



CUUPS Newsletter - Fall 2019

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GA 2020 in Plymouth MA Planning Needed | Volunteers Needed

Hello Autumn!

Living in New England this time of year feels so quintessentially Autumn. During a drive to the woods of New Hampshire a couple of weekends ago, I was present to the richness of the colors, the smells in the air, the shift in the wild life in the woods, and the light the sun casts. It is both peaceful and a reminder of the circle of life.

This season has also more than before been filled with the loss of some dear sisters, and brothers in my world. As I get older I am clear I do not want get use to this cycle and that is all there is to surrender to, change is inevitable. Each memorial service I have attended or led has been a reminder to love deeply, and forgive for one's self generously.

As we inch towards to time when many of our traditions honor and dance with the ancestors and the sacred dead, may we be present to the legacies we are in their visions of what they would leave behind on this each. We are the ones they hoped for and who those coming after us need. Laugh a lot. Give many hugs. Listen deeply.

Many Blessings!
Jerrie Hildebrand
CUUPS President

Bios for Upcoming Board Members & Nominating Committee Members

Below are bios for the people the Nominating Committee have vetted about participating on the CUUPS board. Each candidate brings a strength the committee saw a need for.

Voting will last 10 days beginning on the morning of November 8, 2019 and complete by November 18, 2019 at midnight. Voting will be open to paid members of CUUPS.

The new board will be seated at the November 2019 Board Meeting.

For the CUUPS Board

Jerrie Hildebrand is the current President of CUUPS, an ordained minister with Circle Sanctuary, as well as an advisor to the Lady Liberty League, a member of the Covenant of the Goddess, and a member of First Church Salem, MA Unitarian Universalist. She has been affiliated

with nature-centered and Unitarian Universalist organizations since 1986 serving on governing boards with various staff and volunteer assignments. She is co-editor and author of the book *"Voices of Unitarian Universalist Pagans & Earth-Centered Spirituality."*

To date under her leadership during the past two years, CUUPS has created a new easy to use website with Wild Apricot. This allows for all financial transactions, forms, and membership management under one system online. We can add forums for Members and Chapters that are specific to their needs. The address for the organization is set to move to Ohio, its state of incorporation as will the banking system. We have divested funds from Wells Fargo and more to Third Fifth Bank in Ohio. Wells Fargo's systems did not align with UU & Pagan principles and thinking. The Curriculum Committee has created a direction to move towards to create educational information for UU ministers, congregations and chapters about the vast world of earth/nature centered traditions, practices, holidays and holy days beyond and inclusive of Wicca centric models with an eye on possible cultural appropriation concerns and how to manage them. Also the long time empty role of Treasured was filled,

Jerrie participated on panels at the Parliament of World Religions in Barcelona, Spain in 2004 about religions freedom issues in Pagan traditions and in Salt Lake City 2015 about sharing and telling one's own story. Currently for the past three years, Jerrie has served on the Ambassadors Advisory Council supporting the training and development of the PWR Ambassadors, and supporting the staff with information on accessibility concerns and needs. Locally in her city, she was one of the founding members of Salem's No Place for Hate Committee working with the interfaith and secular communities.

She is trained in sacred listening, forgiveness skills, transformational models of thinking, and building co-creative environments that empower teams and communities. In her everyday life, Jerrie runs a graphic design and marketing company specializing in tourism and destination marketing, and is the mom to an environmental activist.

Her vision for CUUPS is to continue to build a strong board that respects and honors one another and empowers the mission and vision of the organization. This includes building systems that creates strong chapter support and membership outreach as well as support for ministers and congregations interested in earth and nature centered programs.

Glenn Morrison is a Unitarian Universalist and Pagan living in the Chicagoland area with his life partner, who currently serves as the minister at DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church in Naperville. As a minister's partner, Glenn has had the opportunity to view Earth-centered worship at a number of churches, including helping to found and run a CUUPS chapter in Bremerton, WA. Though he was not officially a UU until he started attending services with his partner, he is originally from the Boston area and, as such, has been ascribing to UU principles and beliefs since childhood, as UU-ism is interwoven into the culture of many of the old New England communities where he grew up.

Glenn came to Paganism after living in Salem, MA for a number of years and being introduced to many great folks in the wider Pagan community. His hope, as a member of the CUUPS Board would be to work with the team to continue to strengthen our presence in the wider Unitarian Universalist movement and foster connectedness to the larger Pagan community.

Erica Shadowsong has been a neo-pagan since 2007, and a Unitarian Universalist religious education professional for going on 8

years. Erica Shadowsong has been in love with mythology, folklore, theater, literature, storytelling, and music for as long as she can remember. Formerly a middle school English teacher, Erica holds a B.A. in English and a Graduate Certificate in Interdisciplinary Studies in Folklore, concentration in Applied Storytelling, from George Mason University. During that time, she also pursued coursework in music education and vocal training. From that point on, she found opportunities to form in local pagan community events such as the DC Pagan Pride Day, the Open Hearth Foundation, the Ecumenical Conference, and non-pagan events such as the Maryland and Virginia Renaissance festivals. She considers storytelling to be an essentially sacred art, however, and loves to tell stories in worship settings most of all.

