



Encouraging Spiritual Growth

They told me I was a “girl” when I was born, and every day after that. I tried so hard to be that, for so long. But I’ve been out of place in “women’s” bathrooms my whole life—it’s usually the gasp; the horrified stare; the obvious double-checking the sign on the door. Sometimes it’s, “What are you doing in here!?” or “Get the hell out of the women’s bathroom!” A dozen times I’ve been physically handled, shoved out the door, or groped roughly by women trying to “prove” their point.

Entering a sex-segregated bathroom requires courage, every single time. My heart races. My mouth dries out. I lower my head, move as fast as I can, pitch my voice high if I have to speak. Although I’m clear it doesn’t work, I try to put on emotional armor in an attempt to protect myself.

Last fall, at a concert, I was preparing to use the bathroom and when I saw the all-gender restroom sign, I grinned wide and exhaled. And then— a woman gave me that horrified stare I know so well and half-screamed, “This is the women’s bathroom!” cont. p2



*Yesterday I was clever, So I wanted to
change the world.
Today I am wise, so I am changing
myself.*

Rumi



The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Jonesboro

201 West Oak Street, Jonesboro, AR 72401
PO BOX 1414, Jonesboro, AR 72403-1414

info@jonesborouu.org

www.JonesboroUU.org

facebook.com/JonesboroUU

Instagram.com/UUJonesboro

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Betty Stafford, Editor

Jennifer Clay, Layout

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“This is actually an all-gender bathroom,” I responded, hoping we could end it there. I'm kind of glad I don't remember the rest, only that it hurt more because I thought I was safe. I went outside for the rest of intermission and cried the tears I needed to cry. (I'm grateful not to mind crying in public.)

My humanity is not up for debate, and neither is yours, I imagine saying to the stranger in the bathroom. I also imagine saying, I wish for you the sensitivity and grace to take ten seconds before you enter future bathrooms to remind yourself you could encounter someone non-binary or gender-bendy. I invite you to remember how much courage it takes for them to be there at all. I invite you to simply assume that everyone in the bathroom knows where they are.

May we breathe into a moment of gentling. . . May we whisper to each other of belonging—of I belong and you belong and we belong, just as we are.

Rev. Li Kynvi (they/them), at First Parish Church of Groton, MA, is also a hospice music therapist.

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP OF JONESBORO

WORDS OF AFFIRMATION

We come together in freedom,
for pursuit of truth,
service to humanity,
and fulfillment of self.

OCTOBER FELLOWSHIP

OCTOBER 1

Dane Dormio will guide our group through “Qigong—A Gentle Mind/Body Practice,” combining gentle exercise, breath-work, and meditation in a 30-minute activity.

OCTOBER 8

Rediscovering the Old Farmer's Almanac. As the 232nd edition is released, Jennifer Clay will discuss the history, weather forecasts, and predictions of this little yellow book.

OCTOBER 8 - PEANUT BUTTER SUNDAY

The Second Sunday is Peanut Butter Sunday. Please contribute peanut butter or other wholesome foods to the increasing needs of the Food Pantry.

OCTOBER 15

Karen Yanowitz will lead us in a service titled “Being Religious in the 21st Century.” What does it mean to say you are a religious person? Would the question even mean the same thing if we asked it of someone in the 19th century as opposed to today? Many UUs don't even want to claim the word “religious,” but maybe they should!

OCTOBER 22

“Food & Memory with Karen Yanowitz. At the last Pot Luck, Karen commented “We should recruit people to the Fellowship by telling them we have lots of good cooks who like to share their skills at monthly potlucks.” Come hear a service built around the ideas of UU principles, food, and cooking!

This is our Third Sunday Pot Luck. Please bring a dish to share that evokes a positive memory for you!

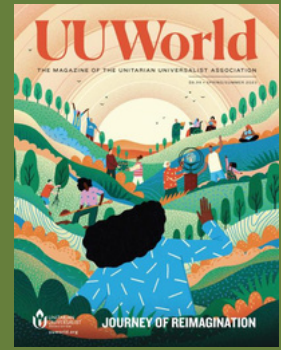
OCTOBER 29

Jennifer Clay will lead us in a “Spooky Service” followed by our annual Halloween Party. Feel free to dress up. There may be crafts; there may be tricks. Please bring some Halloween or other October holiday-themed treats to share.

