



# The View

## March 2026

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.

**Mar. 1, Rev. Sabrina Jennings: *The Good Is There to Be Known.*** We're in the Christian season of Lent, a season everyone can learn and grow from. It's best known for giving up things, as if it's a shorter period of keeping New Year's resolutions. In actuality, it is supposed to be a time when people are called to see their true selves. What does that look like in our world and our lives today? Who are we and who were we made to be?

Pastor Sabrina is a minister of the United Church of Christ, the Faith Communities Coordinator or the Arizona Palestine Solidarity Alliance, and an educator through her project called Note to Self School.

**March 8, Rev. Michelle LaGrave: *Sermon on the Amount.*** A celebratory and humorous take on the coming year's budget to kick off the annual stewardship drive.

**March 15, Rev. Michelle: *Soul Matters: Paying Attention.*** To what do we pay attention? Or not? When? Why? Answering these questions can serve as a window to our spirits, letting us know something of our spiritual health.

**March 22, Rev. Michelle: *Ostara.*** Ostara is the name of both the holiday and the Goddess celebrated at the Spring Equinox. The holiday celebrates balance, the coming of spring, life, birth, rebirth, and fertility. Come celebrate with us!

**March 29, Rev Anthony Johnson: *Cultivating Compassion.*** Compassion is not simply a feeling; it is a practice, a discipline, and, at times, a radical act. In a world conditioned toward separation and speed, how do we slow down, soften our hearts, and choose to see one another fully? This Sunday we reflect on compassion as a spiritual muscle—one that requires tending, intention, and courage. Together, we deepen our capacity to hold ourselves and each other with tenderness and truth.

<i>In This Issue</i>	
Services	1
Minister Musings	2
From the President	2
Facilities Update	3
Moving Meditation	3
Tom Neilson Concert	3
Meditation Group	3
The Forum	3
Women's & Men's Groups	3
Mahjong	3
Stewardship	4
Rummage Sale	4
Leadership	5
General Assembly 2026	5
Pagan Gathering	6
Membership	6
GP Mission & Vision	6
Newsletter Deadlines	6
Social Justice Council	7
Seeds of Support	7
SJ Food Pantry	7
Adult Faith Development	8
Children's Faith Development	9-10
Trans Day of Visibility	11
The Woodlands	11
Birthdays	12
Who's Who	12

### 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.



## Ministerial Musings

Rev. Michelle LaGrave

As you've probably noticed by now, we have made some changes to the ways we share information on Sunday morning.

We are printing fewer orders of service and the ones we print are in a different format. Part of the reason for this is to be more environmentally friendly by printing less. Another part of the reason for this has to do with increasing accessibility. One of the best ways to increase accessibility is to give people more options. That is exactly what we are doing by sharing the orders of service in a variety of ways, from emails to QR codes to website pages to electronic slides up on a big screen to large print paper printouts, there is something for everyone.

It's up to you to choose what works best for you! For those who are hard of hearing, we are recommending, for now, using a smartphone app such as Google Transcribe, Otter, or Whisper, to get speech directly transcribed to your phone. Speaking of phones in worship, now's a good time to remind everyone that there are lots of appropriate uses for smartphones and various forms of high and low tech during the service.

People may be using screen readers, transcription services, looking up readings or scriptural passages, taking notes, or even blocking out background noise so they can concentrate better. How cool is that? There are two big takeaways from all of this. First, keep in mind that while not all of this is for everyone, all of this is for someone.

Second, let's keep Granite Peak a judgment-free zone and trust that people know how to meet their own accessibility needs. By continuing on the path to even greater accessibility, we are keeping Love at the center, right where it belongs!

## From the President Rick Denney



Dear Friends,

We are now well into the new 2026 new year, enjoying the lovely new Sanctuary and appreciating the finishing touches on the renovation work begun nearly a year ago. The next time you are in the Sanctuary, notice the two newly installed rails that provide safer access to the Chancel. Choir members, worship associates, guest speakers, and Minister Michelle really appreciate having less concern about potentially dangerous tumbles while accessing the Chancel!

