



The View

December 2024

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 updates.

December 1, Yvonne Garrett: "*Being Thankful in Difficult Times.*"

In this season of being together, of considering what we are thankful for, how might we lean into our UU Values?

Dr. Yvonne C. Garrett (she/her/hers) is a second generation UU, feminist, activist, Religious Humanist/Ethical Vegan. She is a Spiritual Life Advisor at NYU's Office of Global Spiritual Life and Ministerial Intern at First UU Brooklyn.

December 8, Rev. Roger Fritts: "*The Hope of Victor Frankl.*"

In 1959 the Beacon Press (owned by the American Unitarian Association) published *From Death-Camp to Existentialism*. Translated from German, it is a story by Viktor Frankl about his experiences as a prisoner in Nazi concentration camps during World War II. The book is a religious affirmation of hope.

December 15, Rev. Roger Fritts: "*A Ghost Story in December.*"

At the beginning of the 19th century, people celebrated Christmas with excessive drinking and loud explosions like we still see at New Years. Christmas changed in part because of the popularity of Charles Dickens's "A Christmas Carol." The book established the moral obligation of charitable giving at Christmas. A British Unitarian Church played a role in the story's creation.

December 22, Rev. Roger Fritts: "*A Unitarian Christmas.*"

Many beloved elements of our Christmas celebrations were created by Unitarians. This is a contribution to our culture of which we can be proud.

December 24, 5:00 PM, Rev. Roger Fritts: "*The Blessings of Darkness.*"

Our Christmas eve service will consist of the singing of carols, the reading of the Biblical story about the birth of Jesus, a very short sermon, a children's story called the "*Gift of Peace and Quiet*," the lighting of candles and the singing of "Silent Night" by candlelight. It will be good to be together.

December 29, Rev. Becky Gunn: "*Every Day a New Beginning.*"

Often as we approach the new year we feel as if we need to make resolutions about what we need to be or do in this new year. Today we will approach the concept of beginning anew each day, with purpose and with joy. Despite the negativity in these times, it is possible to live with a sense of meaning, compassion and love. We can return to a life of hope and know that we make a difference.

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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.

From the Minister

Rev. Roger Fritts



During holidays I remember those who are not with me. I recall friends and relatives who live far away. I think of those with whom I have lost contact or who have died. I remember all the persons I have celebrated with in the past, and whom I will not be with this year. The memories are mostly, mixed with a little sadness for times now gone.

Still, in December, for me, the present merges with the past. When I sing "Silent Night," I am not just singing it with those who are with me here in 2024. I am singing it also with friends in Phoenix when I was an eight-year-old and in a Christmas play. I am singing it with friends in college, spending Christmas together on a beach in Mexico. I am singing it in Unitarian Universalist Churches I have served in Kentucky, Massachusetts, Illinois, Maryland and Florida. I feel connected to my past.

Again, this year I will sing the carols. I light the candles and share gifts and eat special foods. In these moments I feel continuity with the past. The ritual, the songs, the lights, are all openings that allow me to feel part of a common experience. This year's celebration merges into all Christmas celebrations.

Whatever holy days you are observing this December, be it Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, the Solstice, Christmas or New Years, I hope you will have this experience of connection and unity. Join in the singing. Taste the foods. Touch the hands of those around you. May your December be an act of meditation on the underlying unity and connections of all life. May 2025 be a time for reconciliation and peace for all peoples.



From the President

Rick Denney



Beloved friends,

I know many of us are disappointed (to the say the least) about the results of the recent election. Like many of you, I take solace in our GPUUC community, where we share timeless values of decency, respect, honesty and compassion. We cannot know the future, but we can strive to live these values as best we can, come what may.

I write this message the week after our annual Auction at GPUUC. It was a great success, both fiscally and emotionally. It was a delightful evening of good food and generous fund-raising! What an amazing array of activities, art, crafts and delectable goodies. Auctioned activities included a meeting for telescopic views of planets and galaxies, a musical soiree, an invitation to witness the social life of chickens, chili and Italian suppers, and many more. Amazing!

As Auction evening drew to a close, a homeless man, dressed only in shorts, t-shirt and sandals, was found outside the front door shivering violently and in great emotional distress. He was ushered in and nearly collapsed into a chair. Several members, striving to warm and comfort him, gathered round and covered him with all available warm wraps. Phone calls to emergency services were made, but none of the local shelter services where he might spend the night could be reached after hours.

Finally, a collection was taken and three members volunteered to take him to a motel room for the night. Unfortunately, after four tries, no motel would take him. Since by then it was nearly 11:00 pm, a member family housed him for the night. The following morning, they took him to CCJ, where he was provided with warm clothing and a promise of shelter that night. This unexpected, intimate encounter with a long-time homeless person was a jarring window into the uncertain and scary world of the unhoused.

