



NUUSLETTER

The Newsletter of Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church
always available online at www.hvuuc.org

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

October 2023

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

Headlines

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Up to date church info is always available at www.hvuuc.org

Save the Date

Nov 1 & 15—Atheist Group

Nov 8 & 22—Let's Chat Group

Nov 12—Green Arts Festival

Nov 14 —Book Club

Nov 17—Game Group

Yoga with Tish Every Tues at 5:15

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

<https://localendar.com/public/hvuuchurch>

Upcoming Church Services - 11:00AM Sun

Nov 5, 2023, Rev. Sapp
All Souls Day

Our All Souls Day service invites us to gather to remember those who have passed away within the last year. Bring a photo, name, or memento for the altar if you have someone you wish to honor. Together, we will remember and reflect on those we have lost.

Nov 12, 2023, Rev. Sapp
You've Got a Friend

What a gift friendship is. John O'Donohue's famous book *Anam Cara* invites us to contemplate how we can be a good friend to others and ourselves, and how deep friendship can change our lives.

Nov 19, 2023, Bradley
The State of History Education in the United States

History education has been a contentious topic recently. Having taught history for a few years, and having spent two weeks with history teachers across the nation, Bradley has some thoughts to share on how our country is choosing to teach our past.

Nov 26, 2023, Steven Roberts
The Sound of Silence

Guest Speaker from our own congregation, Steven Roberts, will share a brief history and lyrical explanation. The service will include a few video presentations, a Quaker style contemplation and an in-service HVUUC discussion time. In Steve's own words "Guaranteed not boring!"

Virtual Church on YouTube

All of our services are available on our YouTube channel. They are uploaded by the end of the day each Sunday.

Subscribe to our channel at:
youtube.com/c/HolstonValleyUnitarianUniversalistChurch/featured

A Platinum Welcome

As I've seen such a delightful influx of new faces into the congregation, it has me thinking about how we welcome folks here. We've got friendly greeters and a solid welcome table and these are warm and informative resources for folks who step into the door for the first time. But what about the rest of us, who don't have an official job? How can we welcome people into our space? Let me tell you two brief stories about how I've experienced Welcomes that made a difference for me.

Memorable Welcome 1

The first, was my first time ever at a Unitarian Universalist Church. As I approached the small building nestled behind a pond in Northwest Florida, I really wondered if Unitarian Universalism was everything that I was hoping it would be. It being such a small congregation meant that they young woman who was standing outside immediately recognized that I was new, and greeted me warmly. When I got into the building itself, and started flipping through the hymnal like the religious book nerd that I am, a woman sitting in her seat in front of us turned around and helped me find the readings in the back of the book. I marveled at the diversity I found there. It was Water Communion, and they had thoughtfully provided water for new people like me who had no idea what was going on. I felt welcomed. I felt like my needs were already being considered before I had even decided to attend that Sunday. I had been greeted warmly by multiple people, one was even my age, and had received just enough resources to get a broader view of what this whole UU thing was all about.

Memorable Welcome 2

My second memorable Welcome was a time I visited a Synagogue for a World Religions assignment. It was amazing to me to be plunged into a detailed tradition that I knew very little about. It was steeped in ritual and a language I barely knew (yes, I know about five words of Hebrew, thanks seminary!). I was a little more out of my comfort zone. But a woman sitting close to me and my best friend asked us if we were visiting and then asked us if we would like explanations of what's happening. And she gave us a very enthusiastic play-by-play of the ritual and showed us where they were working from their liturgy book.

How Can You Create a Memorable Welcome?

What's interesting to me is that in both cases, it was people sitting nearby that were the easiest connections to make. People were aware enough of their surroundings, noticed my shuffling and confusion, and asked if I wanted some more information. All the other strategies and efforts helped too, but a friendly person who just happened to be sitting close to me was what really made these two visits stand out. Which means that all of us have a part to play in welcoming folks!

Do Unto Others?

And we can all develop our skills to be more effective in offering this welcome! Several months ago we explored the idea that the Golden Rule ("do unto others as YOU would have them do unto YOU") doesn't work as well when we are in diverse communities, because people don't always want or need the same things. Instead, we try to use the Platinum Rule in as many things as we can ("do unto others as THEY would have you do unto THEM"). A "Golden Rule" welcome might involve asking someone what they do for a living (because you have a job), or asking someone where they go to college (because you went to college), but we no longer have the luxury of assuming that everyone here is alike. And while I'm sharing cautions, be very cautious about "Are you new here?" We're a large group of people at this point and most do not attend every week, which means that luck could have it that even if you're a social butterfly there may be someone here who has escaped your notice for months.

The Takeaway

So what do we do within these cautions? Well instead of the comfortable opener of "Are you new here?" you could try the equally effective "I don't believe we've met before... (introduce self and then ask their name, and maybe how long they've been coming). Broadly appealing conversation starters after that may be asking about how the drive was out here (since it's really a drive for all but two of us), asking what they thought about the service or the sermon if it's after the service, or asking what they do in their time outside of Sunday mornings. If they do reveal that they are new-ish, it's always a good thing to find out what motivated them to check us out in the first place (and if they reveal an interest like social justice or religious education for their kids, try to introduce them to someone).