This is the time of year when our GPUUC community begins preparations for our annual Stewardship Campaign to support our facilities and ongoing programs for the next fiscal year, which begins July 1. How fortunate we are to have such a well-organized Stewardship team, with expert leadership and numerous, dedicated, volunteer stewards. When asked, please welcome a steward to visit, share what GPUUC means to you, and, if able, pledge your continued support for this remarkable institution. Also, plan to join Karen and me at this year's annual Congregational dinner on Saturday, March 7 at the Centennial Center, 1989 Wineglass Drive, Prescott to celebrate and kickoff this year's Stewardship Campaign. As this year's Stewardship motto says, "It Depends on All of Us."

Granite Peak UUC continues to be a place of peace and renewal in these challenging times. It is such a pleasure to be part of it! Let us keep it growing and thriving! Take every opportunity to welcome and get to know all the new faces that keep appearing on Sunday mornings! They may become new members and eventually, old friends!



## Talk to the Board

Each month, on the third Sunday, you will find two board members in Davis Hall after the service who will be ready and willing to answer your questions, hear your concerns, or even just chat with you so you can get to know us.



## GPUUC Facilities update

Dawn Korade, Facilities Chairperson

Some of the parking bumper stripes got a refresh, and the dry wall repair in the men's room is Done! Yippee. Ok guys, what does your restroom still need?

The library looks nearly finished. Volunteers to help straighten out the shelves?

Many thanks to Dick Walter for getting the needed plunger and air filters, to Thomas for drywall repair support, and whoever arranged the furniture in the library! Many hands make light work. 😊

## Moving Meditation

Wednesday, 9 am  
in the Sanctuary  
Led by Thomas Camargo

This no-cost weekly class utilizes Chi Gong and other movement forms as a gentle way to improve internal and external balance, flexibility, and strength. Through mindful movement and focused breathing, participants are guided toward meditative awareness.

The class is open and adaptable to all fitness levels. Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing is recommended.

We hope you'll join us.



## Social Justice Fundraiser Concert

Music with a Social Justice Twist

Date: Saturday, February 28  
Time: 4:00 to 5:30 pm  
Location: Sanctuary



The Social Justice Council will host a fundraiser for our food pantry featuring Tom Neilson, composer, singer, and activist, performing original music.

Suggested donation is \$20. Attendees are encouraged to bring nonperishable food items if able.

## 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 & Men's Groups

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



Interested in joining our Men's Group 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. Lila Witt



## It Takes All of US

You are cordially invited to the annual Granite Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregational Dinner.

At The Centennial Center  
1989 Wineglass Drive  
Prescott, AZ 86301

**Saturday, March 7, 2026**  
**5:00 – 7:30 P. M.**

### Menu:

- Appetizers
- Chicken picatta (with gluten free gravy) with creamy potatoes, vegie medley, green salad, rolls (including gluten free), butter and a special entrée for the vegetarians and vegans
- One free glass of wine with additional glasses @ \$5. Two free glasses of soft drinks, additional glasses \$3.
- Coffee, Iced Tea and water
- Cake for dessert and gluten free brownies

Sign up in Davis Hall by Noon Sunday, March 1, 2026 to reserve your seat at the dinner



## Rummage SALE March 23-28

What You Can Bring for  
The Rummage Sale

FIRST, what not to bring:  
Opened liquids, Men's  
clothing, large tools, Large-  
heavy furniture.

### BRING:

Women's and children's clothing, women's,  
children's and men's shoes, Linens (please  
size.)

Jewelry, watches, purses.

Sheets, glass ware, dishes, plastics, bath, office,  
sewing, health, Holiday decorations,

small appliances (working only), electronics (only  
flat screen TV's), again working only, label  
all equipment, so we know what it is.

Books, DVD's, hand tools, luggage, puzzles,  
small furniture pieces, sporting and camping  
things, exercise equipment, toys, plants, and  
yard "stuff"...

If in doubt, please contact Charlotte Skuse or  
Barb Nigh.

## Volunteer Schedule Overview

Sunday, March 22

Remove chairs from the Sanctuary and help carry in  
donations.

Monday and Tuesday, March 23 and 24

Setup, unpacking, and filling tables. Donations ac-  
cepted through Tuesday only. Trucks and help need-  
ed for pickups.

Wednesday and Thursday, March 25 and 26

Pricing, straightening, and final setup. Lunch needed  
for all day workers. Baked goods may be brought in  
on Thursday.

Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28

Rummage Sale Days. Cashiers and floor monitors  
needed. Baked goods brought in early. Cleanup be-  
gins immediately after the sale ends on Saturday. All  
unsold items will be packed for thrift store pickup,  
and spaces must be reset for Sunday services.

We will try to have the total amount raised available  
before cleanup is finished.

Thank you to everyone who donates, volunteers, and  
helps make this event possible.

The Social Justice Council compiled a  
Resource Directory for the use of our community  
members and friends. The Directory includes names,  
phone numbers, and brief descriptions of programs  
available to assist individuals experiencing mental  
health challenges, food insecurity, homelessness,  
domestic violence, job insecurity, substance abuse,  
veterans services, and additional needs.

The Directory can be accessed from the GPUUC  
website's homepage. Click or tap on the Local Re-  
sources icon/button.

## Leadership Development

### Applications Now Being Accepted for General Assembly Funding

The Ethan Davis Leadership Fund has been established to encourage development of lay leaders of the congregation. The Endowment Committee has been tasked with disbursing funds annually for this purpose.

The committee will make awards based on the following priorities: registration fees for the UUA General Assembly, registration fees for other UUA training or purposes that foster the development of leadership for the congregation. Priority will be given to individuals who could not otherwise afford to attend, or if it would be a significant financial hardship to do so. To be eligible, you must be a signed member in good standing or an active member of our youth group.

This year's General Assembly will take place virtually Sunday, June 14 through Sunday, June 21, 2026, so you can attend from the comfort of your own home. For more information: <https://www.uua.org/ga>.

If you wish to be considered for an award, please fill out the Stipend Application form and return it to the Leadership Development Committee by April 9. Contact Kelly ([granitepeakuu@gmail.com](mailto:granitepeakuu@gmail.com)) or Mary Ann Clark for either an electronic or printed copy of the form.

If you are interested in being considered for one of our three delegate positions for General Assembly, complete the GA Delegate form (contact Kelly for a copy) and return it to the Board of Trustees.



**The 65th UUA General Assembly will be a virtual event** with an optional in-person component.

When you register for General Assembly 2026, you'll receive access to the Whova Event App, your central hub for interactive and on-demand video content, the EduCenter library, and networking opportunities with other participants.

Registration is for individuals with unique email addresses.

Registration Required: Everyone participating in GA, whether joining a community gathering, watch party, or attending at a UUA-hosted site, must be registered for General Assembly.

All registrants agree to adhere to our event covenant.

### [Now Open: Adult Registration](#)



Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde Is Our 2026 Ware Lecturer

We are honored to announce that Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde will serve as the 2026 Ware Lecturer at General Assembly.

Each year, the UUA President extends an invitation to a distinguished guest to address General Assembly as the Ware Lecturer. In 2026, the Ware Lecture will take place on Saturday, June 20, at 8 pm Eastern / 6 pm Mountain / 4 pm Alaska.

Bishop Budde serves as the spiritual leader of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, which includes congregations and Episcopal schools in the District of Columbia and four Maryland counties. The first woman elected to this role, she is widely respected for her steady pastoral leadership, her commitment to justice and mercy, and her deep belief in the dignity of every human being. Her preaching and writing consistently invite people to live with courage, faith, and compassion, especially in times that call for moral clarity.

With GA registration, participants will be able to experience the Ware Lecture in several ways. Studio Site registrants can watch in person at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville, KY. Satellite Sites and Community Gatherings can watch the livestream together in shared space. Fully online registrants can watch live from wherever they are, and all registrants will have access to the video on-demand when it becomes available.

We look forward to welcoming Bishop Budde to General Assembly 2026 and to the wisdom she will bring to this year's Ware Lecture.

For More Info Click Here: <https://www.uua.org/ga/program/highlights/ware-lecture>



## Pagan Gathering

Saturday, March 21

### The Vernal Equinox: a Time of Balance

11:00-12:30 Faith Development Building

On March 21, day and night will be of equal lengths, light and dark in harmony. Around the world and through the ages it has been celebrated as a time of balance, renewal and growth. Today, through ritual, we will take time to pause, reflect, and align ourselves with the shifting seasons. How can we find harmony and balance?

