



# The View

January 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.

**January 4, Rev. Michelle: *A Robert Fulghum New Year.***

Let's ring in the New Year with humorous, yet oh so introspective readings from famed author and UU minister, Robert Fulghum.

**January 11, Rev. Michelle: *UU Thea/ology - Is There Such a Thing?***

Yes! Even a pluralistic faith such as ours holds a thea/oological framework. The Rev. Dr. Thandeka, a UU minister and thea/ologian, has articulated a thea/oological framework, based largely on neuroscience, called Affect Theology. This "*umbrella theology*" holds the potential for understanding multiple thea/ologies and philosophies of life.

**January 18, Robert Shegog: *Martin Luther King is in all of us.***

Martin L King was a great leader and orator. He introduced many ideas for social change. However, he was a human being just like us. Like, Dr. King, each of us has opportunities for greatness, holy moments, moments of greatness that can change our world.

**January 25, Michelle: *Soul Matters: Practicing Resistance.***

When we think of resistance certain actions are likely to come to mind - calling Congresspeople, marching in protest, speaking up at rallies and so on. But what is it that enables us to take such actions? Today we'll take a look at the spirituality of Joy - think Black Joy, Queer Joy, Disabled Joy. What is Joy and how do we maintain it when life seems bleak?

## 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

This year, I did something new for Christmas. I bought myself a present, wrapped it in beautiful paper, addressed it to myself,

and placed it under the tree. I found it while shopping for my family at Prescott's annual Stocking Stuffer Bazaar. It is a wooden cup with an attached saucer, carved from a single piece of wood. The inscription underneath the saucer reads Psalm 23:5. The reference is to the line in *The Lord is My Shepherd* which says: "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup overflows."

I immediately thought of a colleague who as far back as in seminary liked to caution us about keeping our spiritual cups filled to overflowing. He said that as we prepare to enter into ministry, and as we continue to engage in ministry, we must continue to replenish our spiritual cups to the point of overflowing because *the saucer is from where we serve others*. We are to use a spoon to serve others from that which has overflowed our cups and fallen into the saucer.

As I prepare to enter this New Year, my new cup and saucer will be a visual reminder to me of this lesson. I will be thinking a lot about how it is that I replenish my spirit to the point of overflowing so that I may serve this congregation and others.

How about you? How do you replenish your spirits?

## From the President

Rick Denney



Greetings from Rochester, NY! Karen and I celebrated the Solstice with my daughter's family and nearly one hundred other revellers on the grounds of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester,

New York. On Christmas Eve, we joined my son, daughter-in-law, daughter, and two of four grandchildren in singing the opening movement of the Vivaldi Gloria with the First UU Church choir for their Christmas Eve service. I am writing this message as I head with my son's family to Boston where we will be departing for Costa Rica for ten days. Karen and I feel greatly blessed to be with extended family at this special time of year.

It has been a remarkable year for Granite Peak UU Congregation! What a delight it is to gather in our renovated Sanctuary for services led by our new Minister Reverend Michelle. The facilities and Project teams continue to improve our campus. Adding acoustic wall panels has clearly helped mitigate the excessive reverberation in the sanctuary. The leak in the roof of the RE building has been repaired. The asphalt in front and around the side of the main building has been completely redone. No more bone-jarring hole in the asphalt outside Davis Hall! What a difference!

Our many committed volunteers continue to carry on charitable work to the wider Prescott community. Our food pantry serves many local folks in need. Our remarkable pantry volunteers have successfully teamed up with the Green Bag program that coordinates our food pantry efforts with other pantries in the area. Many of our choir members continue to participate in the Prescott Interfaith Choir that recently sang "*They Went to War*" in Prescott and Sedona and participated in the Prescott Community Thanksgiving Service.

For many of us, GPUUC plays a vital role in our social and spiritual lives in this challenging time. We join in community to share joys and sorrows; to contribute; to strive to be better stewards of our precious planet. As we enter the new year 2026, GPUUC continues to work for justice, fairness and peace.

With love, Rick Denney, Board President





## Board Buzz

Jo Sprague, Secretary, Board of Trustees

As we come to the end of the Calendar Year 2025 and approach the second half of the Congregational Year 2025-26, your Board of Trustees is engaged in both reflection and projection. Join us.

Think about how far we have come since last January. We've made decisions on everything from the actual amount that could be spent after the total pledges for the capital campaign were tallied to the preferred contours of a stage to myriad design decisions (inside and outside paint colors, carpet, lighting fixtures, overlay pattern and colors for the featured front windows, flooring, railings and much more.).

We have also coordinated actual work to be done, by members or by professionals, not part of the construction contract. Chairs and piano were moved out of the sanctuary. Sound and video equipment was relocated and a very nice temporary sanctuary was arranged. On October 5, this was all reversed as we held our first service in the new sanctuary. Others were managing finances—tracking change orders during construction, purchasing new Insurance policies and negotiating a bridge loan to cover the time span covering the receipt of pledges.

