



# The View

December 2025

Granite Peak  
Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
882 Sunset Avenue  
Prescott, AZ 86305  
(928) 541-0000  
<http://www.prescottuu.org>

**Worship :** All worship services are held at 10:00 am, unless otherwise noted. Join us on ZOOM or in-person for the Sunday Service. Please see the Weekly Peak for any updates.

**December 7, Rev. Michelle LaGrave: *Holy Dark.***

In this season of diminishing light, we'll reflect on what is holy about darkness.

**December 14, Rev. Michelle LaGrave: *Soul Matters: Choosing Hope.***

Is hope a choice that can be made or is it something that must emerge organically? How do we transition from hopelessness to hopefulness? Can a community hold hope for others?

**December 21, Rev. Michelle LaGrave: *No-Rehearsal Christmas Pageant.***

Come in costume or grab some props at the door! We'll have a rollickin' good time as we retell the traditional story of Jesus' birth in some new and fun ways.

**December 21, 7 pm: *Solstice Celebration***

**December 24, 5 pm, Rev. Michelle Christmas Eve Service: *Lessons and Carols.***

Join us for this (mostly) traditional service of lessons, carols, and candle-light.

**December 28, Meg Bohrman: *Spiraling Into the Center***

During these days, when the light is just newly born and beginning to return to the world, marking the Brand New Year, let us remember that the Circle of Life is always turning and that the End is always the Beginning. We will explore how to be the Light in these Dark times.

**Our Covenant:**

Love is the doctrine of this congregation,  
the quest for truth its sacrament and service is its prayer.  
To dwell together in peace, to seek knowledge in freedom,  
to serve others in community, thus do we covenant together.

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## Ministerial Musings

Rev. Michelle LaGrave

Our congregation recently engaged in a Start-Up Workshop with the Rev. Tania Marquez of the Pacific Western Region of the

UUA. These workshops are meant to support the congregation and the minister at the beginning of each new ministry and are considered important enough to be included in each new ministerial agreement. The primary purpose of these workshops is to lay a strong foundation for shared ministry among new ministry partners.

One thing we learned about is how to give feedback. I'd like to lift up three of the most important components we learned about. The first is to ask ourselves if this is a situation in which feedback is wanted or appropriate. And if it is, am I the appropriate person to give that feedback? An example of feedback that is wanted and appropriate and can be given by any member or friend of the congregation is to answer the call for feedback that has been running in the Weekly Peak for the last few weeks about announcements. We want to hear how you, as individuals, best like to receive announcements and how you best remember information that is shared with you. You can send your thoughts to [announcements@prescottuu.org](mailto:announcements@prescottuu.org).

The second component is to give feedback directly and not anonymously. Directly means giving feedback to the person who is actually responsible for the task. It is important that anyone receiving feedback knows who it comes from so they can ask questions about it if anything is unclear. If you are feeling uncertain about what to say or are finding it difficult to approach a person on your own, enlist a friend who can coach you in figuring out what to say or can come with you for some moral support.

The third component is to give feedback constructively, with facts, and kindly. Coming to a person with potential solutions to a problem can help everyone think outside of the box and get more creative.

Stating facts about what you observed, and leaving out any assumptions you may have made about what your observations might mean, can help everyone to focus on the issue at hand and avoid escalating the situation into a conflict. Most importantly, though, and above all else, any feedback or criticism given must be made kindly.

## From the President

Rick Denney



Dear Friends,

I continue to be delighted with the visual transformation of our sanctuary. There are plans in the works to install sound-dampening panels to moderate the excessive echo and to acquire wearable, wireless microphones. These ongoing efforts should improve the clarity of the spoken word.

On Saturday, November 15, a representative from the UUA conducted a "Start-up Workshop" on Zoom for Reverend Michelle. Those of us who attended reviewed the history of our congregation had an opportunity to develop a broader understanding of how the organization operates. With such talented members, an inspiring new sanctuary, and fresh, inspiring Ministerial leadership, GPUUC has a bright future to look forward to!

One yearly tradition of the GPUUC Board is to identify general guiding goals for the fiscal year. To ensure that everyone is aware of this year's Board goals, I summarize them below:

- Build connections with new members and friends of all ages by inviting them to become actively involved in Granite Peak activities and mission.
- Expand and focus Granite Peak outreach to our neighbors through locally targeted Social Justice work.
- Provide a safe and healthy campus with complete construction and needed repairs to support activities that reflect our UU values.

