



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.

September 2021

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

Headlines

- Read the Reopening Task Force Report on page 4
- Kitchen of Hope September 6
- Gatherings Covenant Group Begins September 7
- In Person and Virtual Water Ceremony September 19
- Let's Chat Covenant Group Begins September 20
- Online Game Group 2nd & 4th Saturdays at 7PM

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

Upcoming Virtual Church Services

11:00AM Sundays at [HVVUUC YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvUUC)

September 5—Appalachia's Labor Movement, Rev. Sapp
We know very well that many Appalachian stereotypes are just plain inaccurate, our congregation is living proof. This Labor Day we explore Appalachia's history of Labor organizing, with the help of Elizabeth Catte's "*What You Are Getting Wrong About Appalachia*".

September 12—General Assembly Report

September 19—Water Communion, Rev. Tiffany Sapp
The Water Communion is a Unitarian Universalist ritual that celebrates the coming together of community. This year we may have to be a little creative in how we connect, but we will connect nonetheless!

September 26—Living Wholeheartedly, Rev. Tiffany Sapp
Brene Brown urges us to "Let go of who we think we're supposed to be and embrace who we are." What guideposts might support us on the quest to live wholeheartedly?

Caring Team Recruiting New Members



The caring team offers temporary assistance to church members and friends. Some things we do are providing meals to someone who is ill, occasional rides to a doctors appointment, sending a personal card to someone who needs one, or sometimes just a chat on the phone.

If you have a little extra time and would like to join us in this important work for our church community, contact Cynthia at caringteam@hvuuc.org or call and leave a message at 423-477-7661.

Religious Education

Religious Education is continuing to adapt to COVID-19, as are we all. We understand how precious and necessary connection and community are. The board approved the Reopening Plan developed by the Reopening Task Force. Please especially note these guidelines:

Small groups of 10 people are welcome at the church campus, indoors or outdoors, with appropriate precautions, which are outlined in the plan.

There is no distinction between adults and kids, vaccinated or unvaccinated.

Please consider ways in which you can connect with other families in small groups safely until we can gather all together, in person and in the church. Connection, not content, is what we need at this time.

The Religious Education Collaborative is actively working on safe plans for our youth and our children under 12 in lieu of RE programming. Please continue to connect to our church Facebook page, our HVUUC Families Facebook Group (search for it if you aren't already a member—we'd love you to join!) and our church website for continuing updates.

Sarah White, Director of Religious Education

Greetings Holston Valley UU Family!

I've been reflecting back on my first month as your minister and I think I've learned some important things. And the most important thing seems to be this: even as the pandemic has gotten worse than ever, we are craving face-to-face time. The times of in-person connection that I've had at the church picnic, or small planning meetings on the back deck of the church, or one-on-one outdoor and distanced pastoral care encounters, seem to meet some sort of instinctual need to be together that we've inherited from our primate ancestors.



And at least for my vaccinated self, I'm ok with outside small meetings right now. But I also know that we all have different levels of what we can feel safe doing. And part of being Community is continuing to be mindful of the wide variety of needs and abilities represented in our congregation.

An in-person opportunity that I'm excited about is an outdoor, socially distanced, In-Person Water Communion on Sunday, September 19th. We will still have an online option posted for people who aren't able to attend in-person.

For those who do attend in person, we will be moving through four stations in small groups, at staggered times. The staggered beginning times, and moving in small groups allow us to make this a much safer experience. So don't just show up at 11am! Instead, start thinking about a group of 9 people or less that you might want to move through the stations with. Maybe two families of four are comfortable being in a "pod" for the day? Maybe you already have some friends from church that you are meeting with?

More information about this process will come to you later in the month, but for now, I just want you to know how excited I am to celebrate our interconnectedness during our in-person Water Communion. I'll be at one of the stations myself, and it will be a great time for sharing our journeys, and receiving a blessing.

This has been a challenging time for many, and I want to repeat my commitment to being available to you if you want to talk about it. Just reach out to me at minister@hvuuc.org. Because even when we don't see each other, we are in this together.

My new favorite poet, John Roedel, speaks to our experiences during this time so well. And so I will leave you with his words:

there's no handbook
for any of this

there are no hard and
fast rules for times
like these

holding things together
while the world falls apart
in this age of fear and fret

you don't need to be perfect;
you just need to be gentle

because that's all you
can really control, isn't it?

yes, things might unravel a
bit more before this is
all done

and it's okay if
you do

while the world
is resetting
it's router

we can take turns
deciding who gets
to cry on the couch

we can take turns becoming
a balm for one another

we can take turns yelling
up into the silent sky

we can take turns
having insomnia

we can take turns being
confessionals for one another

we can take turns brushing
the tears off of each other's face

don't worry about getting
all of this right

don't worry about making
mistakes

there is only one great commandment for
enduring a storm - and it's this:

go easy,
my love,
go easy

(www.johnroedel.com)

Kitchen of Hope Monday, September 6

No volunteers are needed for Kitchen of Hope this month, but we are still serving meals.

The Kitchen of Hope is still serving meals to folks in need. In fact, the numbers have risen to 200+ a day. In an effort to keep volunteers and guests as safe as possible, the logistics have changed. Instead of a sit-down community meal, we now must serve to-go meals only, at the door, one at a time. We have adapted to this situation. And we, too, want to limit potential exposure for you.

Until things get back to normal, 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.