*“It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold, when it is summer in the light and winter in the shade.” —Charles Dickens*

*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 [sukeyinaz@icloud.com](mailto:sukeyinaz@icloud.com)*

*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.*

## Granite Peak UU Congregation

**Follow Us on Instagram**



## From the Membership Committee

By Lydia Garrett



On February 7 we held an informational meeting for people interested to find out more about GPUU and how to become members. Six people showed up and they all signed our membership book! On Sunday a seventh joined as well. They are: Catherine Forthun, Megan Lookup, Marti Gerdes, Patti Anderson and the family of Holly Knies, Jim Wangerin and daughter Ainsley Wangerin.

Ainsley is our first 14 year old to join GPUU. Please welcome these new members with a special greeting when you see them. A Congregational welcome for our new members will be part of a Sunday morning service before too long. – **Our membership at this point stands at 141 members.**

### 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.

### Newsletter Deadlines Midnight

**April 2026 newsletter due:**  
**March 24, 2026, Tuesday by midnight.**

**May 2026 newsletter due:**  
**April 21, 2026, Tuesday by midnight.**

Send articles to: [newslettergpuuc@gmail.com](mailto:newslettergpuuc@gmail.com)

# Social Justice



**From the Social  
Justice Council**

**Undies Sunday.** We will be sponsoring our second “Undies Sunday” on March 15. Please consider contributing new underwear and socks and/or gently used outerwear to our local veterans in need.

**Don’t forget the Tom Neilson Concert!** The Social Justice Council will be hosting a fundraiser for our food pantry on **Saturday, February 28 from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.** Tom Neilson, composer, singer, and activist will be performing original work: “**Music with a Social Justice Twist.**” Suggested donation is \$20. Consider bringing non-perishable foodstuff or personal care items to donate to the pantry!



**Lovejoy/Pettit Awards Dinner.**

We have a date for this year’s Lovejoy/Pettit Awards dinner: **April 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.,** at the Crossroads Center. We look

forward to honoring this year’s recipients—soon to be announced!



**Empty Bowls 2026.** Yes, it’s already time to start thinking about Empty Bowls 2026, after our record-breaking year 2025! We’ve given \$4,250 to a total of eight food pantries around the region thanks to more than \$34,000 raised in 2025. Recipients include Chi-

no Valley Food Bank, Chino Valley Education Foundation Hungry Kids Program, Paulson Food Pantry, Yavapai College Food Pantry, Humboldt Education Foundation Hungry Kids Program (Prescott Valley), Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Conference of St. Vincent de Paul (Cordes Lake), and Prescott Farmers Market. We are currently recruiting for our Steering Committee, and we will be looking to recruit Area Leads within a few months. Consider being part of

this fabulous event! Contact Dixie King at [dixieleeking1955@gmail.com](mailto:dixieleeking1955@gmail.com).



**SEEDS OF SUPPORT FOR MARCH: Prescott Meals on Wheels**

Prescott Meals on Wheels provides meals to homebound clients in the Prescott and Prescott Valley region five days a week, Monday – Friday, delivering hot, fresh, nutritious meals that arrive at a client’s home between 10:30 am and 12:30 pm. But Meals on Wheels offers more than a meal. Services include wellness checks, community resource referrals, and precious moments of companionship for anyone who is unable to shop or prepare meals due to physical or cognitive impairment, regardless of age. Please be generous in your support for this awesome service!



**GPUUC Food Pantry:**

Thank you to everyone in this Congregation who so generously donates to the ongoing needs of our food pantry. We generally have between 40 and 50 patrons every week who visit on Fridays!

The GPUUC Food Pantry is unique because we supply paper products (T.P. and Paper Towels) and personal care items. No other food pantry in the area does this – many patrons tell us this is why they come every week. We get many, many expressions of thanks from our patrons. This year we gave out gift cards over the holidays, and this has resulted in many new faces coming to our pantry over the past few weeks.

The needs in this community are significant. If you have any questions, please reach out to Catherine Marsh, Kris Parsons, or Moira Patterson.



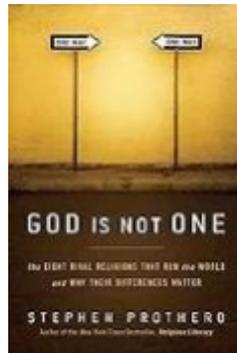
## Adult Faith Development

Mary Ann Clark

**Introduction to World Religions based on *God is Not One: Part 3*** Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism, Atheism and Civil Religion presented by Mary Ann Clark.

