



# NUUSLETTER

The Newsletter of Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church  
always available online at [www.hvuuc.org](http://www.hvuuc.org)

*The mission of Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church is to promote spiritual growth, religious freedom, and ethical action.*

May 2023

PO Box 8383 Johnson City, Tennessee 37615 (423) 477-7661

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Up to date church info is always available at [www.hvuuc.org](http://www.hvuuc.org)

## Upcoming Church Services - 11:00AM Sun

### May 7, 2023, Lee Sinnott

*Quest for the Holy Grail, a Search for Meaning*

We will look at the UU, the 4th principle, a free and responsible search for truth and meaning. Using the story of the holy grail as a guide we will search for meaning in our lives.

### May 14, 2023, Rev. Tiffany Sapp

*Flower Communion*

A widely celebrated Unitarian Universalist tradition, the flower communion is an interactive service that invites us to contemplate what we bring to our community and what we receive from our community. Please bring a flower. It can come from the store, your garden, or even the roadside. Additional flowers will be provided so please come whether you have a flower or not.

### May 24, 2023

*More Ethical than God*

Stories told about "God" or "the gods" from ancient times often present a Deity that doesn't live up to more current Humanist ethics. How can Humanist wisdom help us be better people? And can there be any value found in these ancient stories still?

### May 28, 2023, Rev Sapp

*Spirituality of Tool*

The experimental heavy metal band Tool has offered unique philosophical perspectives through their music for decades. Hear three of their most popular songs, and reflections on what meaning they may reveal about the human experience.

## Save the Date

May 5—Women's Night

May 7—Multicultural Book Club

May 10&24—Let's Chat Group

May 19—Game Night

May 28—Path to Membership

Every Wed—Yoga with Tish

No Brunch Bunch this month!

Find these events and more on our church calendar at the link below.

[https://localendar.com/public/  
hvuuchurch](https://localendar.com/public/hvuuchurch)

## Teacher Appreciation Dinner

The RE Collaborative is hosting a Teacher Appreciation Dinner, catered by Poblano's, on Saturday, May 6, from 6:00 - 8:00 pm at HVUUC to recognize and thank our RE teachers, OWL facilitators, Youth Group leaders, and nursery volunteers.

If you have volunteered in one of these areas in the past year please RSVP to Justin Ridley, [dre@hvuuc.org](mailto:dre@hvuuc.org) with your plus one so we can get an idea of how many people to expect. Childcare will be available and pizza for those 11 and under.

## UUA Presidential Nominee

"Our most basic teaching is that every one of us is worthy, that none of us can be made less than the greater love that calls us into being" -Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt

While we have spent a lot of our attention on the Proposed Article 2 Revisions this year that will be voted on at General Assembly, this year's General Assembly is an important year for another reason. This year we elect a new President of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

The UUA Presidency is a six-year term, position and for the last six years this position has been held by Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray. According to the UUA's website, "The President of the Unitarian Universalist Association is the primary public and spiritual leader of Unitarian Universalism, as well as the UUA's Chief Executive Officer. They are tasked with helping to lead our Association on a path to Beloved Community, in which people of diverse backgrounds, identities and theological beliefs can thrive."

Throughout 2022 the Presidential Search Committee (composed of 5 elected positions and 2 Board-appointed positions) sought and reviewed applications for the position, and in the Fall submitted their two candidates for the Presidency. This process is all outlined in the UUA's bylaws.

According to the UUA's press release about this round's process, "At the conclusion of its process, the PSC unanimously nominated two exceptionally qualified leaders to be candidates for President. One of those nominees declined the nomination. Once the nominations were made, the committee determined that the only fair and appropriate course of action was to move forward with the nomination of Rev. Dr. Betancourt, rather than reopening the application process. The PSC members respect the decision of the nominee who withdrew, and will continue to honor their privacy, as was done throughout the interview process."

Nomination by this Presidential Search Committee is only one way to become a UUA Presidential Candidate. Petition candidacy is also an option that any member of a UU congregation can engage in if they wish. But this year's process did not offer us any petition candidates.

So, instead, Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt is running for UUA President unopposed.

While this is an unusual development, everything that I know about her and have read about her supports the notion that she will lead us well. Her platform of Communal Care, Collaborative Leadership, and Facing the Unknown Together resonates with the kinds of support that I feel like I need as a Unitarian Universalist in this new century. I was privileged to participate in a workshop that she led on Unitarian Universalist Liberation Theology at our last General Assembly. One of the questions that she asked us that day has stuck with me all year: "Who are you accountable to in your work?" As a parent who feels threats coming at my child from potential environmental collapse, a rise in gun violence and fascism, and legislation that tries to frame my efforts to support transgender kids as child abuse, the answer that came to my mind immediately in this reflective question is that it is our next generation that I am accountable to in the work of our shared ministry: to make sure they have a world left to live in, and a world where they can thrive. It is exciting to me to potentially be led by someone who is inviting us to this sort of reflection.

