UniFire

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YAKIMA

We celebrate community and promote spirituality,

justice, responsibility, and compassion.

October 2026

October 4: Share the Plate — The Soul of Money: Lynne Twist, Unitarian Universalism, and the Practice of Sharing

Today we will look at three myths associated with money: Scarcity, More and Lack. Partially based on the book by Lynne Twist, *The Soul of Money*, along with UU's tradition of Sharing the Plate, this service will hopefully bring some clarity to our choices in how we share our money.

On this day we will also hear from some members about local non-profits that are nominated for this coming year's Share the Plate recipient. As service concludes, we will vote on those nominations.

October 11: The Intelligence of Trees

Sean Tait will discuss recent scientific discoveries about the nature of trees, including their amazing abilities to sense their world, communicate with each other, make decisions, learn and even remember. He will speak as an arborist about things he has learned in the classroom, as well as lessons he has learned (mostly from his own mistakes) over the last 30 years of practicing tree care. Come with an open mind and be prepared to have it blown!

October 18: Heritage and New Member Recognition

As UUs, we share a rich heritage including Unitarian traditions of freedom, reason and tolerance, and Universalist emphasis on faith, hope and love. Today's service, led by Susan Kaphammer, reminds us of the struggles and courage that is our heritage, a heritage that we share with newer members who join us in choosing this path for living.

October 25: Seasonally Appropriate All Ages Service

Prepare to be surprised by this eclectic interactive all ages service. Seasonal activities with a spiritual bent will be featured. Plan to dress in costume, share treats, enjoy history and unleash creativity. Led by Erika Haukness and Linda King.

November 1: UU Shared Value — Generosity

Evolving understandings of our faith lead to evolving language. In 2024, our Association adopted a set of deeply interconnected shared values centered around LOVE to describe Unitarian Universalism. Today's service focuses on: Generosity - We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope. Susan Kaphammer leads us in considering what generosity means in our lives and in the life of our congregation and beyond.

Perspectives from UUCY President...

Look to Fall Bounties and Responsibilities

"Summertime has turned the star-wheel, autumn is upon us."
(Hymn #73, *Chant for the Seasons* by Mark L. Belletini)

The signs of nature's fall season are undeniable – later sunrises and earlier sunsets, ripening pumpkins, yellowing leaves, and a cooler nip to the air. Our church is also transitioning into the next season with robust Sunday services and renewed efforts by committees, including our Social Justice Committee again meeting regularly.

Our congregation's concerns for social justice are reflected in our mission: "We celebrate community and promote spirituality, justice, responsibility, and compassion." Pursuit of this mission necessarily includes, by definition, politics and the upcoming Mid-Term Elections.

Dictionary.com defines "political" in part, as "exercising or seeking power in the governmental or public affairs of a state, municipality, etc." By definition ALL of the issues of social justice are political, including justice, immigration, health care, food security, climate and environment. Even such activities as volunteering at a food bank are political in that the volunteer is "exercising power in public affairs…" The next step for individual volunteers and organizations supporting such volunteering is, of course, to try to influence public policy to better serve people and reduce the need for food banks.

So rather than shy away from "politics" I urge recognition of the political nature of work for more "justice, responsibility, and compassion" in our world. **The primary political responsibility for all citizens is voting!** Ballots come this month with a November 3rd deadline. Voting matters. Each vote is one… but one plus one plus one is the only way to build a majority. Voting does not guarantee better policies, but not voting eliminates personal power to participate in establishing public policies for more justice and improved lives.

While we cannot, as a church, promote specific candidates, tax-exempt status does NOT preclude individual or congregational political activities. Our national Unitarian Universalist Association provides support for legal and appropriate political action under the headline: "Prophetic, Not Partisan."

> Religious individuals and groups have played a prophetic role in public life throughout history by calling attention to oppression, demanding change, organizing for justice, and holding leaders and institutions accountable for their actions and policies. We have a moral responsibility and are fully within our legal bounds to be a voice in the public policy arena and a force in mobilizing communities to advance our values 365 days a year…
>
> Progressive people of faith can be powerful and prophetic without being partisan.

