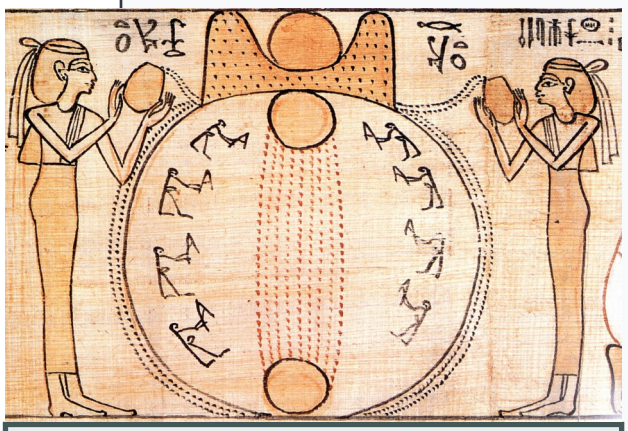
Thursday, Sept. 17 – Board Meeting, 10 a.m. in the ECC library; everyone welcome.

(Board meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Thursday of the month.)

The Power of Myth

Tuesdays (September 15 through October 20), 6-8 p.m.

Has the recent release of Christopher Nolan's movie, *The Odyssey*, piqued your interest in mythology? In 1988, PBS produced an acclaimed series called *The Power of Myth*, 6 hour-long conversations between noted journalist and political commentator Bill Moyers and teacher, storyteller extraordinaire Joseph Campbell. Their discussions dealt with the universality and evolution of myths in the history of the human race, as well as the place of myths in modern society. Campbell recounted stories from many cultures and civilizations to present his most compelling thesis that modern society is (still) going through a transition from the old mythologies and traditions to a new way of thinking where a global mythology will emerge.



Sunrise at Creation from the Book of the Dead of Khensumose

On six Tuesday evenings in September and October, Rosemary Saul will facilitate as we watch these interviews, followed by an informal discussion of the implications of where we are with that transition today, nearly 40 years later.

Sept. 15, 22, 29 and Oct. 6, 13, and 20 from 6 -8 p.m. in the library at ECC. Come for one, all six or however many you wish. Registration not required. Someone will be at the door 5:45-6:00 to let you in. Please be on time.

VOTE ON SHARE THE PLATE — OCTOBER 4

Each Sunday, you hear these words recited: "Our practice of sharing the plate of Sunday contributions with local agencies is in keeping with our adopted mission: "We celebrate community and promote spirituality, justice, responsibility, and compassion. This is why we come together; this is what we do." This Sunday we will hear nominations of various local organizations that members recommend for Share the Plate for our 2026-2027 year. As a reminder, our recipient for the last year has been the local YWCA Domestic Violence Program. If you have a suggestion for a local organization to be our recipient for next year, please share it with Debra Kroon or any board member.

After we hear and learn about the organizations nominated, we will then have a vote. We hope you will be at the October 4 service to join in this annual event.

LIFESPAN LEARNING IS OFF AND RUNNING!

Thanks to Erika Haukness, creator of our elementary curriculum, **our Children's Chalice program is scheduled to begin on Sunday, Sept. 20, 2026**. Children will create their own covenant of behavior, move on to the UU values not covered in 2025-26 and then explore our UU principles.

Lead teachers for the program include Jessica Blair, Aurora Walker, Mike Gempler and Suki Smaglik. Back up teachers are Jen Berry and Linda King.

If you are interested in learning with and from children, there are openings for a couple more lead teachers and several helpers. Lessons are planned and scripted to allow maximum participation with very simple preparation. All volunteers go through background checks with Hannah in the office.

Adult learning opportunities include an unnamed workshop to take place on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2026 in the Fireside Room at ECC from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Details in the October UniFire.

Starting Point Retreat

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the King House in the Nile

This is a great way for newcomers to learn about the unique faith of Unitarian Universalism, focusing on spiritual journeys rather than beliefs or creeds. For long time members and friends this is an opportunity to explore our collective and individual paths, perhaps creating a spiritual "re-starting point." For all it offers a chance to fall in love with our journeys and to understand our faith, supported by the framework of Unitarian Universalism.