March 4, 1 to 3 PM in Faith Development-A. (Last class!)

*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 ([drmaryann49@mac.com](mailto:drmaryann49@mac.com))



**AZ Corporation Commission: Reasonable and Just? March 8, 2 to 4 PM in Davis Hall.**

The Little-Known 4th Branch of Government and the Ethics of Electric Bills presented by Melanie Beikman, head of Interfaith Power and Light and sponsored by the GPUUC Adult Faith Development Committee, the GPUUC Social Justice Council, the Interfaith Power and Light, Northern AZ Climate Change Alliance, and Interfaith Climate Action Tea, March 8 2 to 4 pm in Davis Hall.

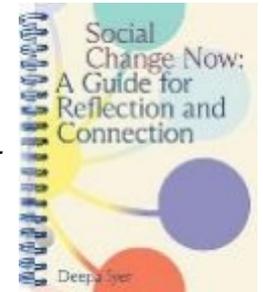
There is a little known "4th branch" of Arizona government" that regulates utilities and other businesses. In that role, the 5-member Arizona Corporation Commission impacts your utility bills as well as how we produce the electricity we all use.

As UU's we look at the cost of energy through the lens of Justice, Equity and Compassion in Human Relations, and we consider the sources of our energy use in light of the Respect for the Interdependent Web of Existence and our stewardship of creation..

Join Arizona Interfaith Power & Light and the Interfaith Climate Action Team of NAZCCA for a conversation about electricity: who regulates it, who decides your electricity bill, and Arizona's role in the climate crisis.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Clark ([drmaryann49@mac.com](mailto:drmaryann49@mac.com)) or Annie Sawyer ([annie@r2v2.net](mailto:annie@r2v2.net)).

**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 in April. A copy of the book is available in the GPUUC library,



**Ho'oponopono - The Hawaiian Practice of Forgiveness & Resolution, presented by Barry & Gayla Gordon. April 4 and 11, 1-3 in Faith Development Room A.**



Ho'oponopono (ho-o-pono-pono) is the ancient Hawaiian spiritual practice for healing relationships and releasing karmic problems that is both practical and profound. In day one of this experiential workshop, participants will learn a simple daily practice, that is immediately life changing. On day two, we will experience the longer ceremonial form of Ho'oponopono prayers and fire ceremony. Ho'oponopono practice offers a path to emotional freedom by clearing resentments, guilt, and painful memories - whether from recent conflicts or deep-seated wounds. The beauty of Ho'oponopono is that it works whether the other person is present, or not, living or deceased, and requires no confrontation.

Barry and Gayla Gordon are Transformational Life Counselors with decades of experience teaching spiritual practices, energy psychology, and Hawaiian Ho'oponopono. Gayla has lineage with Mornnah Simeona (teacher of Dr Ihaleakala Hew Len, who is the teacher of Dr Joe Vitale), and Barry has lineage with Big Daddy Bray, one of the first Kahunas to share Hawaiian wisdom with Westerners.

## Faith Development Happenings

By Sandra Palacios



### January 25, 2026: Soul Matters/Joy

“Joy” means a feeling of great happiness, delight, or pleasure. Often, joy refers to a deep sense of well-being, which can be a feeling of emotion or a lasting state. This can stem from a positive experience, achievement of goals or spiritual connection, representing more than just happiness.



The students of Faith Development discussed what brings them joy and they also explored the 5 Steps of Joy:

1. Physical Joy
2. Collective Joy
3. Emotional Joy
4. Spiritual Joy
5. Moral Joy

Some student’s responses included the following:

“Eating candy” “snow” “roller skating” “my horses” “mountain biking.”

*“The root of joy is gratefulness; it is not joy that makes us grateful, it is gratitude that makes us joyful.”*

### February 1, 2026: Living Simply

Living a simple life involves intentionally reducing nonessentials, decluttering possessions and minimizing commitments. Focusing on what truly matters in life, such as relationships, health, and personal growth. It is a mindset towards contentment, reducing stress and finding joy in less, rather than chasing material wealth. Ultimately, the value of a person is not determined by their material possessions. It is more about who they are as a person, their values and contribution to the world.