In the world of Unitarian Universalism, she has been very active in LREDA, serving these last two years as a Fall Conference Worship Leader, and is co-teaching the Worship Renaissance Module at the 2019 Fall Con in Baltimore. She has also contributed writing to *The Promise and the Practice*, and authored the recent UUA pamphlet "Unitarian Universalism and Sacred Texts." She was a 2016 Fahs Research Fellow with the Fahs Collaborative, where she explored the subject of devotional reading as a spiritual practice for Unitarian Universalists. She has served on the DRUUMM steering team, as well as presented two GA workshops on storytelling and multicultural identities, and the needs of transracially adopted children and their parents in our congregations. After the Finding Our Way Home conference for UU professionals of color in 2018, she helped establish a virtual network of UU pagans of color.

Erica has been an active member of the Universal Temple of Spirits, a DC/MD/PA based eclectic group that focuses on trance-possession and ecstatic dance rituals, and is working on forming a new temple in the tradition in Pittsburgh. She was also recently ordained on October 6 of this year as a priestess to Sekhmet, through the Order of the Golden Gryphon. Erica is a member of the National Storytelling Network, and an affiliate member of the American Folklore Society. She is currently serving at the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh, PA as the Lifespan Religious Education Director, where she continues to bring her love of storytelling, music, and ritual to her work.

Catherine Rigby has been a Unitarian Universalist for 15 years and served or chaired various First Unitarian Church of Orlando teams including serving as a First Unitarian Board Trustee. Cat is currently the Chair of Mystic Grove CUUPS which celebrates 18 years as a group this year! She is also currently the Chair of Leadership Development and Council Chair. Cat frequently teaches Adult RE classes and is the HS Youth Group team lead who organizes and supports the HS youth advisors. Off campus, she's been involved with the Orlando Pagan Pride Committee for two years assisting in putting on this annual local event.

In her everyday life, she is a stay-at-home mom while completing her professional certification to become a middle school math teacher as her second career. Her strengths lay in organization, visioning, and helping to break down the "big picture idea" into doable steps.

Cat has a deep interest building stronger regional connections across chapters and developing new chapter leaders. Her hopes for CUUPS include more "easy to implement" material for emerging chapters such as a companion book group study guide for *"Voices of Unitarian Universalist Pagans & Earth-Centered Spirituality"* for Adult RE use. She would also like to see a worship resource for ministers, DRE's, and CUUPS chapters filled with chalice lightings, songs, readings, and more to help them bring Pagan inspired elements to UU worship. If elected as CUUPS Board Secretary, she hopes to learn more about the inner working of the CUUPS board and possibly help bring some of these ideas to life.

For Nominating Committee

Cat has been serving at her local church campus and in local off campus groups for years. She's ready for the challenge of regional and continental leadership.

David Troxel has been a member of UU congregations in Colorado and California since 2014, and has been a practitioner of American Wicca in the West Coast Eclectic tradition for over twenty years.

He first became familiar with CUUPs in 2001 when he was invited to present on Wiccan ritual practices by the UU congregation in Durango, CO, and in 2018 he founded the Redwood Coast chapter of CUUPs at the Humboldt UU Fellowship in Bayside, CA.

Dave also holds degrees in the sociology of religion and community dynamics and conflict, and looks forward to bringing his academic, organizational, and pagan practice experience to his support of the work of the CUUPs board.

Volunteers Needed!

We're just like you, are teachers, parents, business executives, and busy people. We volunteer with our congregations and communities and like our members we have a dedication to working in teams. With volunteers we can make a bigger impact. Interested? We would love to talk with you!

Let us know your interest!

Chapter Support!

We have been working to take better care and be more available to our chapters! If you need support creating covenants or working with your congregation we are here.

Board members Om Prakash (Dr. Rev. John Gilmore) and Debra Gilbert are the liaisons for to work with chapters, ministers and boards with chapter concerns and development.

Contact us for support!

GA2020 Plymouth, MA Volunteers

The board is now planning programs for submission for the 2020 General Assembly in Plymouth, MA. This year is the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims. The theme is *Rooted*.

If you have a chapter in New England we would love to hear from you about supporting the booth and programs.

**Contact Om
Prakash or Jerrie
Hildebrand!**

Acknowledgements

Sometimes sadly people we work with need to move on due to life circumstances. We would like to thank Pamela Backstrom, Irene Glasse, Sarah Tso, and Sally Walsh for their contributions over the past years. These wonderful people have taken on new adventures and the CUUPS board was no longer going to work for them to participate in.

We will miss them. Sarah Tso will be continuing to participate on the Curriculum group as a member with her eye on diversity concerns.

Thank you all so much for your contributions.

Renew Your Membership
or Chapter Dues or
Become a Member

Stay Connected



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