And, at the same time Your Board was dealing with major personnel shifts. They served as a search team in recruiting and hiring Reverend Michelle LaGrave, a task that involved interviewing and decision making, but also arriving at a contract for compensation, benefits and moving needs.

I can say this, I think, because I am the only non-elected member of the Board, having recently joined in a temporary appointment. I am not claiming an iota of credit but speak as a long-time fairly active member of the congregation: The members you have chosen have gladly taken on responsibilities that greatly expanded their workload. They have walked the line between imposing on the roles given to various committees and teams and yet stepping up to make unanticipated decisions. They made sure that policy was followed, jurisdictions were honored, all affected parties were consulted. President Rick Denny gave regular, detailed updates to the congregation week after week, sharing information that

kept us all involved and gave us the information we needed.

Going forward: The work and the fun are not over yet! Lots of decisions remain to be made about things like storage space, rental policy updates, adding the decorative touches that will help the sanctuary make just the statement we want, and planning the grand dedication event that will be both a recognition of the sacred role of this building and a party to remember! Stay in communication with the Board; they are there to serve the entire congregation. Share your concerns and ask questions of any board member or attend the Talk to the Board meetings held during coffee hour on the third Sunday of each month.

## 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 .



The Social Justice Team at the Food Pantry distributed Fry's Gift cards as a surprise on December 19.

The patrons were so pleased and touched by the gift, one gentleman when he realized what was in the gift stocking returned to say Thank You so much – you do not know how much this means for me – my car was on fumes! Now I can see family.

Thank you to everyone who helps support the food Pantry at GPUUC!

## GPUUC Facilities update

Dawn Korade, Facilities Chairperson



Updates going into the New Year.

1. The Parking lots are DONE!!! Yippee.
2. Found a Handy person company and got an estimate for the drywall, painting, and other work.—evaluating that now.
3. Roof repair for the FD building is finished, Yay! No more leaks.
4. The dead trees behind the FD building have been removed.
5. I am sorry that the bottle fill in the water station is still not working. I haven't forgotten.
6. The library will be moved to the office room off Davis Hall (old minister's office).

Found a small landscaping group that has come out and done trimming and cleaning, moving lots (and lots) of leaves to the compost area.

So many thanks to Stephen, Thomas, Moira, and anyone else who has been working on the grounds keeping over the last month.

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 New Year, Peace, Dawn

## From the Membership Committee

Welcome to a new year: 2026! We look forward to continued growth of our congregation, not least thanks to our inviting new Sanctuary. We continue to have visitors, and our committee therefore is planning our next **Informational Meeting** for prospective new GPUU members for **Saturday, February 7, 9:30 to 12:00**, in the Faith Development Building. Congregational members and our minister will give

an overview of our UU faith and organization, and particularly our own Granite Peak community. We will explain what is involved in membership with GPUU. This meeting is open to anyone who would like to find out more about Unitarian Universalist background and history of our faith. Invitations to registered visitors will go out later this month, reservations are needed. Call or email our office at 928-541-0000 or email Lydia Garrett, Membership chair.



Care

Corner

## Care Team Corner:

### Birthday Recognition Update:

The Care Team loves recognizing our members' birthdays but our current list needs updating. After Sunday services in January please consider checking with us at a table in Davis Hall. This is especially for those who have joined in the last several years... do we have your birthday listed? (Probably not.) Hope to see you there!

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 to:

1030 Scott Drive,#214  
Prescott, AZ 86301

Requested by her daughter, Gretchen Hopkins.



ROBINSON, James & Anna Bess

A memorial service for Anna Bess Robinson will be held on

**Saturday, January 10  
at 4 pm at Granite  
Peak.**









## Pagan Gathering

### “Reinventing the Wheel”

“The **Wheel of the Year** is an annual cycle of seasonal festivals, observed by a range of modern Pagans, marking the year's chief solar events (solstices and equinoxes) and the midpoints between them” (Wikipedia). Modern observances are mostly based on European folk traditions. But this month we ask, how well do those traditions reflect what is going on here in the Arizona central highlands? Are there other seasonal patterns that we should be honoring? When do eagles nest? When do we plant and harvest? How do monsoons influence our lives? What wisdom can we gain from the Yavapai people? Everyone is welcome to come and share their experience with the natural cycles here in the Prescott area. Do we need to reinvent the wheel?!

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.*

**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.

## 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!

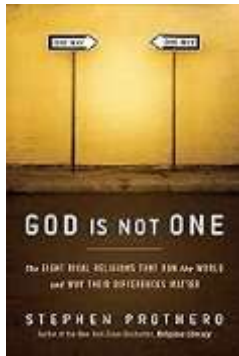
The Tuesday afternoon MahJong group is now meeting at 1:00 pm in Davis Hall and welcomes new members.

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. Lila.



## Adult Faith Development

Mary Ann Clark

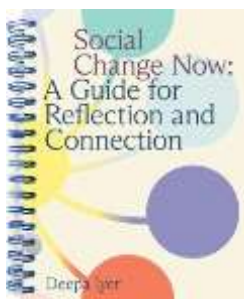


Introduction to World Religions based on *God is Not One: Part 2* Hinduism, Buddhism, Yoruba Religion presented by Mary Ann Clark. January 7, 14, 21, 28, 1 to 3 pm in Faith Development-A. In *God is Not One: The Eight Religions that Run the World*, bestselling author of Religious Literacy

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.