Thanks for all you do! Our community is infinitely better for your caring and commitment!

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



Gatherings Covenant Group

Gatherings Covenant Group (adaptation of a publication by Bushman and Hamilton-Holloway on Small Group Ministry for Men)

Gatherings is a series of 8 small covenant group meetings offering men an opportunity to grow spiritually and personally by meeting in an atmosphere of appreciation, attentive listening and self discovery through shared leadership and participation. Gatherings nurtures a culture of trust and support.

We will meet in person, outside on the deck at church beginning at 6:30PM on September 7. We will continue to meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays (Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec) for a total of 8 meetings.

George Cross and Tom Burns are co-facilitating. Sign up by email to gatherings@hvuuc.org

Let's Chat Covenant Group

A new Covenant Group is beginning in September featuring interesting, challenging, and fun discussions on a variety of topics.

Each session will be a different topic, in which you'll have input. The topic for the next session will be emailed out a week before the session so you'll have time to go over the subject, readings, and resources. A safe environment to chat in, no surprises.

To be held the 1st and 3rd Mondays starting September 20th from 6:30PM to 8:30PM in person at church.

Sign up by Monday, September 13. Contact Greg at letschat@hvuuc.org

Dream Covenant Group

"Sharing dreams and searching cooperatively for their meanings regularly creates deeper intimacy and understanding between and among people participating in the process" Jeremy Taylor, UU minister and dream worker.

In this group we will be sharing and exploring the rich layers of our dreams using Taylor's Dream-work Toolkit and his assertion that "all dreams come in the service of health and wholeness."

Facilitators: Wendy Hearl and Brandie Worley

Meeting place and time: Beginning Monday, September 11. We will meet via Zoom from 7-9pm on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month from September-May

To sign up contact: dreamcg@hvuuc.org

Reopening Task Force Report

The Board would like to thank the Reopening Task Force for their hard and thorough work and their comprehensive final report. Kim R (chair), Cindi H, David K, George C, Larry L, Rosemary, Wanda E, and Wendy H served on the task force.

The reopening plan and supporting materials are available under the [“Reopening Tab.”](#) Here is a summary of the most critical points combined with some plans we have going forward.

Standard Precautions

Throughout this information, “standard precautions” means:

- Mask wearing for all who enter church (except a lone speaker at the podium)
- Small groups may unmask with consent from all participants.
- Social distance of 6 ft indoors (outdoors, by mutual consent) between “bubbles/pods.”
- Frequent hand washing/sanitizing
- Taking temperature at door (touchless thermometer)
- If not feeling well, congregants stay home

Metrics

The Reopening Task Force identified metrics for a variety of activities on our church campus. We are using data from [COVID ActNow](#), The Board will make the most conservative decision based on numbers for Kingsport Metro and Johnson City Metro areas.

- **Average NEW CASES** over the last 7 days
- **Average INFECTION RATE** over the last 14 days
- **Average POSITIVITY RATE** over the last 7 days

The following are the various levels of reopening.

	Green Low Risk	Yellow Medium Risk	Red Severe Risk
Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily new < 1/100K • Infection rate < 0.9 • Positivity < 3% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily new 1-10/100K • Infection rate 0.9-1.1 • Positivity 3-10% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily new >10/100K • Infection rate >1.1 • Positivity >10%

Church Services—General

Green

- Standard-length in-person services
- Standard precautions

Yellow

- 45-minute in-person service AND live Zoom service each Sunday
- Reduced capacity
- Standard precautions

Red

No in-person services, live Zoom services (hopefully beginning in October, also recorded and posted on the YouTube channel)

Religious Education

The RE Collaborative (REC) will not offer formal classes on Sunday mornings until young children can also be vaccinated. Until then, the REC will collaborate with the Families Group to organize fellowship activities in outdoor spaces around the Tri-Cities for connection. The Youth Group will meet for a few events this year incorporating standard precautions as well.

Green

Standard precautions

Yellow

Standard precautions if volunteers are available

Red

None

Coffee Hour

Green

- Standard beverage service
- Individually wrapped food
- Indoors or outdoors
- Standard precautions

Yellow

- Bottled water provided
- Individually wrapped food may be possible
- Outdoors only
- Standard precautions

Red

- None

Committee, Group Meetings, Gatherings

Green

- Precautions determined by the science at the time

Yellow

- Outside or inside
- Standard precautions

Red

- 10 or fewer
- Standard precautions

Last of all

The various documents under the “Reopening” tab include much more information, including guidelines for live music during services, what needs to happen before we can meet in person, and what an in-person Sunday might look like, so we recommend that you look at the [full Reopening Plan](#) for more information.

Membership

Caring Team

The Caring Team coordinator for September is Brandi Hayes. Contact Brandi at caring@hvuuc.org or 423-477-7661 Press 1.

Thank You to our July coordinator Joy Boyd!

Please Remember Your Pledge

Please continue your support of the church by completing your intended pledge for this fiscal year. We still have the mortgage, electric, internet/phone bills to pay. To honor our commitments all paid staff will continue to be paid during this time.

The best way to donate at this time is by check. Electronic donations are also possible, but they take a small percentage of each transaction, so the church will not receive your entire donation.

Mail to: **HVUUC PO Box 8383 Gray, TN 37615**
Write "pledge" in the memo line. Thank you!

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.
Up to date information can always be found at www.hvuuc.org