

# UNIFIRE

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF YAKIMA

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

## JANUARY 2025

### **January 5: The Practice of Story**

Story is a fundamental and universal aspect of being human. From earliest times, the world encountered through human senses has been made understandable by construction and sharing of stories. In turn, the stories repeated and adopted shape how the world is experienced and understood, for both good and bad. In this service Susan Kaphammer will prompt us to take a look at this power of stories to frame our personal lives, our communities and our world. When we recognize the stories, we have the chance to enrich or change them.

### **January 12: Coffee House Poets**

Join Cindy Lamb, Chuck Forster and other members of the Yakima Coffeehouse Poets for a service celebrating original poetry. Chuck will be the celebrant so, of course, come prepared to sing.

### **January 19: Tune In Together — TBA**

Join as we gather in person to view a previously recorded service from one of our greater UU communities.

### **January 26: Universalism**

The Unitarians and the Universalists merged in 1961 to form the UUA -- the Unitarian-Universalist Association, of which we are a part. The Unitarians were the bigger of the two, and it sometimes seems like the Universalists have become UUA's ugly stepchild. But the ideas that gave rise to Universalism (originally a Christian sect) are important not only to Christian-leaning UUs, but also to those of us who identify as secular humanists. Bill Jacobs will briefly explore the history of Universalism and its relevance today.

## *Perspectives from UUCY President...*

**“There is no path to happiness: happiness is the path.”**

*—attributed to Gautam Buddha*

I am tempted to approach the New Year making resolutions meant to create a “better me” sometime in the upcoming year. I look ahead to a slimmer, more fit, more well-read me; I’ll be better and happier when the resolutions have yielded their improvements. But the quote above reminds me that resolutions are not a path to some future happiness. Rather, such resolutions, at their best, serve only as minor guidelines for my life, the path of which offers happiness to be experienced every day.

In our congregation, as well, we may be tempted to believe that our Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima will be better and we’ll be happier with our church when...? When we have room to expand activities with our children... when we have a real kitchen... when we have more members... But I invite you to pause and realize that we don’t have to wait for happiness until we achieve certain objectives. Rather, we can revel in the joy, support and success that is inherent with our blessed community.

This does not mean that we do not or should not have goals we are working toward. Indeed, your UUCY board, committees, and individual members take actions small and large that move us to more fully embody our mission: We celebrate community and promote spirituality, justice, responsibility, and compassion.

UUCY is not all it could be; we will never achieve some endpoint to say, “Now we are happy.” But that is not the point. We are, right now, active and whole and meaningful for members, friends, newcomers. Note that fifty-nine -- 59!! -- individuals of all ages gathered for our Christmas Eve service. The laughter and listening, the singing and the quiet reflection of candlelight was our gift to ourselves and others.

Our UUCY path, originating in the 1950s, stretches before us. Let us be open to the happiness abundant on our path at every step, and take this joy and strength to continue enriching the hearts, minds, and lives of all we touch.

At our December board meeting, the newly revived membership committee shared preliminary plans to help strengthen our welcome for visitors as well as assuring a smooth process of greeting attendees to our services. The committee welcomes anyone interested. Thank you, Lana Barnes and Jen Berry for your thoughtful, enthusiastic efforts.

The Board also discussed Zooming our Sunday Services. Tentative plans are to do a trial videoing of the first service in January. If all goes well, we can begin making the services available for members and friends over Zoom. Watch the weekly update, usually emailed on Thursdays, for the Zoom link. For now, services

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

## *Perspectives from UUCY President...*

will only be provided to view at the same time they happen; they will not be recorded or posted. Anyone with questions or concerns about attending services and perhaps being visible on Zoom can opt-out of permission for being filmed by calling the office.

The Board also adopted facility use procedures. First priority is for UUCY programs and events. The building can also be scheduled by church members for life celebrations and by groups that promote the mission and values of UUCY as long as at least one UUCY member belongs to the group. In all cases, a UUCY member must attend and be responsible for leaving the facility as found and securing the doors. No fees will be charged, but donations will be accepted.

In closing, Happy New Year to all, and remember to take in the happiness of our current path!

