



# UU Laramie News

October 2021

Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of Laramie  
1402 E. Gibbon Street  
Laramie, WY 82072  
(307) 745-8874

## Services for October

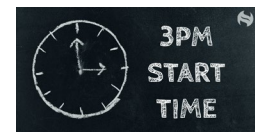
**October 3** “That's Awesome” - We live in a place of great natural beauty. But what is it beyond the visual that feeds our spirits?

**October 10** “Spiritual Dimensions of Music” – UUFL member Matt Stannard leads us in an exploration of the spirituality behind some of our favorite UU hymns.

**October 17** “A Revolting Guru: Lessons in Spiritual Aesthetics” - Honest religion and unvarnished spirituality require that we engage the whole world - not just the good and beautiful, but the evil and ugly as well. This Sunday, UUFL member Jeff Lockwood will probe the meaning of ugliness and go still further into the realm of disgust. If spirituality entails our connecting with other beings in ways that transcend language and transgress rational boundaries, then what about the truly, genuinely repulsive aspects of nature? We will go on a journey with an utterly disgusting six-legged shaman and see what this creature can teach us about living authentically and appreciating nature even when it regurgitates and defecates on us.

**October 24** Rev. Kee will be in the pulpit speaking on the theme of “Beauty.”

**October 31** “A Maskerade Party” - Pandemics are scary but let's have some defiant fun in the form of a Masked Costume Party! At 3:00 pm, we will gather at the Fellowship for a grand and absurd costume party in which your COVID mask will constitute your costume. The mask should be functional and marvelously, cleverly, intriguingly, oddly, spookily, or otherwise decorated. There will be a distinguished panel of judges to evaluate the contestants (which includes everybody because some sort of mask is required!) in various categories such as most humorous, most original, most UU, and most scary. Bring along some Halloween holiday treats (wrapped for safety) and get in the spirit of the season.



### Minister

Rev. Leslie Kee ([lkee@wyoming.com](mailto:lkee@wyoming.com))

### UUFL Board

Board Co-Chars: Linda Meeker ([ldangrousl@gmail.com](mailto:ldangrousl@gmail.com))

David Perry ([dperry@uwyo.edu](mailto:dperry@uwyo.edu))

Treasurer: Jennifer Wade ([Jswade.wyo@gmail.com](mailto:Jswade.wyo@gmail.com))

Secretary: Robin Chestek ([rchestek@gmail.com](mailto:rchestek@gmail.com))

Catie Ballard ([cdonbdoc@bresnan.net](mailto:cdonbdoc@bresnan.net))

### UU Laramie News Editor

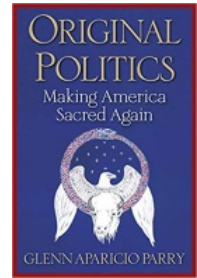
Laura Miller ([uularamienews@gmail.com](mailto:uularamienews@gmail.com))



## Minister's Musings

In his book, *Original Politics: Making America Sacred Again*, Dr. Glenn Aparicio Parry writes

The human conception of time used to be simple. Time was nature – wholly dependent upon the natural rhythms of a particular place. ... For millennia, time was seen as a series of iterative cycles, even in the West; for both Plato and Aristotle, time unfolded in the energy of a circle.



The circle has always represented the whole. But Western consciousness reoriented its view of time and in doing so exchanged the circle for the line.... Once we began to view linear perspective and linear time as real, everything changed – not just in art, but in science, consciousness, and politics.

That was because it literally changed our world view from an immersion in one's environment to an objective distance..... (by) adopting a linear perspective, energy had been redirected away from living nature and into our own head – and consequently if perhaps accidentally – deadening the world around us. Energy now flowed in one direction: from our eye out onto the landscape. This is how the eye of perspective eventually gave birth to the “I” – the ego.....

As we've been wrestling with the very serious issues of what to do with our building – our religious home, the center of our spiritual community, a significant investment – Glenn's book and the ideas he presents have been in my mind a lot these days. Although I'm familiar with many of the Native American concepts he draws upon, it is his pairing with western-colonial ideas that intrigues me. Since our building is such a big deal, I have been searching for a way to think about our cracking walls and water-saturated grounds in a way that helps me feel less frustrated and powerless.

Dr. Glenn Aparicio Parry is in Casper for a book signing on October 9. He is also the guest presenter at the 10 a.m. UU Casper worship service on October 10. See page 5 for more information.