Weekly services are planned by the Worship Committee. If you would like to join the Worship Committee or have an idea for service, please email info@jonesborouu.org.



The UUA Welcomes the Rev.
Dr. Sofia Betancourt as the
Tenth UUA President



UU World

Recipe CHILI CON CARNE

From the kitchen of **SUE GARRISON**

Serves **6-8**

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs ground beef
- 1 can whole tomatoes
- 1 can crushed tomatoes
- 2 cans dark red kidney beans
- 1 Tablespoon Cumin
- 2 Tablespoons Chili powder or to taste
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

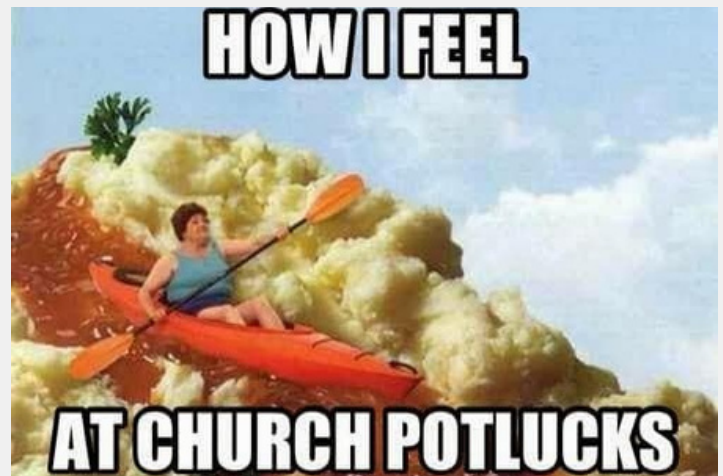
DIRECTIONS

Brown ground beef in large pan/ Dutch Oven.
Add all other ingredients.

Simmer up to an hour until whole tomatoes are soft. Serve in a bowl with condiments like shredded cheese or sour cream. For a big family, to extend, we served it over rice. I found out in the Army that this is how they serve it in Puerto Rico!

Summer's End

Samhain in the pagan calendar (roughly October 31-November 1) celebrates the end of the harvest and the start of the coldest half of the year. Samhain is also recognized by many practitioners as the beginning of the spiritual new year. The recognition of Samhain is reflected in the UUA's Sixth Principle—"Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature."





Our Interdependent Web

Wildlife, plants, and insects evolved to coexist with the night sky, illuminated by the stars and moon. But humans have transformed the dark. Artificial lights have brightened naturally lit night skies. A 2016 study estimated that 80% of the world lives under skyglow, the term used to describe the brightening of the night sky in places where people live. That same year NOAA reported that less than 30% of humanity could clearly view the Milky Way galaxy. In most areas, human-produced light obscures the soft glow of more than 100 billion stars.

This excess of light at night is a form of pollution that can harm wildlife and plants. Artificial light pollution is caused by any kind of outdoor lighting—street-lamps, porch lighting, home/office buildings—that leave lights on throughout the night without the use of shades or blinds. Light pollution disrupts the natural sleep-wake cycle—the circadian rhythm. It also distorts natural rhythms in seasonal lighting that provide important cues to all life—for some species, when to begin hibernating or migrating. It changes the time that plants and animals spend awake or asleep, and it alters the activities they typically carry out during their waking hours.

The impact of light on such species as birds and sea turtles are known, but few studies have evaluated the interaction between insects, pollinators, plants, and artificial light. What has emerged is that artificial light can drastically alter the behavior of insects and pollinators, affecting the ability of plants to generate fruit and reproduce. In 2019, scientists in the UK studied the effect of streetlamps on moths—70% of them flew towards the streetlamps and away from flowering plants, thus reducing plant pollination.

A later study found that nighttime pollinators were less likely to visit plants underneath artificial light. 62% fewer insects visited the plants in a meadow illuminated at night with LED streetlamps than a meadow naturally lit by the moon. Some nocturnal pollinators are attracted to and disoriented by artificial light, expending precious energy and distracting them from their nighttime routines and pollination duties, resulting in fewer plants yielding fruit and reproducing. Artificial lighting also increases a nocturnal pollinator's risk of predation because they are easier to see. This risk is thought to be one of the factors contributing to declines in nocturnal pollinators globally.

What can we do?