Take care,

*Susan Kaphammer*, president

### **DATES TO NOTE:**

**Friday, January 3 – board agenda drafted; committee reports due**

**Thursday, January 9 – 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.*



## GAME NIGHT TO RETURN IN 2025!

In the new year, we will be resuming a monthly game night. The first instance will be on **Friday, January 3** starting at 6:30 p.m. Bring your favorite game or try something new! There will be treats too!

Photo by [Dave Photoz](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## LIVESTREAMING & YOU!

### *(Privacy Notice)*

Beginning in January, tentatively on January 12, 2025, our Sunday service will be available on Zoom to members and friends who cannot attend in person. Look for notification and the Zoom link in our Thursday update. The livestream will only be available during the Sunday service itself and only for members and friends who access the link via the UU Thursday update e-mail. No recordings will be saved. If you have reservations about the possibility of having your image seen by UU 'zoomers' during the service, please contact the UUCY office.

## 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!

## 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.)

# ***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](#).

**LEARNING CIRCLES** are small discussion cohorts based on a book or podcast that provide:

- Important learning about white supremacy, racism, and our national history
- The opportunity to build trust and go deep in small group discussions over time
- A safe place to have difficult discussions and deal with discomfort
- An opportunity to create and strengthen relationships with others
- Connection, focus and purpose in a virtual setting

### **How Do LEARNING CIRCLES Work?**

- Each cohort (typically 4-12) gathers for a series (from 6-12 sessions) of facilitated Zoom discussions.
- Register for specific Learning Circle(s). Meeting dates & times vary.
- Everyone is given the opportunity to share reactions, then discuss as a group
- We ask that you plan to attend all sessions so we can build bonds of trust and insight

For questions contact Jody Feldman @ [feldmanjody@gmail.com](mailto:feldmanjody@gmail.com).

## **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)

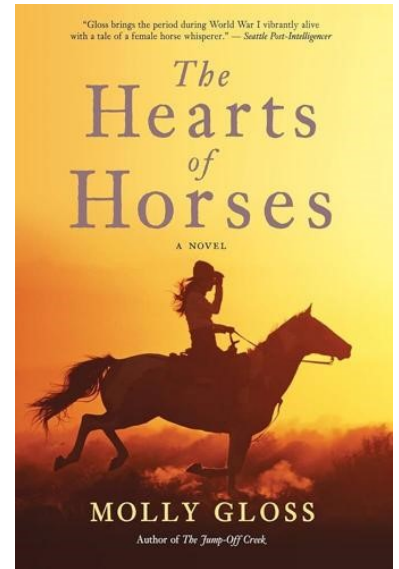
Questions: [info@whalecoastak.org](mailto:info@whalecoastak.org)



# HISTORICAL FICTION SET IN EASTERN OREGON FOR JANUARY BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION

The November 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 the award-winning historical fiction book *March* by Geraldine Brooks, which offered a different perspective on the family of *Little Women*.

The next book takes us to eastern Oregon in the winter of 1917. Award-winning author Molly Gloss' *The Hearts of Horses* is an elegant, heartwarming story about the profound connections between people and animals.



## Here's what reviewers had to say:

"[An] affecting, timely novel that lays explicit emphasis on empathy as a yardstick of humanity." — *San Francisco Chronicle*

"Not just a horse story or a tale of the West, Gloss's moving novel . . . is a story not soon forgotten." — *Bookpage*

"Gloss's lyrical story follows the mesmerizing journey of 19-year-old Martha Lessen." — *Hallmark Magazine*

"The moving story of a . . . strong-willed woman bucking society's norm to gently train horses without breaking their spirit." — Temple Grandin



The first week of December, Rosemary Saul will have eight copies of *The Hearts of Horses* from the Yakima Valley Libraries Book Club kit to distribute. Copies are also available on Kindle, with print and electronic editions available at the Yakima Valley Libraries, and from Inklings Bookshop; indicate it is a book club selection for a discount.

Then plan to meet on **Thursday, January 9, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.** at our church home at 407 N 1st Street, Suite 3 to share your thoughts and reactions to the novel.

# 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)

*UUCY OFFICE: 407 N. 1st St, Ste 3, Yakima, WA 98901 • uucyakima.org  
509-453-8448 • admin@uucyakima.org*

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