I believe these goals reflect the diverse, ongoing activities and projects undertaken by our cadre of amazing volunteers. Kudos to all your good work!

The Board has been asked by several members to establish guidelines concerning pet dogs on campus, especially in our lovely, newly renovated sanctuary. Many of us love our canine family members. However, some folks have allergies; others simply are uncomfortable around dogs. The Board suggests a compromise: (1) Only qualified service dogs be welcome in the newly renovated, sacred sanctuary. (This applies all the time, not just during services.) (2) All well-behaved canine friends are welcome on the rest of the campus (Davis Hall, office and RE building). I urge dog owners to be sensitive to the feelings of others and consider leashes where appropriate.

Several of our regular choir members sang with the Prescott Interfaith Choir on Thursday, November 20, for the Prescott interfaith Thanksgiving community celebration. A remarkably diverse collection of musical groups, speakers, and a talented mime came together to call for Gratitude and Thankfulness. It was inspiring for all participants and attendees.

Karen and I are looking forward to family from Austin joining us for Thanksgiving. I wish all a meaningful Thanksgiving Holiday!

## Board Buzz

Jo Sprague, Secretary, Board of Trustees



November has been a busy month for the Board of Trustees as we continue with the many transitions that are underway. Most visible and exciting has been our settling into the new sanctuary. Following our first service on October 5, a perfect blend of the divine and the rowdy, we have continued to work closely with the Construction team, the staff, our contractors and vendors, and several committees. We thank them for their hard work and the congregation for its patience.

We knew in advance that sound adjustment was going to be a challenge. "It's totally baffling" one member said. "I'll echo that," said another. Finally, the tiny slits of light in a couple of spots on the front windows have been dealt with, overhead lighting is adjusted, large sound baffle boards have been expertly placed,

improved microphones are on order, methods for hearing aid connections (possibly via cell phone app) are under review.

Congregational opinions will be sought out for creating a decor that is compatible with our mission and values. When a dedication service is scheduled for some time in the spring, wouldn't it be wonderful to display some artwork that captures the Granite Peak spirit: the inclusiveness of community, the energy and joy we share, the sacred calm of sanctuary?

Meantime, there has been major attention to returning Davis Hall to its primary usage, making sure that it has the equipment for our needs and those of our renters. Watch for the library to be reassembled in a new spot and an opportunity for members to bid on some of the excess furniture before it's sent off to charity.

We work to keep communication channels open. One effort is the **Talk to the Board** table that will be available during coffee hour on the Third Sunday of each month. Sundays. At least two members of the Board of Trustees will be available to chat with you about any questions that you may have about the congregation's activities. If you are wondering about how governance system is set up, how decisions are made, ways to volunteer, groups to join, this is a place to contact leadership. Board members can either answer your questions on the spot or refer you to someone who can. A special invitation to visitors or new members just to stop by and get acquainted.

## Aesthetics Committee Request

The aesthetics committee is looking for your input! As we tend to the more immediate needs around sound, we want to take this opportunity to hear what you think about our interior spaces, mainly in terms of the Sanctuary and Davis Hall.

We have a more formal process in place for those who wish to make donations, but at this time, we are just looking for your thoughts related to what sort of things should be considered. We are looking for conceptual themes to consider as well as more specific ideas such as color, art, and such. If you have ideas, please share with us. Deidre Schwartz or Russ Erickson.

Here is our Aesthetic Committee Vision Statement for reference:

*Our congregational space is a living reflection of our deepest values—a space where beauty and function come together to honor the worth and dignity of every person.*

*Our interior will not only serve the needs of our congregation but also stand as a symbol of our commitment to improving the global community.*

*By respecting the interdependent web of existence, we will design with care for the natural world, using our resources responsibly and sustainably. In every choice—from art and furnishings to light and layout—we envision an interior that uplifts, inspires, and reflects the sacred interconnectedness of all life.*

## GPUUC Facilities update

Dawn Korade, Facilities Chairperson

Thanks for your patience. I got sidelined by a little health issue but should be back up to speed in a couple weeks.



Meanwhile, in Davis Hall:

1. We are still looking for a handy person to do dry-wall in Davis Hall and the men's restroom. The last person who came out to give us an estimate apparently doesn't work in churches other than his own.
2. I am sorry that the bottle filling in the water station is still not working. This will require a service call from a person qualified for this unit, and I simply haven't gotten to finding that contact yet.
3. We have a new lockable storage closet in the utility room for tools and chemicals. Now, it just needs to be assembled.
4. The library will be moved to the office room off Davis Hall (old minister's office).