Gratitude was the timely and timeless theme of Thursday November 21 annual Thanksgiving community gathering at St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Speakers, singers and dancers of many faiths emphasized that gratitude is central to all their diverse traditions. As we look forward to this coming holiday season, let us be thankful for what we have and continue to do what we can for those who are less fortunate.



Board Buzz: Highlights from the Board's November meeting

Meeting schedules get a bit irregular around holiday travels, so apologies for any inconvenience. Our next meeting is planned for December 17, at 4 pm. That's a Tuesday, mostly in person, meeting.

We are all watching the progress on our building renovation planning. Concern is focused on cash flow, so be listening for options and updates. The impending kick off of the Capital Campaign will follow the holidays. Our Schwab account for investments is being re-invigorated to allow for more easily made donations of stocks and bonds. A budget has been approved for the Capital Campaign team to allow them to promote and manage the campaign, without using money raised by the Capital Campaign.

The revised Personnel Manual was approved by the Board. Several ideas and plans are in discussion for holiday decorating.

Peace to all, Dawn

BOT secretary & facilities coordinator.

Facilities Brief: Regarding the water pressure in Davis Hall.

The lack of water pressure has been investigated. We have a good estimate from Super Plumber to replace the broken main water shutoff valve and to replace the inoperative pressure regulator valve. I will do my best to give you advance notice of when work will be done, and when the water may need to be off to the building. Dawn. Korade.



GPUUC's financials continue to look healthy through September. We are 33% through the fiscal year and are still ahead in revenue by 14% and under expenses by 4%.

Against our operating budget, we are running a net revenue surplus of \$73912.72. We have received over \$112,000 in '24-'25 pledge contributions, bringing us to 44% of the pledge budget (thank you!). Our rental income is now at 61% of our revenue goal thanks to Lisa DeLeo's efforts. October's finance reports are on the Granite Peak website.

The More You Know.....

We had a few expenses incurred last month that the committee chairperson/coordinator was not aware of in advance. Although these expenses were not large, the committee coordinator manages that budget, so please follow the procedure of getting their approval in advance with the payment request form either via email or through the forms in the office. The coordinators are listed on our website, but if you are unsure, or if you have questions about the form or process, please let me know. Thanks in advance!

Respectfully Submitted,
Tracy Augustine, Treasurer,
GPUUC Board of Trustees

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.



GPUUC Annual Auction 2024 "Fabulous 50's"

Update on the GPUUC Annual Auction 2024
"Fabulous 50's" –

**Granite Peak U.U. Congregation's Annual
Fundraiser for Operating Expenses**

The Fabulous Fifties fall auction was a great success
and bids are at this time still coming in for unsold
items and events that did not sell out. For more infor-
mation about the Auction, please contact

Marianne Erickson at

GranitePeakUUAuction@gmail.com





Empty Bowl Sales at the Farmers Market!

Many thanks to a team of volunteers who spent their Saturday morning selling our extra bowls and cozies at the Prescott Farmers Market. We were able to raise another \$2000+ for county food banks, and we're not done yet!

Saturday, December 7 we will reconvene at PFM - please come by and get your holiday shopping done, from 9:30 to 12:30. This will be the last chance to buy until next year's Empty Bowls event!

Winter Solstice Celebration

**Saturday
December 21
7:00 PM**



"So, the shortest day came, and the year died, And everywhere down the centuries Came people singing, dancing, to drive the dark away."

Honor the dark and welcome the return of light at GPUUC's annual event.

Join us for ceremony, singing, drumming, Yule log, camaraderie, and refreshments.

All are welcome. Invite friends to join you on this special evening,

CUUPs, Pagan Gathering monthly meeting will not be held this month due to the Winter Solstice Celebration.

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. Lila.



Bridge Group

Third (3rd) Wednesday of the Month in Davis Hall - A commitment is required, no Drop Ins. Please contact Lea Phillips.

Please note that the Granite Peak Office will be closed the week of Christmas.

Closed 12/24-12/27

Open 1/2/2025



Adult Faith Development Vision Workshop

Photo of Mary Ann Clark Chair of the Adult Education Committee

Vision Workshop: Living with Vision Loss and Supporting Those Who are Experiencing It, presented by Annette Skellenger on Mondays, November 18 through December 2nd from 10:30 to noon in the Faith Development Building. Contact Annette for more information or Annette skellenger.

The Monday, December 2 session will include members of our local community talking about their experiences with low vision. All are invited to attend.

Workshops and programs are planned for 2025 but it's not too late if you have something you want to present or something you want to learn. Contact Mary Ann, Jo Sprague, or Annette Skelleger..

Faith Development Happenings

By Sandra Palacios



October 27, 2024: Halloween/Pumpkin Carving

The English word, "Halloween" is derived from "All Hallow's Eve." Halloween is celebrated on the 31st of October every year because it is a season of the solar years, not the calendar year. The solar year is marked by the position of the sun in the sky, and that does not change. The carved pumpkin lantern's association with Halloween is first recorded on November 1, 1866.