For example, if when this neighborhood was being built, the developers had operated less out of their egos – that “I” centered-energy-flowing-out-onto-the-landscape perspective – and more from an understanding of the inter-relatedness of everything, then perhaps we and all of our neighbors, wouldn't be in this dilemma. There are many examples of where humans believe they can master nature and ignore the power inherent in the natural conditions around them. And so not only are UUFLers facing a practical and financial crisis, we should also be asking ourselves, what is our building-as-a-conduit-of nature's-energy telling us?

As we assess our options, I believe it will be important for us to include a both/and perspective, in that yes, we want to fix and continue to inhabit our building; and yes, we want to understand and respect the natural energies which have existed deep underground for millions of iterative cycles. As we think about our relationship with this little piece of ground, I hope our perspective also has room for that which is begging us to pay attention. In the end, we cannot master the natural forces upon and within which our building was brought into being, but we can factor them into the decisions we will be making about the future.

This is not a bad, either/or, win/lose proposition. It is a spiritually-wise and respectful way to create new meaning out of this pocket of time in which we find ourselves today. No matter what engineering solutions, no matter what aesthetic interior, no matter the size of our investment – we will create more peace for our hearts if we work with nature instead of trying to master it. Perhaps finding a way to be a peace with such a serious and consequential set of decisions we are making will be the ultimate definition of success.

*Rev. Kee*

## Musings of a Board Co-chair

For this month's musings, I thought you might like a taste of the issues the Board has been discussing recently. First, the building, as you are no doubt aware, appears to have cracks in two new areas of the south wall as well as the previously identified pair in the northeast and northwest corners. It is particularly discouraging to see new problems just a few feet from the corner we thought was permanently repaired from installing 3 piers last spring. The United Methodist Church on the other side of the park has generously shared the results of borehole samples that were analyzed around their building and Linda is currently seeking estimates from two geotechnical engineering firms to do a similar analysis on our property. Only then can we engage a structural engineer to recommend strategies to mitigate the foundation issues. The Board—or at least I—was initially unaware that we needed two different spheres of expertise: structural engineers don't study soil and soil specialists don't deal with structures. Life is never simple.



Another complicated issue we are discussing is the pandemic Building Use Policy. The Board is constantly revising our recommendations based upon the metrics provided by the Wyoming Department of Health as noted in the Policy that we have been updating regularly in this newsletter. We are currently in the “orange” zone, one click away from the “red” zone that would trigger returning to online services only. (Other metrics from the CDC and CovidActNow use slightly different criteria and put Albany County squarely in the “red” zone.). We are also negotiating between the recommendations of the UUA that say Wyoming is a COVID hotspot and meeting in person is discouraged and the local reality that the University and schools are operating at full capacity with masking required. I personally have received impassioned negative comments about banning congregational singing as recommended by the UUA. Please be aware nothing is written in stone for the remainder of the church year, conditions and recommendations are constantly evolving and we are doing our best to keep our members safe and healthy. The virus has a single goal: to replicate. Together through vaccination, masking, and air circulation we can help deny the virus access to the replication machinery of another host.

I hope that by this time next month I can offer a more optimistic assessment of both the building and the pandemic. In the meantime, stay safe and stay well.

*David*

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## What's New at UUFL?

**Facebook: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Laramie (public)**

**Facebook: UUFL Community Group (private)** *This is a private group for UUFL members and friends who want to discuss current issues and challenges.*

**Website: [uularamie.org](http://uularamie.org)** *For more news and events, and the latest updates!*

## UUFL Calendar

David Perry maintains a current event calendar on the UUFL website ([uularamie.org](http://uularamie.org)). You can always check there to see what is happening. Remember, all scheduling for use of the building must be done through David ([dperry@uwyo.edu](mailto:dperry@uwyo.edu)).



## Contemplative Yarns



We continue to meet on Saturdays at 12:30 pm at Harbon Park for a picnic and conversation. We will meet as long as the weather permits. Later this fall, we will begin to hike on Saturday mornings, mostly in town at Pilot Hill. We are also starting a book group late November or early December. We will be reading and discussing *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Paganism*. If you are interested in participating in any of these activities, e-mail [uularamieneews@gmail.com](mailto:uularamieneews@gmail.com).