Faith Development building:

1. Roof repair for the FD building will take place Nov. 26, the day before Thanksgiving (weather permitting).
2. The dead trees behind the FD building will be removed December 16.

The Parking lot repairs are being organized but have not been scheduled yet.

If you have questions, problems, or suggestions – please email me.

As before, the email for anything facilities related is [facilities@prescottuu.org](mailto:facilities@prescottuu.org).

Happy Thanksgiving,

And thank you to all the people who have helped out this past year, and those who have thanked the helpers.

Peace, Dawn



Care

Corner

## Care Team Corner:

The Care Team is taking sign-ups for volunteers to help in the year ahead with shopping, meals, transportation, hospital, and/or home visits, making calls or sending notes. Help us help members who may need assistance when recovering from illness, surgery, accidents, isolation, inability to drive, etc. Please contact Bobbie Bollinger if you would like to be on the call list.

**January 2nd is Judy Davis's 97th birthday.** Please send her a birthday card

Requested by her daughter, Gretchen Hopkins.

## Granite Peak Vision and Mission Statements

**Vision:** Where ALL are welcomed, encouraged and nurtured.

**Mission:** We are a compassionate spiritual community that:

- Celebrates diversity;
- Nourishes the personal and spiritual growth of all ages;
- Shares our gifts,
- Promotes justice for all; and
- Serves the world we live in.



## Pagan Gathering

Saturday, December 20 .  
11:00-12:30

Faith Development Building

### YULE be Surprised!

This special time is so much more than decorated trees, stockings hung by the fire and Santa Claus!

Do you know about Krampus, Befana, the Yule Lads, the Mari Lwyd, Frau Perchta, the caganer, Yule goats, and mummers! Yuletide offers a host of characters, folktales, and traditions from around the world to explore . Come sip eggnog, nibble cookies and enjoy a frolic through stories of the season.

These gatherings are sponsored by *GPUUC CUUPS*, an interfaith Pagan group sponsored by the Granite Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation.

*Each month we create ritual and learn more about Pagan and Earth-centered religions and encourage all to share their wisdom. For more information, please email Sukey Jones.*

*Paganism is an umbrella term that covers many spiritual traditions and beliefs that have existed since ancient times.*

*There are many different types of Pagan religions, each with its own set of beliefs and practices. Some of the most popular include Wicca, Druidism, Asatru, Heathenism, and Shamanism. By understanding the history and beliefs of these religions, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the beauty and complexity of the world around us.*

## Sunday Drum Circle is cancelled for December 2025.



**Dec 21, 2025**  
**Winter Solstice**  
**Celebration**  
**7:00 pm**



## GPUUC Meditation Group

Peg Travis, who led the Introduction to Buddhism Adult Faith class, has volunteered to lead a weekly meditation group for the congregation. The new group will meet on **Thursdays at 3 pm** in the Faith Development Building.



## The Forum

Zoom meetings are on Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. We won't solve all the world's problems, but we will discuss them and learn from each other.



Contact Fred Kraps for "The Forum" information.

<https://zoom.us/j/524691598> (Password=Forum)



## Women's Group & Men's Group

Interested in joining one of our Women's Groups here at GPUUC? Please contact Charlotte Skuse.

Interested in joining our Men's Groups here at GPUUC? Please contact Russ Erickson.

## MahJong!

The Tuesday afternoon MahJong group is now meeting at 1:00 pm in Davis Hall and welcomes new members.

If you're an experienced player, just drop in and join us. If you have never played, you may either drop in and learn by watching or call or email one of us for a private lesson. We're very happy to teach. Ask Lila Witt.



## From the Sedona Fellowship:

### Rockin' Holiday Party

Fri, Dec 19 @ 5:30PM — 8:30PM.

"MERRY CHRISTMAS, BABY!" Join us for an upbeat & heartwarming holiday event, with live music show, yummy food and great holiday cheer! And you'll be supporting community causes, just by attending and having a great time!

5:30 PM-Doors OPEN

6PM-BUFFET & Social mixer

7PM-Concert 3MKi's "Rockin' Holiday Show!" (w/ Intermission)

Sedona Hub , 525-B Posse Ground Rd. , Sedona, AZ 86336

TICKETS: \$45-Adv. / \$50 Door. NOTE: All Seats are GENERAL SEATING, First-Come, First-Serve.