The whole pumpkin represents the world we live in now and is literally filled with blessings waiting to be granted. Each seed represents an opportunity available to you in this life, and with an average pumpkin having about 500 seeds, you can literally count your blessings!

The students each carved their own pumpkin. *"In a world full of apples, be a pumpkin pie."*



November 3, 2024: Diwali, Hindu Festival of Lights

Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights, with variations celebrated in other Indian religions, such as Jainism and Sikhism. It symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance. A traditional Diwali greeting is to say, "Wishing you a Diwali that brings happiness, prosperity and joy to you and your family." The students created a Diya, which is a lantern. They also had pistachios, chocolate and mango, traditional snacks to celebrate Diwali.



Social Justice

November 10, 2024: Veterans Day of Remembrance

Veterans mark the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when the allied nations entered a cease fire with Germany, bringing an unofficial end to World War 1. The observance was first established as “Armistice Day” on November 11, 1919.

In 1938, Veterans Day became a federal holiday honoring men and women for their dedicated service in the military. The students shared their personal stories of family members that served in the military. They made signs depicting the word, “Love” in red,



Seeds of Support for the Sunday Sermons is the Prescott Area Shelter Services (PASS).

Prescott Area Shelter Services (PASS) provides temporary, emergency shelter to women and women with children in a 19 bed dormitory setting, and an additional two rooms built to serve moms with children, including sons over 12 years old.

The shelter includes a community room with two rooms built above it, kitchen, four bathrooms and a conference room equipped with computers.

Shelter Guests may stay up to 90-Days with the opportunity to extend their stay if certain criteria are met. While at PASS, guests receive case management services and referral to valuable community resources. PASS is a Housing First program with over 78% of our guests transitioning into permanent housing!

Collection from the Christmas Eve service will go to the Ministers Discretionary Funds.

The Minister's Discretionary Fund has been established to enable the minister to provide ministry to the congregation and the wider community in ways that are not covered in the congregation's budget. Often such expenditures would be to support individuals who might be experiencing significant life difficulties, which can be alleviated by the gift of a sum of money.

Recipients of these gifts will remain anonymous except for the minister's knowledge.

December Birthdays

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



Introducing Dixie King.



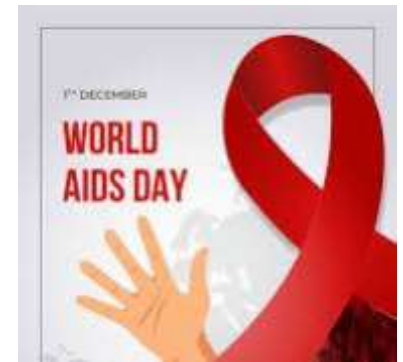
Many Granite Peak attendees heard Dixie King speak to the congregation in July 2024. Her openness and sincerity were moving. She related an experience of a life-threatening illness that she is still recovering from. She spoke of gratitude as part of her journey.

Dixie likes to claim that in coming to Prescott, she's actually coming "home". Her parents met and married here in 1954. Dixie claims that because she was conceived and baptized here (at the old Catholic church that was the Prescott Center for the Arts), she is really a native, who had a 67-year hiatus before coming home. Dixie was raised in Bakersfield, California, spent a year in Jerusalem as an undergraduate, and got her doctorate in cultural anthropology with a specialization in psycho-cultural studies at UCLA in 1996.

She started her own business, Transforming Local Communities Inc. (TLC), in 1997 in Bakersfield. TLC still provides evaluation, technical assistance, and training services to grant-funded programs through schools, public agencies, and non-profit organizations. Dixie is a diversity trainer and facilitates strategic planning for organizations and businesses. She is a certified Mindfulness Meditation teacher. She is also a writer who recently finished the first book of a fantasy trilogy.

Social justice issues are near and dear to Dixie's heart. And it is her joy to serve as a co-chair of the Social Justice Council at GPUUC.

Cowardice asks the question, 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks the question, 'Is it politic?' And Vanity comes along and asks the question, 'Is it popular?' But Conscience asks the question, 'Is it right?' And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must do it because Conscience says it is right. Martin Luther King



On December 1, the world will gather to commemorate World AIDS Day. This annual event serves as an important reminder that we must remain steadfast in our commitment to prevent new HIV infections and provide essential services to all people living with HIV globally. In 2024, we will commemorate the 37th World AIDS Day with the theme, "Collective Action: Sustain and Accelerate HIV Progress."

<https://www.hiv.gov/blog/world-aids-day-2024-collective-action-sustain-and-accelerate-hiv-progress>



Each of us has worth and dignity, and that worth includes our gender and our sexuality. As Unitarian Universalists (UUs), we not only open our doors to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, we value diversity of sexuality and gender and see it as a spiritual gift. We create inclusive religious communities and work for LGBTQ justice and equity as a core part of who we are. All of who you are is sacred. All of who you are is welcome.

<https://www.uua.org/lgbtq>