I've probably shared too many conversation suggestions with you. Don't feel the need to squeeze them all into one conversation!

Hello, My Name is ...

Outside of conversation, please remember to wear your nametags! That helps everyone. And it is easier to notice people who have write-on nametags when everyone is wearing their more permanent ones. (there's a sign up sheet for nametags by the nametag cabinet if you need one)

I want to thank each of you, whether you've been here for 4 weeks or 40 years, for making this such a warm and joyful place to be on Sunday mornings. I feel really lucky to be part of a community that is doing such good work and that cares about each other so much. And let's look for these Platinum opportunities whenever they present themselves.

Rev. Tiffany

minister@hvuuc.org

Upcoming News and Events at HVUUC

First Friday Women's Group

Special Date: November 10th
Host is Mary W.

Theme is Art for Giving!
Making holiday stick decorations.
Will also be collecting any Giving Tree items you may have ready.

Please carpool if possible:
Parking in the drive way is very limited and steep. Easy parking in street is best.

For chauffeur service down the drive-way...just give Mary a call.

All who identify as women are always welcome! Bring the usual favorite snack or beverage to share. We always make fond memories together!

For directions and questions email Cynthia Goodman at womens-group@hvuuc.org

The Giving Tree is Back!

Join The Social Justice Committee will once again decorate and supply gifts for "The Giving Tree" this upcoming holiday season in downtown Johnson City.

Last year was our first Giving Tree and it was enthusiastically supported both by HVUUC and others in our community. Our larger community heard about it on the news and in the newspaper. They came bearing gifts and put them on the tree. Also area businesses helped out as well.

The presents are bagged in clear plastic and hung on the tree for those in need to take. We will have the donation box in place in the Fred Ball Room starting October 1.

Items needed:

Caps, gloves, scarves, underwear, socks, (all sizes), men and women's hygiene products of all kinds.

Please leave items unwrapped. You may put items in clear ziplock type bags (this helps) or leave them in the box unpackaged.

It appears we may have enough balls for the tree, but we are in need of garland. As time gets closer, we will be looking for volunteers to decorate and resupply our tree.

If you know of a business that may wish to donate gifts for their holiday giving project, please let us know.

Also, monetary donations are also accepted from anyone. One of our elves will happily do the shopping for you.

Please contact us at givingtree@hvuuc.org for monetary donations, suggestions, etc. Thanks for all your support!

Green Arts Festival

Join us after church on Nov 12 for the Green Arts Fest. Local artisans will have homemade items for sale. Find treasures for yourself & for gifts. From chocolate to greeting cards, wood to crochet-- something for everyone!

Do you make homemade food, art, or craft items you'd like to offer for sale? If you'd like a table to sell your wares, email Kim at greenarts@hvuuc.org No fee to vend or attend--vendors are asked to donate 10% of any sales to the church's Green Initiative.

Potpourri, pine cones, tie dye, paintings, pickles, leather, wood, cocoa bombs-- more treasures than a pirate's lair -- without the pesky pirates. Whether you're shopping for yourself or a gift, come join the merriment at the Green Arts Fest right after church on Nov 12 -- in the Fred Ball Room.

Plant a Tree!

The TN Environmental Council has announced its 10 th annual Tree Days event.

Planting trees benefits our environment in many ways including decreasing air pollution, filtering rainwater, and improving wildlife and pollinator habitats. There is more information about the environmental impact of trees on the website below.

Tree orders begin November 1, 2023 and continue through early March 2024. Order your trees early for the widest species selection.

To learn more about trees and to order your trees:

1. Visit this website: <https://www.tectn.org/tennesseetreeday.html>
2. Choose the site on the map where you will pick up your trees in March.
3. Select and purchase your trees.

HVUUC is serving again this year as a local pick-up location! Tree Days are March 15th and 16th , 2024. We need volunteers to help with this important work. On March 15th (helper time TBD) on the HVUUC back deck we will organize and bundle seedlings and prepare them for distribution.

On March 16th , we will be open to the community for tree pick-up 9:00 am-1:00 pm. Volunteers are needed 8:30-1:00 on March 16, Saturday.

We will need a tall stack of newspaper to bundle seedlings. Donations will be appreciated early 2024.

For questions or to participate one or both days contact, environment@hvuuc.org or talk with Lori K.

Wednesday Night Suppers Return!

An intergenerational church meal for all is served on the last Wednesday of each month. This is a chance for our church family to simply relax, chat and eat together. Meals will be served on the last Wednesday of each month

You must reserve a spot for each Wednesday night supper by the Sunday before the date. Email WNS@HVUUC.org

to reserve your spots. There will also be a sign up sheet in the Fred Ball Room.

Cost

- \$15.00 - two adults
- \$8.00 - one adult
- \$5.00 - 12 and under

Mention your food sensitivities when you sign up. We will do our best to have vegetarian and gluten free options available.

Caring Team

Caring Team October coordinator is Freda Love

Contact caring@hvuuc.org to communicate any needs in our congregation.

THE CARING TEAM CARES ABOUT YOU



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 twice 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

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.

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 grocerycards@hvuuc.org.

Thank you for continuing to participate!

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Submissions for each month's newsletter are due by the last day of month to newsletter@hvuuc.org.