

UNIFIRE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YAKIMA

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

SEPTEMBER 2024

September 1: Labor Day — No Service

As is usual for holiday weekends, we are not holding a regular service. Instead, we will have an "open house" -- come enjoy coffee, snacks and fellowship at a "non-regular" service!

September 8: Water Communion

This is a time to renew our faith – faith in our community, faith in ourselves and faith in one another. This service for all ages will feature the mingling of waters brought by each of us. Congregants will have the opportunity to briefly share why their water is special to them, and pour it into a large bowl, representing our joining together. Facilitated by Susan Kaphammer and Linda King.

September 15: Potluck Picnic Brunch

Let us enjoy communing in the fresh air in a nod to harvest time and autumn solstice. All ages, members, friends, family are welcome and encouraged to join in fun, fellowship, and a meal. The church will be closed, and we will gather at Chesterley Park at 40th Ave. and River Road at the large, covered area with picnic tables. Bring your own chair if you prefer. Bring a potluck dish to share included a serving spoon, ladle, or fork if needed to serve it up. (No electricity is available.) Plates, napkins, plastic utensils, and water/drink will be provided. The restroom is nearby. There is a playground and lots of lawn. Bring a game if you wish. I hear cornhole, a currently popular version of bean bag throwing, will be one of them. Organized and led by Denise Edwards.

September 22: Why We Aren't Lemmings by Rev. Alex Holt

Historically, Unitarians have enjoyed a somewhat contrarian reputation. The myth of lemmings all jumping over a cliff isn't really true. We generally don't jump over the symbolic cliff together, either. How do we keep centered and balanced in an age when we are expected to just follow the crowd? Or, is there a time to risk it all together?

Alex Holt has been a transitions minister, especially to smaller UU congregations for nearly 30 years. He served congregations all over the United States including Oregon, Washington State, Illinois, South Carolina, Texas, and Pennsylvania. From 2009-2010, Alex served UUCY as consulting minister. He is currently retired but occasionally speaks at smaller congregations, including this Sunday as our Guest Minister. Alex and his partner, Debra, are practicing Buddhists and live in Oregon.

September 29: Living Love Through the Practice of Invitation

Life can be understood as a continuous series of invitations that we accept or that we dismiss, as well as invitations that we offer to others and, perhaps, to ourselves. This message by Susan Kaphammer is the first of our church year's Soul Matters series. We are asked to consider the invitations that inform our spiritual lives by inviting love into the center.

Perspectives from UUCY President...

UUCY BEGINNING NEW CHURCH YEAR

In our distant past, UUCY took a break from services in the summer with more formal services starting a new “Church Year” in September. Even when we employed ministers, they took their time off in the summer. Sunday services then were typically informal and lightly attended. This year your Sunday Services Committee has provided engaging “Coffee and Conversation” services that generated impressive attendance and lively, thoughtful sharing. This summer can be celebrated as a time of personal and congregational growth in our liberal religious faith!

Now, with traditional “Water Communion” on September 8, and our potluck picnic on September 15, we are well into a new cycle. Let’s credit our Sunday Services Committee: Debra Kroon as chair, with Linda King, Bill Jacobs, Susan Kaphammer, Denise Edwards and Sunny Sonker. Committee members often speak of enjoying our committee meetings as we work hard to develop the schedule of varied, meaningful services. And we laugh often as we enjoy each other, the work, and the results. The committee meetings, usually on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:30AM – next meeting on September 3 – are open to everyone. Bring your ideas or just come and join us as we discuss and plan and laugh together!

UUCY Lifespan Learning continues to grow with our first adult program beginning this month! Called “Starting Point,” the 4-session experience will be valuable for newer members as well as those who have been coming for a while and those of us who have been coming for a long while! See the article in this UniFire for more information.

Your UUCY board meets the second Thursday of each month at 1 PM, and as with all committees, it is open for anyone to attend. One of the board’s primary responsibilities is to monitor and manage the finances of our congregation. We clarified policy requiring prior approval of purchases. Purchases under \$500 and covered by a budget line item may be approved by the appropriate committee chair or by the president. Items exceeding this amount, or not fully covered by the current budget, require board approval. Every month the board reviews financial reports; we are happy to be paying our way with our pledge income.

Highlights from the August board meeting include taking a step forward toward implementing “Hybrid Services,” that is, presenting our in-person services online as well. Jacob Tudor, a newer addition to our congregation, reviewed our equipment needs and offered to donate a laptop. The board approved purchase of a camera and accessories. The next steps will be learning how to use it and lining up people to help on Sundays. Anyone with interest in working with this technology, let the office or Susan Kaphammer know.

The board also voted to purchase a portable accessibility ramp to make it easier for individuals using canes, or walkers, or wheelchairs to make their way from the parking lot to our front door.