If Rev. Dr. Bentacourt was not the only nominee, I would not be using this platform to speak of my admiration for her train of thought so openly. But since she is running unopposed, I thought you all might be interested to hear about who our nominee is and what I think about her.

You can learn more at her website: <https://sofiabetancourt.com/>

# Upcoming News and Events at HVUUC

## Facilities Note

On Sunday, April 23 a very enthusiastic group of people participated in the first ever Service Sunday and we sure provided service.

Carpets, windows, and closets were cleaned, the sink hole filled, gardens weeded, trees and shrubs were trimmed and sticks/limbs piled sky high. Sidewalks, steps, decks and the memorial wall were pressure washed and all the secret storage spaces (ha) were cleared and organized. Kitchen tiles were cleaned, things put back in the proper place and the trail was cleared. Chairs/rooms reorganized and hymnals inventoried and redistributed.

Shew, what a list and I'm sure we've forgotten something.

As expected, camaraderie was built and folks gained satisfaction from seeing our sacred space renewed! Just what we hoped.

Thanks to everyone that was able to participate.

## Curious About Joining Our Church?

There will be a Path to Membership Class on Sunday, May 28 from 12:30-3:00 pm. Childcare will be provided. This is a class that helps those considering membership learn more about our church and the opportunities for involvement. Although the class does not commit you to membership, it is a necessary precursor for joining our church. It also allows you to get to know a small group of people on a more personal level.

The number of participants will be limited to 10. Get your name on the list, if you haven't already, by emailing [membership@hvuuc.org](mailto:membership@hvuuc.org). There is also be a sign-up sheet on the side counter in the sanctuary.

Please provide the following information when you sign up:

Name, email, phone, and how you prefer to be contacted. If you require childcare, please provide the number of children and their ages.

We look forward to your participation!

## First Friday Women's Group

1st Friday Women's Group—May 5, 6:30PM

Meeting at the home of Michele Marks from Frisch.

As usual bring a snack or beverage to share. This will be a casual evening to meet new friends and reconnect with familiar faces.

For further information email [womensgroup@hvuuc.org](mailto:womensgroup@hvuuc.org)

## Game Night

Game Night is friendly competition in a supportive environment, playing modern board (and card) games.

WHEN:  
Friday May 19, 6:30—10:00

WHERE:  
Join us on the lower floor of the REZ for fun and fellowship.

## What should I bring?

Yourself! That's all that is required. Optionally, feel free to bring:

- other people you like who like (or might like) board games
- snacks and drinks... just for you or to share
- a modern game or two that you can teach to others and are burning to play... we usually can't play all the games that get brought, so be ready to persuade the group!

## Looking for Techies

Our Sunday Services need several tech-savvy people every week to make them happen. If this is your cup of tea, please get added to our list of helpers by emailing [tech@hvuuc.org](mailto:tech@hvuuc.org)

We need people to run the video camera, run any videos we have in the service, and do video production after the service ends to get our videos on YouTube. All jobs come with some training, and if you want to do video editing and don't have your own software, we can provide some. This may be the way to find your niche here at HVUUC!

# Social Justice News and Initiatives

## Peace Works Focus Group:

May 18th 5:30 pm – RALLY in advance of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) public meeting at 6:30 in Erwin, TN. The public meeting is at the Unicoi County Courthouse, 100 N. Main Street, Erwin. Topic will be the Licensee Performance Review of Nuclear Fuel Services which research has determined has poisoned 95 miles of the Nolichucky River. An awareness vigil will be held. <https://fb.me/e/3yxmvdFYg>

SAVE THE DATE: July 15: Visit to the Peace Pentagon ([www.peacepentagon.net](http://www.peacepentagon.net)) in Independence, Virginia. We will convene a World Peace Flag Ceremony. Express your love to all living beings and to all of creation on earth. Details to Come!

On April 22nd The HVUUC Social Justice Peace Works Focus Group hosted several earth-loving organizations: APEC (Appalachia Peace Education Committee), GINI (Green Interfaith Network, Inc.), ECAN (Erwin Citizens Awareness Network) and CCL (Citizens Climate Lobby) gathering from TN, VA and NC. Our focus was on the poisoning of the Nolichucky River by NFS (Nuclear Fuel Services) Denuclearization for Peace was the evening's common topic. Photo courtesy of Pamela Murphy of [Landoftheskyphotography.com](http://Landoftheskyphotography.com)



## LGBTQA+ Focus Group:

The Focus Group lead, with many HVUUC members, a tabling at the ETSU "You Can't Drag Us Down" Drag Show and Storytelling on March 31. The beyond-SRO crowd enjoyed wonderful (and loud) entertainment and speeches by a Johnson City Council member, a TN State legislator and Presidential Candidate Marianne Williamson. All speakers emphasized the imperative of citizens voting and running for public office as a move to reverse the onerous state legislative efforts to limit free speech and expression protected by the US Constitution.