The retreat will be led by Jen Berry and Linda King. Sign up sheets will be available soon.

Land Acknowledgement

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.

Upcoming Meetings

Sunday Services Committee Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 1st, 10:30 a.m. (Fireside Room)
Finance Committee Meeting: Tuesday, Sept. 8th, 1:00 p.m. (ECC Library)
Board Meeting: Thursday, Sept. 17th,10:00 a.m. (ECC Library)
Social Justice Team: Tuesday, Sept. 22nd, 1:30 p.m. (Location To Be Announced)



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.)

Crafternoon — NEW TIME!

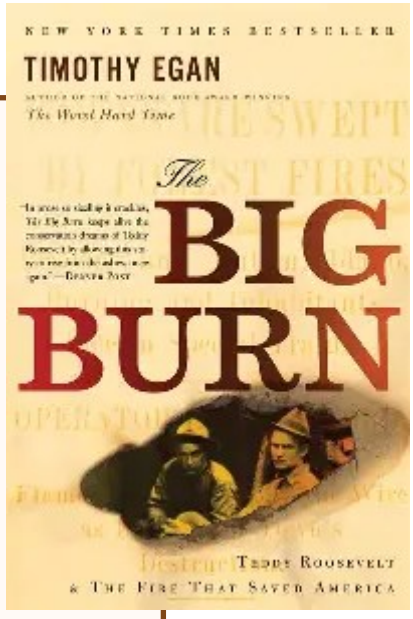
Tuesdays, 2-4 p.m.

In the hope of avoiding the extra traffic associated with school release times and the local rush (half) hour, regular attendees have decided to change the Tuesday Crafternoon meetup time. Makers will still gather at Odd Fellows Hall, at 206 West Walnut Street, on Tuesdays, but starting an hour earlier at 2 till 4 o'clock. All handcrafters are welcome—come join us!

UUCY Book Club

"In The *Big Burn; Teddy Roosevelt and the Fire That Saved America*, Pulitzer Prize winner Timothy Egan narrates the struggles of overmatched rangers against the implacable fire of August, 1910, and Teddy Roosevelt's pioneering conservation efforts that helped turn public opinion permanently in favor of the forests, though it changed the mission of the forest service with consequences felt in the fires of today." (*from YVLS description*)

All kit books have been distributed, but our public library system has print, ebook, and audio versions available. Read this compelling nonfiction book and join the discussion on Wednesday, September 9th.



UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

SUNDAY SERVICES

Debra Kroon, Chair
Jen Berry
Bill Jacobs
Susan Kaphammer
Linda King
Sunny Sonker
Erika Haukness

FINANCE

Janis Luvaas, Treasurer
Kia Tudor
Lana Barnes

AUCTION

Carole Sahlstrand, Chair
Nancy Born

MEMBERSHIP

Carol Guthrie, Chair
Suki Smaglik

MUSIC

Sunny Sonker, Pianist

LIFESPAN LEARNING

Linda King, Facilitator
Jen Berry
Mike Gempler
Erika Haukness
Rosie Hill
Susan Kaphammer
Suki Smaglik

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Phil Dindia
Lana Barnes
Bill Jacobs
Joy McKinney

ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Denise Edwards, Coordinator
(Active seasonally)

Your 2026 to 2027 UUCY Board of Trustees is:

Board President	Susan Kaphammer	susanlkap@gmail.com
Board Vice Pres.	Debra Kroon	debrakroon@gmail.com
Trustee	Jen Berry	ourjeneration@yahoo.com
Trustee	Craig Moore	mr.22thousand@gmail.com
Trustee	Chuck Forster	piplyp@msn.com

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509-453-8448 • admin@uucyakima.org

UUCY Administrator – Hannah Born (hours: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Tues., Thurs., & Fri.)