



# The UUCC Chronicle

November 2018

## Worship: 10:00 AM

### **November 4**

Ancestors

Rev Mark Pafford, Tracie Craighead

Potluck Dinner Following Service

### **November 11**

Memory

Rev Mark Pafford, Dylan Gardner

### **November 18**

Gratitude

Rev Mark Pafford, Deanna Lack

### **November 25**

Transgender Day of Remembrance

Dylan Gardner

## Reflections: 11:00 AM

Every Sunday after Worship, approximately 11:00 AM; Co-facilitated by Susan Ford and Deanna Lack

Reflections is an informal, non-judgmental, small-group discussion of the sermon topic. Participants share thoughts and insights or just listen. All are welcome.

*NOTE:* For those who prefer to congregate outside the group, please keep noise directly adjacent to the Reflections group to a minimum. Thank you!



## November is Trans Affirmation & Awareness Month at UUCC

Last week the Trump administration leaked a memo from the Department of Health and Human Services that would further deteriorate transgender rights. It reads, "Sex means a person's status as male or female based on immutable biological traits identifiable by or before birth. The sex listed on a person's birth certificate, as originally issued, shall constitute definitive proof a person's sex unless rebutted by reliable genetic evidence."

It's worth noting that this is NOT policy, not yet, but it would not be surprising if the administration did adopt this policy, given its track record of trying to remove trans troops from the military and rolling back Obama-era orders on restrooms for transgender people.

In short, the administration is considering adopting policy that pretends that transgender folks don't exist. The obvious problem is, they do. There are approximately 1.4 million transgender adults in the US. What, exactly, does the administration expect them to do?

The first principle of Unitarian Universalism is "The inherent worth and dignity of every person." The third is, in part, "acceptance of one another." And hopefully, we go beyond mere acceptance and tolerance to allyship. The

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31 West First Street, Cookeville TN 38501

Mark Pafford, Pastor

Tracie Craighead, Board President

# Events

## Samhain Ritual

UU Pagans of the Upper Cumberland  
Thursday, November 1 @ 6:00 PM

## First Sunday of the Month Potluck!

Sunday, November 4 @ 11:00 AM

For the Potluck, please bring a cooked dish or a store-bought item or contribute \$3 in the donation tin toward the meal or offer to wash or dry dishes. When you bring food, please bring enough to serve all who wish to enjoy your dish. And EVERYBODY wishes to enjoy your tasty morsels!



## Compassionate Communication

1st & 3rd Wednesdays  
Wednesday, November 7 @ 6:00 PM  
Wednesday, November 21 @ 6:00 PM

Compassionate Communication is led by Ivan Cordrey and Susan Ford. It is an effective tool for resolving differences. This training will aid you in better understanding other people and in having other people better understand you.



## Dungeons & Dragons

Saturday, November 10 @ 6:00 PM



## Sign Making Party for Trans Protest

Sunday, November 11 @ 12:00

The Social Justice Committee welcomes you to join in a sign-making party. These signs will be used for the Trans Affirmation Protest to be held on the Cookeville Square on Sunday, November 18 @ 1:00 PM>



## Meditation & Mindfulness

Tuesday, November 13 @ 6:00 PM,  
Buddhist Metta Meditation and Heart Chakra  
Discussion with Deanna Lack

Saturday, November 17 @ 10:00 AM  
Mindfulness for Everyone with Deanna Lack

Tuesday, November 27 @ 6:00 PM  
Join us and de-stress with evening meditation with  
Rev. Mark Pafford



## Tarot Study

UU Pagans of the Upper Cumberland  
Friday, November 30 @ 6:00 PM

## Movie Night

Dates and Times to Be  
Determined

The UUCC and Ric Finch host periodic movie nights. Keep your eye on the events board or contact Ric Finch for additional information.



## What it's Like to Be Transgender

### By Lee Mokobe

The first time I uttered a prayer was in a glass-stained cathedral.

I was kneeling long after the congregation was on its feet, dip both hands into holy water, trace the trinity across my chest, my tiny body drooping like a question mark all over the wooden pew.

I asked Jesus to fix me, and when he did not answer I befriended silence in the hopes that my sin would burn and salve my mouth would dissolve like sugar on tongue, but shame lingered as an aftertaste.

And in an attempt to reintroduce me to sanctity, my mother told me of the miracle I was, said I could grow up to be anything I want.

I decided to be a boy.

It was cute.

I had snapback, toothless grin, used skinned knees as street cred, played hide and seek with what was left of my goal.

I was it.

The winner to a game the other kids couldn't play, I was the mystery of an anatomy, a question asked but not answered, tightroping between awkward boy and apologetic girl, and when I turned 12, the boy phase wasn't deemed cute anymore.