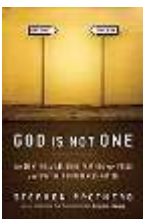
This event is hosted by SUUF (sedonauu.org), Sedona Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. SUUF Community outreach includes Sedona Food Bank, Kids Backpack Program/Sedona Food Shelf, Hope House, PFLAG Sedona/Verde Valley and League of Women Voters, among others.

### Adult Faith Development

Mary Ann Clark



**Introduction to World Religions based on God is Not One: Part 1 Islam and Christianity presented by Mary Ann Clark. December 3, 10, 17, 1 to 3 pm in Faith Development-A.**



In *God is Not One: The Eight Religions that Run the World*, bestselling author of *Religious Literacy* and religion scholar Stephen Prothero argues that persistent attempts to portray all religions as different paths to the same God overlook the distinct problem that each tradition seeks to solve.

Delving into the different problems and solutions that Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Confucianism, Yoruba Religion, Daoism and Atheism strive to combat, *God is Not One* is an indispensable guide to

the questions human beings have asked for millennia—and to the disparate paths we are taking to answer them today.

We will begin by exploring Prothero's general ideas about world religions and then learning more about Islam and Christianity with plans to look at the other traditions after the first of the year.

There is a copy of the book at the public library. It is also available from Amazon, Audible, and other book sellers.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Clark.

**Skills for Disagreeing Better, presented by Braver Angels, Saturday, January 24, 10-12.**

The Skills for Disagreeing Better workshop helps participants understand the values and concerns of those who differ from them politically and teaches essential skills for communicating across differences and finding common ground. You will learn about the values and concerns of the other political side and practice skills for communicating more effectively in the presence of disagreement.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Clark.

**Introduction to World Religions based on God is Not One: Part 2 Hinduism, Buddhism, Yoruba Religion presented by Mary Ann Clark. January 7, 14, 21, 28, 1 to 3 pm in Faith Development-A**

In *God is Not One: The Eight Religions that Run the World*, bestselling author of *Religious Literacy* and religion scholar Stephen Prothero argues that persistent attempts to portray all religions as different paths to the same God overlook the distinct problem that each tradition seeks to solve. There is a copy of the book at the public library. It is also available from Amazon, Audible, and other book sellers. For more information, contact Mary Ann Clark.

**The UUA Common Read for this year, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection* by Deepa Iyer (Skinner House) see <https://www.uua.org/lifespan/curricula/read> facilitated by Jo Sprague and Fred Kraps will be presented next spring. Watch for more information.**

## December Birthdays

Name		Date
Sprague	Jo	2
Miller	Warren	3
Flurry	Henry	7
Lovejoy	Stephen	8
Schwartz	Michael	8
Sena	Bea	15
Tank	Rowena	15
Waldorf	Donna	19
Alden	Leanne	19
Smith	Susan	22
Resk	DeeAnn	23
Grady	Patrick	27
Miller	Christy	18

## Faith Development Happenings

By Sandra Palacios



### October 26, 2025: Jack O' Lantern

Typically, the Jack O' Lantern is a lantern that is carved out of a pumpkin for Halloween. The tradition originated from a 19th century Irish folk tale about a man named, "Stingy Jack", who tricked the devil and was cursed to wander the Earth forever with only a burning coal inside of a carved-out turnip the light the way. Irish immigrants brought the tradition to America, where they began using pumpkins.

The students from Faith Development carved out their own personal pumpkin in preparation for Halloween.

### November 2, 2025: In the Celtic World/Samhain

"Samhain" symbolizes the end of the harvest and the start of Winter, marking the Celtic New Year. It is considered the beginning of the "dark half of the year." Samhain also symbolizes the thinning of the veil between the physical and spiritual world, allowing for the reflection on death, remembrance of ancestors and the seeking of wisdom.



The Faith Development students engaged in the blowing of bubbles, which is a very magical experience in the Celtic world. Each student received their own bottle of bubble mixture. They learned the following incantations:

"Bubbles, bubbles glimmer bright, bring us joy, bring us light."