Continued on the next page — keep reading!

(President's Column, continued)

> We can engage our neighbors, educate our communities, mobilize voters, rally around ballot initiatives, and shape the public discourse with values-based framing, rooted in our theology and principles. Electoral cycles offer heightened opportunities to engage and inspire people, mobilize around key issues, and to strengthen democracy, and win real advances on key issues on the ballot. (https://www.sidewithlove.org/prophetic-not-partisan)

Recognize that we are called to participate in public politics by our principle to affirm and promote "the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large," and by our denominational values, including:

> **Justice:** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive. We work to dismantle racism and all forms of systemic oppression. We support the use of inclusive democratic processes to make decisions within our congregations, our Association, and society at large.
>
> **Equity:** We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion. We use our time, wisdom, attention, and money to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities.

With the support of our congregation, in furtherance of our UU values, learn what you can about the candidates and issues, and vote, sending your ballot in early or taking it to a drop box. And, as you are able, be a voice for democracy in this critical time for our nation.

(*NOTE: See article elsewhere in this newsletter about the UUA Side With Love program*, Tending Soil: Nourishing Justice Leadership in UU Congregations.)

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, Oct. 9 – **items for board agenda and committee reports due**

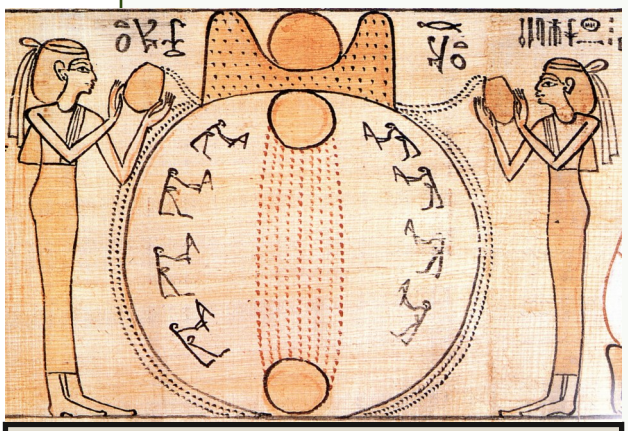
Thursday, Oct. 15 – Board Meeting, 10 a.m. in the ECC library; everyone welcome.

(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.

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.

Tending SOIL

Nourishing Justice Leadership in UU Congregations

Skills • Organizing • Interdependence • Liberation

Tending SOIL is Side With Love's leadership program to support congregational justice teams in building their capacity to faithfully and strategically engage in the transformation of the world through liberating Love.

Through SOIL, congregational or regional teams of 3-5 participants will strengthen their **S**kills, develop their **O**rganizing Plan, practice **I**nterdependence within and beyond their congregation, and deepen their understanding of Collective **L**iberation (i.e., SOIL!)

Side With Love states: We know you are busy doing the work in your community. We know too that Tending SOIL may feel like a big undertaking -- and you're right, it is not a small commitment. But **it is an absolutely worthwhile one that will boost your impact as you lead and mobilize in your community. We are really excited about this deep dive program, and hope that you will join us!**

FROM YOUR UUCY PRESIDENT: Consider your interest and commitment to further Social Justice in Yakima, and your time and energy for the learning, challenge and growth through such a program. Check the Tending SOIL webpage through this link: https://www.sidewithlove.org/tending-soil. Team Applications are due November 20th, 2026. The program runs January through August 2027. An information Zoom session is available **November 15** to learn more.

Lifespan Learning

Lifespan Learning Committee meets the first Sunday of each month at 11:20 a.m. in the UUCY office. If you are interested in working or helping with adult and/or children's religious education, just come to a meeting. Parents and interested others are always welcome.

Chalice Children

The 2026-27 program is underway. Aurora and Jessica have worked with the children to develop their own rules of behavior or covenant which they will share with the congregation sometime in the future.

In October they will begin learning about the **UU value of generosity**. Each week they light and extinguish their chalice, hear stories, share feelings and participate in games and activities related to that week's theme.

Adults wishing to teach or help in class once every month or two may contact Mary Brunelle to fit into the schedule.