Our attention to details like the ramp and working to provide services online are ways we can expand our welcome. But we – you and I and all of our members – are the real keys to inviting and welcoming others into our community. Let others know about us, and especially continue the kind, warm-hearted greetings we give each other when we gather.

Take care,

Susan Kaphammer

DATES TO NOTE: Tuesday, September 10 – Board Agenda drafted

Thursday, September 12 – 1:00 PM Board Meeting

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.

CALLING ALL UUCY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS!

Here's your opportunity to make a positive contribution to electing the POTUS candidate of your choice!

The Social Justice Committee has ordered 500 postcards from the Progressive Turnout Project to be filled out by hand, addressed, stamped and mailed to voters in "battleground states." (We had to choose a single state, so we chose Pennsylvania, because it has the greatest number of Electoral College votes of all the swing states.)

The postcards will arrive by Labor Day, which will give us about 6 weeks to prepare them for mailing (mid to late October.) We'll need to fill them out according to a script prepared by the Project. The script will urge people to vote, but will not explicitly endorse a candidate, since churches and other 501c3 nonprofit organizations are prohibited by law from doing that. (We all know that this law is routinely violated by evangelical churches, apparently without consequence, but we at UUCY believe in law and order!) Full disclosure: the mailing list, of course, has been selected to target registered voters who are Democrats and/or tend to support progressive policies.

We will schedule "postcard parties" (probably for an hour after Sunday services) for those who would like to help fill out the postcards. Also, folks can get postcards from the church and fill them out at home. These should not be mailed directly, but must be returned to the church no later than October 13 so we can mail all the postcards on the target date for mailing.

Last, but not least, the cost of the 500 stamps we will need is \$280. We would greatly appreciate any donations, small or large, to help us cover this expense. We will have a special donation jar out on Sundays for donations, and checks can be mailed to the church. Make checks out to UUCY, and be sure to note in the memo line "Postcards" so Hannah will know what the check is for!

Questions? Please contact any member of the Social Justice Committee, listed below!

Thanks,
UUCY Social Justice Committee

Phil Dindia
Lana Barnes
Joy McKinney
Chuck Forster
Bill Jacobs

GETTING TO KNOW YOUU

SUMMER 2024 KIDS' DISCOVERY GROUP

JULY 29-AUGUST 2

by Denise Edwards



Celebrate! We did it!

In June, when the idea of a summer children's program came up during a Lifespan Learning meeting, parents said they liked the idea, leaders volunteered, and it was on its way!

The first meetings revealed a group of enthusiastic and committed parents, some being relatively new to Unitarian Universalism. We took measured steps and blended our talents. Once a framework was established, each person took responsibility for leading one day of the week while being supported by others during planning and on site. We all have busy schedules and using a spectrum of communication tools allowed us to maintain ongoing communication throughout the experience.

Children learned UU concepts and principles paired with activities. Some of these were: Everyone is important, we each have a say and we vote, we can share happy and sad feelings and experiences (joys and concerns). They experienced the flaming chalice as a UU symbol, various ways it may look, and they heard about reasons we may light one.

We learned and sang "This Little Light of Mine," made clay chalices that we used all week, made and gave away friendship bracelets, meditated paying attention to sound and our own bodies, made pudding, tasted and smelled a wide variety of snacks, and more.

A few weeks later, feedback from a parent is that her children had fun and are asking when we will do it again. They are voting at home and spontaneously making chalices!

This weeklong summer experience provided an introduction to religious education for nine children ages 2-12 years old. These children have been attending UUCY for anywhere from a few months to a few years, but generally not all together at the same time. Children and adults learned a lot about each other, working and playing together and "Getting to know youU."

It was my pleasure to be a part of this endeavor with these fine women, girls, and boys: 2024 parent teachers: Jen Berry, Jessica Blair, Denise Edwards, Oksana Edwards, Aurora Walker.

Children ages 2-12 years: Lux, Nova, Leo, Flint, Ellie, Emma, Cambria, Zenith, l'zavien (baby Darby was elsewhere learning the ropes of being a 1-year-old)

LIFESPAN LEARNING FOR ADULTS TO BEGIN SEPTEMBER 28

EXPERIENCE STARTING POINT:

For those new to Unitarian Universalism

For those wishing to renew and grow their UU connection

Plan to learn about the UU journey by experiencing it! We will begin with personal spiritual journeys, move on to the historical journey of Unitarian Universalism and our congregation, and move into the shared journey that church members and friends travel together.

Classes begin on Saturday, September 28, 9:45 a.m. – 12 noon at UUCY and continue for 4 sessions, every other week on September 28, October 12, October 26 and November 9. Attending each session will enhance the individual and group experience.

Sign up at church or email the church office at admin@uucyakima.org.