*"Sadness and fear I cling to you, by blowing bubbles, I release you, so I may smile and be true."*

### November 9, 2025: Hearts Broken Open

*"And thus, the heart will break yet brokenly live on."*  
- Lord Byron

A discussion was held with the students on the topic of what makes them hurt and "breaks their hearts."

Reflections from Thich Nhat Hahn's book, "A handful of quiet happiness in four pebbles" were shared with the students, which focused on calmness. The students laid down on yoga mats and were guided to reflect on times of sadness in their lives. Afterwards, they wrote about their own reflections on cut-out heart shapes.





### November 16, 2025: Kindness

World Kindness Day is an international observance on 13th of November. The idea is to promote goodwill, empathy, and compassion around the globe. The day reminds individuals that even small everyday gestures can make significant differences in someone's life and bring communities together.

The "Golden Rule" is the principle of treating others as one would want to be treated by them.

*"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see."* - Mark Twain

The students discussed what it means to be kind, and they listened to the reading of the "Kindness Book." They wrote various examples of acts of kindness on strips of paper and collected them in a "Kindness Jar" that they created and decorated to take home.



## Social Justice



December Seeds of Support is the Martin Luther King Annual Celebration January 19, 2026.



Details about the Celebration will be available in the January newsletter. Typically there is a March on MLK day (this year 1/19/26) and a service at a downtown church. Other events may be planned.



## From the Social Justice Council

The Social Justice Council expresses its warm thanks for the generous contribution of new socks and underwear to benefit our local veterans on our first “Undies Sunday” in November. We’ll be doing one more “Undies Sunday” on December 14, in time for the holidays. Along with new socks and underwear, we are asking for gently used jackets and outwear to help our friends through the cold weather.

Hold the date! The Social Justice Council will be hosting a fundraiser for our food pantry on Saturday, February 28. Tom Neilson, composer, singer, and activist will be performing original work in the Sanctuary: “Music with a Social Justice Twist.” Suggested donation is \$20.

Our November post-Empty Bowls sale of leftover bowls at the Prescott Farmers Market was a rousing success! We will be selling our remaining bowls at the Farmers Market on December 13 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. If you would like to volunteer to help with sales, please contact Moira or come and buy beautiful bowls for those last-minute holiday gifts!



## Commission on Social Witness

The full text of the 2025-2028 Congregational Study/Action Issue, **"Abolition, Transformation, and Faith Formation"** is now live on [uua.org](http://uua.org).

Congregations are invited to explore the CSAI's Topics for Congregational Study as well as the curated Resource List, both found [here](http://here). CLF has a resource and learning hub at [clfu.org/abolition](http://clfu.org/abolition) with monthly conversations on abolition.

## **Monthly Conversations on Abolition: "Imagination and Abolition"**

Monday, December 1, 2025, 7–8:30pm ET on Zoom

How does imagination shape our understanding of abolition — and what new worlds become possible when we dare to dream beyond systems of punishment and oppression?

Join us for “Imagination and Abolition”, the next conversation in our Monthly Conversations on Abolition series. Together, we’ll explore how imagination is not just a creative act, but a spiritual and political practice essential to the work of abolition and collective liberation. [Register to participate.](#)

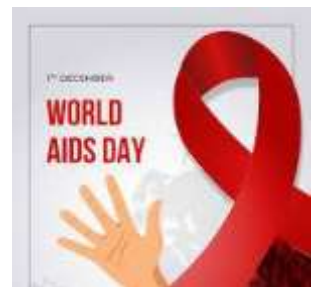
## **Monthly Conversations on Abolition: "Intro to Restorative Justice Practices"**

Tuesday, January 20, 2026, 7–8:30pm on Zoom

Join us for “Intro to Restorative Justice Practices”, the next conversation in our Monthly Conversations on Abolition series. If you have asked yourself, what does accountability look like in a world without the carceral system? One answer is restorative and transformative justice practices. We will learn the basic tenets of restorative justice and dialogue about the ways we already affirm many of these practices in progressive spaces. [Register to participate.](#)

## **World Aids Day**

Each year, on 1 December, the world commemorates World AIDS Day. People around the world unite to show support for people living with HIV and to remember those who have died from AIDS-related illnesses.



Each World AIDS Day focuses on a specific theme, which this year will be **Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response.**

This year’s theme joins a growing list of challenges that World AIDS Day has alerted people to globally. Founded in 1988, World AIDS Day was the first ever international day for global health. Every year, United Nations agencies, governments and civil society join together to campaign around specific themes related to HIV.