## Can you help?

A UUFL member is looking for an inkjet printer to use to transfer a photograph to a piece of fabric. If you have a printer available for this one time use, please contact [uularamieneews@gmail.com](mailto:uularamieneews@gmail.com).

## Family Promise

Thanks to everyone who donated food and/or supplies in September. We are not on the schedule for October. Please call Bren Lieske (307.761.0887) or get on the Family Promise website for more information. We should be back on the Family Promise schedule in November.

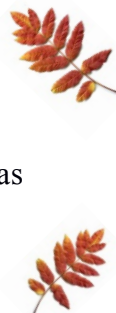


## Membership Committee

The UUFL Membership committee is Robin Chestek (Chair) and Andi Noakes. Please help keep the member / friend database up to date! If you have a change of address, phone number, or email address, please send your updated contact information to Robin at [rchestek@gmail.com](mailto:rchestek@gmail.com).

## Social Action

Social Action is going to collect Change-for-Change for the next 3 Sundays, including the collection from September 26, and forward it to the survivors of Hurricane Ida in New Orleans. We will be sending these funds to the Houma Nation, a Native American community devastated by Ida. Rev. Paul Beedle from the First Unitarian Universalist Church of New Orleans has given us several options. With the help of their Religious Educator, Sivani Gelfand, these funds will be forwarded directly to the survivors. All cash and checks not indicated as your personal "pledge" will be forwarded to hurricane survivors for the next 3 weeks.



## Zoom Room Information

UUFL has a Zoom Room members and friends may use to host UUFL related events. Contact Michael Wade ([darooke22@gmail.com](mailto:darooke22@gmail.com)) for details on how to use the Laramie Zoom Room to host a meeting. Below is the Zoom access information for both the Laramie and Casper Zoom Rooms.

**Laramie Zoom Room**  
**Meeting ID: 290 700 5294**  
**Passcode: Board0805**

**Casper Zoom Room**  
**Meeting ID: 459 187 0381**  
**Passcode: 084964**

## From Politics to Love: A Journey from Fragmentation to Wholeness

Public Presentation and Book Signing, Saturday, October 9, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Community of Casper

Go to [uucasper.org](http://uucasper.org) and click the join an on-line service tab.

Glenn Aparicio Parry is an educator, ecopsychologist and political philosopher who, in his most recent book, *Original Politics: Making America Sacred Again*, contends Native America was the primary influence upon the founding principles of the United States. In addition, he traces the influence of Native America on nation-shaping historic forces including the 19th-century women's and abolitionist movements, and modern ecological movements. On writing the book, he says "All the aspirations of our ancestors, as well as the broken treaties, are buried in this sacred ground. My task was to reveal both the highest principles of America and its shadow." This presentation considers how we might reclaim the founding principles of this nation, aligning ourselves with the will of Nature as the Native American cultures do and so start a political journey from fragmentation to wholeness. On Sunday, October 10th, Dr. Aparicio Parry will be the guest presenter at the 10 a.m. UU Casper worship service. Go to [uucasper.org](http://uucasper.org) for more information.

## Building Use Policy *updated August 4, 2021*

The UUFL board has updated the policy governing the use of the Fellowship building during the COVID-19 crisis. The Board will reconsider and update this policy on an ongoing basis as data and events demand.

### Requirements:

1. Users must wear masks or cloth facial coverings **inside** the building.
2. Users are responsible for cleaning tables, doorknobs, and bathroom surfaces with appropriate solvents.
3. There must be a gap of one hour between groups using the building.
4. A maximum of 20 household groups is allowed in the Sanctuary and no more than 12 people are allowed in the Social Hall.
5. While individuals may bring their own food or drink, food may not be prepared or served to groups without advance agreement by the Board.

### Recommendations:

1. Please maintain a social distance of 6 feet or more.
2. The doors and windows should be opened for ventilation, weather permitting.

### Indoor Church Services:

We are allowing in-person services inside, but to protect those among us who might be vulnerable to infection, we continue to require masks or facial coverings **inside** the building. This policy applies if the Albany County Transmission Indicator\* remains in any of the green or yellow zones. If the county Transmission indicator declines to one of the **Red Zones**, services will be **virtual only**.

\* <https://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/infectious-disease-epidemiology-unit/disease/novel-coronavirus/covid-19-orders-and-guidance/>, click on County Transmission Indicators.