In search of simplicity, the students of Faith Development participated in playing a variety of table games; not so popular these days since technology has taken their place.



*“Those who live life with deep understanding, always prefer simplicity”.*

“The secret of happiness, you see, is not found in seeking more, but developing the capacity to enjoy less.”

### February 8, 2026: Valentines Day

Valentines Day is about celebrating love in all forms: romantic, familial and platonic. Rooted in ancient Roman festivals, the Christian feast day honors St. Valentine, the patron saint of engaged couples, marriages, and love. He was a 3rd-century Roman priest who later became a martyr, ministering to persecuted Christians and defying Emperor Claudius by secretly marrying soldiers to spare them from war. Valentine’s Day has evolved from pagan fertility rites to the cultural phenomenon of expressing affection with cards, flowers, and gifts to symbolize connection and appreciation.

Fun fact: Valentine’s Day is the second largest holiday for sending greeting cards after Christmas.

The Faith Development students made a 3-D Valentine heart project, on which they expressed what love means to them.



### February 15, 2026: Chinese New Year

The 2026 Chinese Lunar New Year begins on February 17th. This year marks the Year of the Fire Horse.

Occurring once every 60 years, this year is considered as a “double fire” year, combining the intense, passionate fire elements with the already high-energy, independent, and fast-paced nature of the horse. It is a time that is expected to bring massive transformation, bold changes, and rapid progress.

The Fire Horse symbolizes independence, bravery and a desire for freedom and self-expression. A powerful time of intense energy and bold actions.

The Faith Development students were each given a copy of the Chinese zodiac chart, so that they could find the corresponding animal of their birth year. The descriptions were read aloud for enjoyment by all. Then they colored in a picture of the Fire Horse. We all ate fried noodles, representing prosperity in the new year and had fortune cookies, too.





## Transgender Day of Visibility

Each year on March 31, the world observes Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) to celebrate the lives and contributions of trans people, while also drawing attention to the disproportionate levels of poverty, discrimination, and violence the community faces compared to cisgender (non-transgender) people.

International TDOV was created in 2010 by trans advocate Rachel Crandall. Crandall, the head of Transgender Michigan, created TDOV in response to the overwhelming majority of media stories about transgender people being focused on violence. She hoped to create a day where people could celebrate the lives of transgender people, while simultaneously acknowledging that due to discrimination, not every trans person can or wants to be visible.

For many transgender people, it feels as if we are living in unprecedented times. In just the first three months of 2025, a staggering 821 anti-trans bills have been introduced in state legislatures across the country. Furthermore, the current administration has targeted trans people through executive orders limiting trans people's ability to obtain passports that accurately reflect our gender, attempted to reinstate a blanket ban on trans people serving in the military, and a number of other orders of varying enforceability aimed at erasing trans people from public life.

Part of the fear-mongering around trans people is predicated on the idea that being a trans person is a new fad or phase, when the reality is that trans people have existed as long as people have existed.

(Source; <https://glaad.org/trans-day-of-visibility-a-message-from-6-trans-community-elders/>)



## A Sacred Space for Trans Belonging & Collective Liberation

The Woodlands is a monthly, online spiritual community gathering for trans, non-binary, gender non-conforming, gender expansive, and intersex people—and for the parents and caregivers who love and support them.

Rooted in Unitarian Universalist values, The Woodlands exists to offer belonging, spiritual care, and healing-centered community in a world that too often denies trans people safety, dignity, and rest. This is not a discussion group or advocacy forum—it is a place to be held, celebrated, and nourished.

Launched in September 2025, The Woodlands has become a consistent home for people seeking connection with others who understand their lives firsthand. Here, trans lives are not debated or explained. They are honored as sacred, whole, and worthy of care.

## What Happens at a Woodlands Gathering?

Each monthly gathering is gently structured and chaplain-led, offering both grounding and flexibility. Gatherings include:

- A shared opening ritual and spiritual grounding
- A monthly theme centered on resilience, healing, identity, or joy
- Story-sharing and reflection
- Breakout groups designed for different ages and roles
- A closing blessing shared together as one community
- Participants are never required to speak. Listening, resting, or simply being present is always enough. [Register to Join Us!](#)