NO ADOPT A HIGHWAY IN AUGUST

We will not be going out on Sept. 7 as listed in the August Unifire. I need to gather more information from WSDOT and from UUCY team members to determine if another Saturday will be possible this season. Check the weekly updates to see if another Saturday is scheduled.

Here's the details if you want them: At the time of this writing (8/27) both of my WSDOT contacts for adopt-a-highway are away at a training. The information that I got from the person available is that everything is burnt west of the Oak Creek feeding station. So, part of our adopted area is burned. It is not clear currently if it is recommended for us to go out to cover the unburned part. The highway is open.

Crews are working to clear tree debris and finish guardrail replacement. In addition, Scott usually picks up the road signs, puts them up, and takes them down. He is unable to do that due to his hand injury.



UUCY COFFEE GATHERINGS

Join us every Wednesday at 9 a.m. at **Catalyst Coffee** (221 E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.) for coffee, companionship and conversation!

**No Game
Night
in September!**

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!

Book Club to Discuss Poignant Memoir of an Adoptee

Everyone is welcome to join our friendly community of readers for the September Book Club meeting, on **Thursday, September 12, at 5:00 PM at our church home at 407 N 1st Street, Suite 3**. Bring your own beverage, if you wish. Optional: bring a finger-food snack to share.

You still have time to read this and join the discussion: copies are available in print, electronic and Large Print editions from the Yakima Valley Libraries, and from Inklings Bookshop with a book club discount.

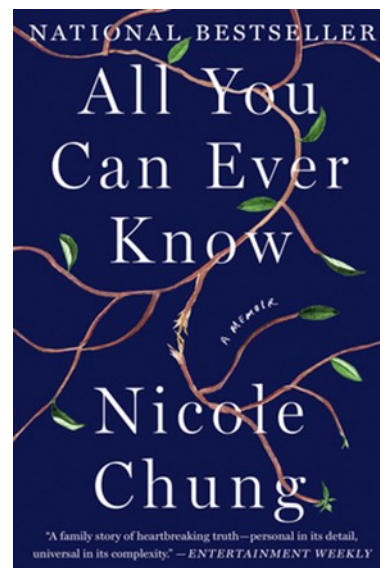
Books are something social - a writer speaking to a reader - so I think making the reading of a book the center of a social event, the meeting of a book club, is a brilliant idea.
-- Yann Martel

***All You Can Ever Know: A Memoir* by Nicole Chung. 2019. 256 pages.**

Nicole Chung was born severely premature, placed for adoption by her Korean parents, and raised by a white family in a sheltered Oregon town. From childhood, she heard the story of her adoption as a comforting, prepackaged myth. She believed that her biological parents had made the ultimate sacrifice in the hope of giving her a better life, that forever feeling slightly out of place was her fate as a transracial adoptee.

But as Nicole grew up—facing prejudice her adoptive family couldn't see, finding her identity as an Asian American and as a writer, becoming ever more curious about where she came from—she wondered if the story she'd been told was the whole truth.

With warmth, candor, and startling insight, Nicole Chung tells of her search for the people who gave her up, which coincided with the birth of her own child. *All You Can Ever Know* is a profound, moving chronicle of surprising connections and the repercussions of unearthing painful family secrets.



**Named a Best Book of the Year by *The Washington Post*,
NPR, *Time*, *The Boston Globe*, and more**

"*All You Can Ever Know* is full of insights on race, motherhood, and family of all kinds, but what sets it apart is the compassion Chung brings to every facet of her search for identity and every person portrayed in these pages. This book should be required reading for anyone who has ever had, wanted, or found a family, which is to say, everyone."

— Celeste Ng, author of *Little Fires Everywhere*

"*All You Can Ever Know* honors the grand complexity of love, family, and identity, while showing us how these things can save us and break us with devastating clarity and beauty."

— *Today*

UUCY TEAMS AND LEADERSHIP

SUNDAY SERVICES

CHAIR: Debra Kroon

Denise Edwards

Bill Jacobs

Susan Kaphammer

Linda King

Sunny Sonker

AUCTION

CHAIR POSITION OPEN

Nancy Born

LIFESPAN LEARNING

CHAIR POSITION OPEN

Susan Kaphammer

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Phil Dindia

Lana Barnes

Bill Jacobs

Chuck Forster

Joy McKinney

FINANCE

TREASURER: Janis Luvaas

Bill Jacobs

Your 2024 to 2025 UUCY Board of Trustees is:

<i>Board President</i>	Susan Kaphammer	susanlkap@gmail.com
<i>Board Vice Pres.</i>	Ray Yates	raycyates@gmail.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Nancy Born	nancyjborn@gmail.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Mary Brunelle	almybrufam@gmail.com
<i>Trustee</i>	Chuck Forster	bddirtpile@gmail.com



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