## Environment Focus Group

APRIL 30TH 5TH SUNDAY

RECIPIENT: Environment Focus Group:  
The Social Justice committee selected  
Hope for Bristol for our April  
30th 5th Sunday donation. Joel Kellogg  
cofounder of the group spoke about the  
group's efforts to address environmental  
issues that affect Bristol.



May 7 – Environment Focus Group will present a “ Show and Tell “ event during Coffee Hour: There will be several tables displaying what resources members use for sustainable living, shopping, composting information, cleaning products, metal straw give-aways, etc. In addition, attendees are invited to bring their own products they find earth friendly. There will also be a table for “what do I do with this?!”, for ideas in repurposing.

May 16 - Holston Valley Regional Conservation Committee, (HVRCC Sierra) will host a presentation and discussion at HVUUC on cryptocurrency - and the process of validating a cryptocurrency transaction. Public is invited. Time is 6-8pm

June 20- HVRCC will host a program at HVUUC by Dana York on farming. Dana worked with the USDA before moving to her family farm in Fall Branch. She has been conducting workshops for women farmers. Public is invited. Time is 6-8pm

## Anti-Racism Focus Group:

### SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023 AT 1 PM - Multicultural Book Group

As the congregation continues to deepen its learning around the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle and building a multicultural Beloved Community, we will be reading the UUA's Common Read for 2023: "Mistakes and Miracles: Congregations on the Road to Multiculturalism" This book provides several case studies of Unitarian Universalist congregations doing this work, and we hope it will give us some inspiration for our own work!

Please contact [antiracism@hvucc.org](mailto:antiracism@hvucc.org) to sign up or for more information.

## Advocating Democracy Focus Group:

### 'TIS THE SEASON

Noel M. and Bob W. represented HVUUC at “Moral Monday” in Nashville April 17<sup>th</sup>. Pictured here: Bishop William J. Barber preparing to rally with supporters for MORAL issues: gun safety, LGBTQ+ rights, Medicaid expansion in TN, \$15 hour living wage.. and so many other issues. He led a solemn procession from the McKendee United Methodist Church to (and, into) the Tennessee State Capitol Building. Six caskets to represent those recently murdered at Covenant School were marched up the steps to our State House. A solemn March. Let's end "Murder by Policies". Complete recording: <https://www.facebook.com/breappers/videos/743567894136167/>



## Caring Team

Thank you to our April Coordinator Brandi Hayes

The Caring Team coordinator for May is Alicia Culbertson.

Contact Options: Email: [caring@hvuuc.org](mailto:caring@hvuuc.org) or find a Candle Card on the church cabinet

You may also call the office 423 477-7661

## Kitchen of Hope

If you would like to help, please consider donating either money or food items that can go in a lunch bag. We serve once a month, but the Kitchen of Hope serves 6 nights a week.

### To donate money:

Mail a check to - HVUUC PO Box 8383, Gray, TN 37615 memo: Kitchen of Hope

Via Paypal - <https://hvuuc.org/donate> (please indicate it is for Kitchen of Hope)

To donate food: Contact Kim at [KOH@hvuuc.org](mailto:KOH@hvuuc.org)

## Website Member Log In

There is information on the website that you need to log in to see. Scroll to bottom of the home page and click on "Members Area". If you need the password, email [office@hvuuc.org](mailto:office@hvuuc.org).

Once you log in, you can get a recent member directory, read the board policies and procedures and board meeting minutes, and get a reimbursement form or our tax exempt certificate.

## Grocery Cards Available for Purchase

Food City and Ingles grocery cards are available and can be mailed or delivered to you!

Cards can be delivered to mailboxes in the Johnson City or Kingsport area, and possibly to others areas. Of course, the cards could also be mailed.

We will happily accommodate your needs so that we can continue to generate a wee bit of income for the church.

If you are interested, please contact Dottie and Richard at [grocercards@hvuuc.org](mailto:grocercards@hvuuc.org).

Thank you for continuing to participate!

## 2021-2022 Board of Trustees

**President:** Ann Johnson [president@hvuuc.org](mailto:president@hvuuc.org)

**Vice President:** Dottie Blades [vp@hvuuc.org](mailto:vp@hvuuc.org)

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**Membership Trustee:** Cynthia Goodman [membership@hvuuc.org](mailto:membership@hvuuc.org)

### Minister

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### Director of Religious Education

Justin Ridley [DRE@hvuuc.org](mailto:DRE@hvuuc.org)

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Submissions for each month's newsletter are due by the last day of month to [newsletter@hvuuc.org](mailto:newsletter@hvuuc.org). Up to date information can always be found at [www.hvuuc.org](http://www.hvuuc.org)