[Skills for Disagreeing Better](#), presented by Braver Angels, Saturday, January 24, 10-12. (Snow Day 1/31)

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.



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.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Clark.

## Faith Development Happenings

By Sandra Palacios



### November 23, 2025, Cornucopia/Horn of Plenty

A cornucopia or “horn of plenty” is a symbol of abundance and nourishment, shaped like a horn, overflowing with harvest goods. It signifies prosperity and gratitude. The students of Faith Development created a cornucopia and filled it with photos of food and fruits cut out from supermarket advertisements.



### November 30, 2025, National Day of Mourning

Ainslee provided this lesson. The National Day of Mourning on November 27 presents us with many questions: Did Christopher Columbus discover America? How did Indigenous people treat the colonizers and how did the colonizers treat the Indigenous people? Where are Indigenous people now? Which Indigenous tribe's land do we live on? What is manifest destiny?





## December 7, 2025, Under the Bodhi Tree

Bodhi Day commemorates the day Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment under a Bodhi tree, becoming the Buddha and marking the foundation of Buddhism. The day is celebrated by many Buddhists on December 8. It involves meditation, studying dharma, acts of kindness and decorating trees with lights. These activities encourage spiritual awakening and the interconnectedness of all things. The students made their own personal Bodhi trees by painting yellow, blue, and red leaves onto a tree.



## December 14, 2025, Chanukah/ Hanukkah

Hanukkah is the Jewish eight-day Wintertime “Festival of Lights.” The Hebrew word “Chanukah” means “dedication.” Typical food for Hanukkah includes the Eastern European classic, Latkes, which are potato pancakes.



It is customary to play a game on Hanukkah using a “dreidel,” a four-sided spinning top, bearing the

Hebrew letters “nun,” “gimmel,” “hay” and “shin.” Lighting of the “Menorah,” Hebrew for “lamp,” is the central ritual of the Jewish holiday, with a candle lit on each of the eight nights of Hanukkah. The students enjoyed playing the dreidel game with a partner and took home their very own dreidel.

# Social Justice



**January Seeds of Support is the Prescott Area Habitat for Humanity.**

**Prescott Area Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, organization** that seeks to eliminate poor housing conditions and unaffordable housing circumstances for families in our community. We make simple, decent shelter a matter of priority, conscience and action. People from all walks of life work together in partnership to build houses with qualified families. Since 1989 PAHH has served 99 families in houses constructed in the Tri-City region including Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley.

**PAHH provides a hand up to families in need** by building homes in partnership with them and by working with others to rebuild their neighborhoods. Housing costs are kept low through volunteer labor. Partner families invest hundreds of sweat-equity hours of their own labor into building their own house and the houses of others.

Habitat ReStore is a home-improvement thrift store whose profits benefit our mission. Our ReStore accepts donations of new and gently used furniture, appliances, and building materials and sell them to the public at a fraction of the retail price.

“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.”—Franklin D. Roosevelt





## From the Social Justice Council

Once again, the Social Justice Council expresses its warm thanks for the generous contribution of new socks and underwear to benefit our local veterans on December 14. Our next “Undies Sunday” is scheduled for February 15. Watch those sales!

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 December post-Empty Bowls sale of leftover bowls at the Prescott Farmers Market garnered over \$2,000! We will be posting our final totals for 2025 and the names of this year’s food pantry recipients at the end of January. Our thanks for your incredible support in helping feed our neighbors.

If you are interested in finding out more about how to be part of Empty Bowls 2026, please contact Dixie King for more information. We will need help in nearly every area of this multi-faceted event!

### GPUUC Food Pantry Needs:

Peanut butter, jelly/jam, canned fruit, condiments (mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise, BBQ sauce), instant potato mixes, cleaning supplies (dish detergent, all purpose cleanser), personal hygiene supplies (shampoo, conditioner, body wash, deodorant), as well as toilet paper and paper towels. Pet food is also appreciated.



## SIDE WITH LOVE

As we leave this holiday season and arrive at the threshold of another year, we are reminded of the deep currents that run through our Unitarian Universalist faith: the inherent worth and dignity of every

person, the interdependence that binds us together, and the enduring call to place love at the center of our public and spiritual lives. December offers us a chance to breathe, to honor the complexity of our world, and to return to the wellsprings of courage and compassion that animate our movement.

In this spirit of reflection and renewal, we’re preparing to begin 30 Days of Love in January: our annual month-long spiritual journey that invites UUs and our partners to ground ourselves in imagination, justice, and faithful action.

This year’s theme, Love at the Center: Imagining the World as It Could Be, calls us to engage the theological heart of our tradition: a belief in the transformative power of human agency, collective liberation, and the possibility of a world shaped by compassion and mutual care.



“All I ever wanted was to reach out and touch another human being not just with my hands but with my heart.”

—Tahereh Mafi, [Shatter Me](#)