- Keep light indoors; close blinds or draw curtains at night to keep light inside.
- Use outdoor light where and when you need it; keep it from drifting into the sky.
- Use warmer colored light bulbs and minimize blue-violet light (temps no more than 3000 kelvins).
- Plant a moon garden (white or light-colored flowers) for nighttime pollinators.

Joanna Gilkeson, EarthSky, 8/31/23



Fingerprints on the Wall

By Rev. Katie Romano Griffin (she/her) serves as the Senior Minister at All Souls Indy in Indianapolis, IN.

For most of my childhood, my mom was a stay-at-home mom. She focused on managing our household and raising two rambunctious children with passion and verve. And our house? When I think back to those years, two scents come to mind: Garlic cooking on the stove, because all good meals start with garlic, right? And bleach, because nothing is truly clean in the house unless it has met with bleach. When she wasn't corralling my brother and me or magically making pennies stretch, we were just as likely to see my mom salsa dancing with the fridge—celebrating life while making dinner—as we were to see her using bleach to scrub a fingerprint only she could see off the wall.

My household has never been the tight ship my mom ran, but my walls were somehow fingerprint-free until the pandemic hit. My oldest son moved home when he lost all of his jobs in one day. My youngest was suddenly taking online school and we parents were working from home full-time. Within weeks there was chaos in the house. Fingerprints were everywhere, dust bunnies materialized in corners, missing socks multiplied, and I had to relearn 10th grade history between zoom appointments.

One night I was sipping on a glass of Malbec and staring at a fingerprint on the wall as the boys were having their second (or third?) post-dinner snack. In that moment I realized how much I cherished that fingerprint. As challenging as this time has been, it has also been a gift to have both of my children together. As they get older, it seems harder and harder for us to be together in the same place. So I'm leaving the fingerprints on the walls, even as they return to their jobs and busier lives as things reopen. I'm also salsa dancing with the fridge as I prepare each meal I get to share with them at home as we lean into these times together.



Peanut Butter Sunday

Yes! Now that we're meeting in person and on a regular schedule, we're also resuming some of our usual activities. Peanut Butter Sunday is one of these, in support of Helping Neighbors, an interfaith food pantry serving residents in Craighead County, located at 501 W. Highland Dr., Jonesboro. The Pantry is managed by a volunteer board of directors representing 24 sponsoring organizations (churches and the synagogue), and the Fellowship has been a member since the Pantry's inception in 1995.

Why peanut butter? Seniors and families with children are the target recipients of this item because it is a highly nutritious, digestible, and easy-to-use food for those without peanut allergies and very welcome to Pantry families.

Your donations to the Pantry (in jars or cash) are always welcome. The Fellowship has traditionally collected PB (creamy preferred) on the second Sunday of the month. September's collection amounted to 23.5 lbs. Thank you, contributors.

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 	2	3	4 	5 Hoshana Rabbah	6	7
8 	9 	10 	11 	12 	13	14
15 Bada'dashain October 15 - October 24	16	17	18 	19	20 	21
22 	23	24 	25	26 	27 	28
29 	30	31 HAPPY HALLOWEEN				

October Months

- Squirrel Awareness Month - Go see the squirrels at ASTATE!
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- ADHD Awareness Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Down Syndrome Awareness Month
- LGBT History Month
- National Diabetes Month
- Positive Attitude Month
- Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month

October Weeks

- Mental Health Awareness Week - October 1 - 7 Remember to take time for yourself this week!
- Bada'dashain October 15 - 24
- National Friends of Libraries Week - October 15-21
- National Food Bank Week - October 16-20
- Free Speech Week - October 16-22

October Days

- October 1 - International Coffee Day
- This might as well be a UU religious holiday!
- October 9 - Indigenous Peoples' Day
- October 10 - World Inclusion Day
- October 11 - National Coming Out Day
- October 12 - National Freethought Day
- October 14 - Be Bald & Be Free Day
- October 20 - National Mammography Day
- October 24 - World Polio Day
- October 26 - National Pumpkin Day
- October 27 - National Black Cat Day
- October 28 - National Chocolate Day
- October 29 - National Cat Day
- October 31 - Halloween

UU Fellowship Sundays at 10am

October 8th - Peanut Butter Sunday

October 22nd - Potluck

October 29 - Halloween Party

Details on page 2

OPEN HOUSE UPDATE:

We will host an open house on Tuesday, November 14th from 5pm to 8pm in the Round Room at the Craighead County Public Library.