Anyone wishing to donate supplies may contact Linda King. Currently we need: scarves, posterboard, pony beads and small decorative boxes.

Adult Religious Education

Our October offering is a long awaited **Ethics class led by Mike Gempler**. It will be held on **Saturday, October 17, 2026 from 9 a.m. to noon in the Fireside Room** at church. Contact Mike or watch for a sign up sheet at UUCY if you are interested in participating.

The Power of Myth Series led by Rosemary Saul continues on **Oct. 6, Oct. 13 and Oct. 20 in the Library Room at church**. Participants just need to show up and may attend any number of sessions. Contact Rosemary for details.

Starting Point Retreat

Save the date! Saturday, November 14, 2026, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. for a Starting Point Retreat at the King House in the Nile. Starting Point is a UU curriculum that presents our faith as a journey rather than a set of beliefs. It is for people new to Unitarian Universalism and also for those who want a "refresher" on their spiritual journey. Participants will share their own journeys, discover the historical UU journey and move into the shared journey UUs take together. Spiritual practices include listening to one's deepest self, opening to life's gifts and serving needs greater than our own. Jen Berry and Linda King will facilitate. Watch for sign up sheets at church or contact Jen or Linda to become a participant.

Upcoming Meetings

Sunday Services Committee Meeting: Tuesday, Oct. 6th, 10:30 a.m. (Fireside Room)
Finance Committee Meeting: Tuesday, Oct. 13th, 1:00 p.m. (ECC Library)
Board Meeting: Thursday, Oct. 15th,10:00 a.m. (ECC Library)
Social Justice Team: Tuesday, Oct. 27th, 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

Tuesdays, 2-4 p.m.

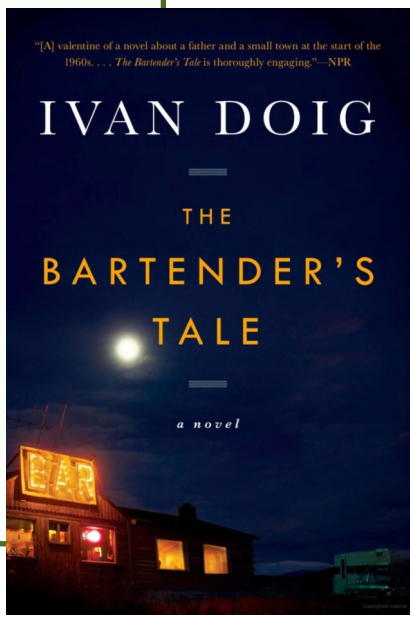
Makers gather at Odd Fellows Hall (206 West Walnut Street) on Tuesdays. All handcrafters are welcome—come join us!

UUCY Book Club

We are back to Montana once again with our next selection, *The Bartender's Tale* by Ivan Doig. Those familiar with Doig's *This House of Sky* will recognize similarities to episodes from the author's own life turned into historical fiction.

"Running a venerable bar in 1960 Montana while raising his 12-year-old son, Rusty, single father Tom Harry finds his world upended by the arrival of a woman from his past and her beatnik daughter, who claims Tom as her father and upends the town with her passionate and pretentious modern views." *(description from YVL.org)*

Discussion will be led by Gean Dindia and Rosemary Saul on Wed. Nov 11, 2026 at 5 p.m. in the Fireside Room (or the sofa in the lobby). Hope to see you there!



UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

SUNDAY SERVICES

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

LIFESPAN LEARNING

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

FINANCE

Janis Luvaas, Treasurer
Lana Barnes
Bill Bosch
Susan Kaphammer
Debra Kroon
Kia Tudor

MEMBERSHIP

Carol Guthrie, Chair
Suki Smaglik

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Lana Barnes
Phil Dindia
Bill Jacobs
Joy McKinney

AUCTION

Carole Sahlstrand, Chair
Nancy Born

ADOPT A HIGHWAY

Denise Edwards, Coordinator
(Active seasonally)

MUSIC

Sunny Sonker, Pianist

ADMINISTRATOR

Hannah Born

BOOKKEEPER

Kia Tudor

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