It was met with nostalgic aunts who missed seeing my knees in the shadow of skirts, who reminded me that my kind of attitude would never bring a husband home, that I exist for heterosexual marriage and child-bearing.

And I swallowed their insults along with their slurs.

Naturally, I did not come out of the closet.

The kids at my school opened it without my permission.

Called me by a name I did not recognize, said "lesbian," but I was more boy than girl, more Ken than Barbie.

It had nothing to do with hating my body, I just love it enough to let it go, I treat it like a house, and when your house is falling apart, you do not evacuate, you make it comfortable enough to house all your insides, you make it pretty enough to invite guests over, you make the floorboards strong enough to stand on.

My mother fears I have named myself after fading things.

As she counts the echoes left behind by Mya Hall, Leelah Alcorn, Blake Brockington.

She fears that I'll die without a whisper, that I'll turn into "what a shame" conversations at the bus stop.

She claims I have turned myself into a mausoleum, that I am a walking casket, news headlines have turned my

identity into a spectacle, Bruce Jenner on everyone's lips while the brutality of living in this body becomes an asterisk at the bottom of equality pages.

No one ever thinks of us as human because we are more ghost than flesh, because people fear that my gender expression is a trick, that it exists to be perverse, that it ensnares them without their consent, that my body is a feast for their eyes and hands and once they have fed off my queer, they'll regurgitate all the parts they did not like. They'll put me back into the closet, hang me with all the other skeletons. I will be the best attraction.

Can you see how easy it is to talk people into coffins, to misspell their names on gravestones.

And people still wonder why there are boys rotting, they go away in high school hallways they are afraid of becoming another hashtag in a second afraid of classroom discussions becoming like judgment day and now oncoming traffic is embracing more transgender children than parents.

I wonder how long it will be before the trans suicide notes start to feel redundant, before we realize that our bodies become lessons about sin way before we learn how to love them.

Like God didn't save all this breath and mercy, like my blood is not the wine that washed over Jesus' feet.

My prayers are now getting stuck in my throat.

Maybe I am finally fixed, maybe I just don't care, maybe God finally listened to my prayers.



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Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Cookeville does that. We are a participant in UUA's Welcoming Congregations program, whose slogan is "All of who you are is sacred. All of who you are is welcome." UCC means those words wholeheartedly.

We therefore, as a congregation, publicly repudiate any efforts of the Trump administration or anyone else to erase transgender people, genderfluid and gender neutral people, or anyone on the LGBTQIA+ rainbow. We designate November as Transgender Affirmation and Awareness month, in which the following events will take place:

**November 11, 12:00 noon:** We will have a sign making party as our Social Justice Committee initiative for a protest the following week.

**November 18, 1:00 – 3:00 pm:** Transgender Affirmation and Protest Rally on Cookeville Square.

**November 25, 10:00 am:** Our service today will be our yearly ritual to observe the Transgender Day of Remembrance, in which we memorialize the individual trans people who have lost their lives as a result of hate crimes. Violence against trans people is one of the most invisible crimes. We will not let their names go unsaid. You can check the website at [tdor.info](http://tdor.info).

**December 9 and 10, details to be announced:** We are hosting a clothing swap for trans and other people.

To our trans and nonbinary friends old and new: we see you, we love you, we stand up for you, we hold hands with you in grief and solidarity.

By Deanna Lack



## Ready to Make a Snow Angel?

By Charles Zuller

Conservatives often derisively dismiss liberals as snowflakes – overly sensitive and subject to meltdown under pressure. Part of the chasm between conservatives and liberals may be due to differing viewpoints. For the conservatives, everything is tribal – my party right or wrong. The liberals are more subject to the scientific method – everything must be questioned and conclusions change due to new information. To an outsider, this could appear a weakness.

Unfortunately, we are now at the stage where our society itself is under assault. Democracy depends upon social justice, majority rule, minority rights, freedom of expression, and public integrity. These items are the building blocks of mutual respect for diversity and the ability to compromise. However, we now see these same ideas under constant attack.

By appealing to the fear of immigrants and the promise of returning the country to an imaginary past of "white makes right," a minority of voters now control all three branches of government (executive, legislative, and judicial).

Some people have already voted early. For everyone else, November 6 presents citizens the opportunity to decide the direction of our country. A vote of status quo means farther entrenching those already in power and encouraging them to more aggressively pursue their goals. A vote for change means a reckoning and accounting must be performed.

Individually, snowflakes appear ethereal, unable to accomplish anything. Collectively, snowflakes can change the environment and the world. At first, snowflakes move in the direction the wind is blowing. At some point in time, their mass can then affect the wind direction, often causing brand new landscapes to appear, creating a sense of peace, tranquility, and hope. Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!