

## The Gathering at Northern Hills, A Unitarian Universalist Community



*The Gathering at Northern Hills  
is a congregation  
of free people*

*As such, we celebrate  
diversity and welcome to our  
services all persons,  
irrespective of race, ethnicity,  
disability, sexual orientation,  
or faith.*

*We invite and welcome to our  
membership those in agree-  
ment with our purposes and  
principles.*

**Website:**  
<http://www.gnhuu.org>

**Join GNH Sunday  
Morning Services  
at 10:45**

**or Join GNH on Zoom**  
<https://zoom.us/j/91833287637>

**Please email**  
[gnhhuu460@gmail.com](mailto:gnhhuu460@gmail.com)  
**to receive additional  
Church information**

# The Harbinger



*The leaves have fallen,  
the grass is brown and dry.  
The sun rises later.  
Night comes sooner.  
The Snow is on it's way.*

# Sanctuary Services

Join GNH Zoom Sunday Morning Service Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/91833287637>

## GNH Website

Be sure to check out GNH's updated web site—[gnhuu.org](http://gnhuu.org)—

*GNH currently offers* hybrid services.

You may attend in our sanctuary or online via our Zoom Link:

**All past service videos can be found on the church webpage: [gnhuu.org](http://gnhuu.org)**

Click where it says "**View the latest service videos here**" and the most recent service video will appear. At the top right of the video you will see a three line icon, click this to access other service videos.

## Masks Consideration

[COVIDACTNOW.org](http://COVIDACTNOW.org) states that our area is at a **MEDIUM** level of community risk for COVID,  
Please consider your personal situation and make the choice that is right for you.

## DECEMBER SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES

**This Sunday, December 7, 2025**, our message topic is "**When Hope Is Hard to Find.**" Speakers are: Sue Cline and Khoa Lewis  
Sue Cline and Khoa Lewis will lead the congregation in a dialog on where we can find hope and how we can make hope a spiritual practice

**Next Sunday, December 14, 2025**, Our message topic is "**Building a BLUU Boat Home to a Beloved Community**" Speaker is Sabura Rashad .

Sabura Rashad explores the Black experience within Unitarian Universalism and the sacred work of creating spaces where Black lives, stories, and spirits are fully honored, invited, and included. This message reflects on the journey toward a faith community rooted in liberation, solidarity, and joy, inspired by the vision of Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism. It invites all of us to help build a spiritual home where every person is held in dignity and love.

**Sunday, December 21, 2025**, Our message topic is: "**Yule Love This Solstice Celebration**". Speakers are Les Tacy and Michael Tacy.

Join us on December 21 for a special holiday service. Because this Sunday falls on the Winter Solstice, Les and Michael Tacy will lead us in songs from the Christmas season that have their roots in Pagan traditions and Solstice celebrations. Come enjoy music, meaning, and midwinter warmth!

## **"NO CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE"**

**Sunday, December 28, 2025** Our message topic is: "**Our Annual Service Wrap-Up**"

Speaker: Michael Tacy

Michael Tacy will offer his traditional gift to the congregation: a video reprise of wise words that have been shared from the GNH pulpit in 2025.



## Office Hours for Christmas Week

**Thursday, Christmas Day, 12/25/2025 "Office Closed"**

**Tuesday, 12/23/25 11:00am - 4:00pm**

**Friday, 11/26/2025 -10:00am - 3:00pm**



## Office Hours for New Year's Week

**Thursday, New Year's Day, 01/01/2026 "Office Closed"**

**Tuesday, 12/30/25 11:00am - 4:00pm**

**Friday, 01/02/2026 -10:00am - 3:00pm**

## Konscious Konscience

We are headed into the Season of Hope, as some have called it. We know this by the music on the radio, the lights on the houses, the dreaded bitter and wintry weather and, most importantly, the feelings in our hearts. Even for those of us who may have a spiritual path that journeys far from the origins of this holiday, this period of time has gained a place in our cultural zeitgeist that puts it very much in our awareness each year. One of the things we can do with this focused energy is to let ourselves understand hope. We speak of peace and joy and goodwill--and we hope this characterizes our world. In the present tumultuous time of transitions it can be hard to find that hope. Maybe that's because it's such an abstract, nebulous and overused term.

So what is hope? And if it truly is something we need, how to we find it or create it or maintain it? Sue Cline and Susanne Bjorner and myself have been diving deep into this question. We've scoured resources from the UUA, carried on conversations with each other and our kin and tried to pin down what it means to hope, or to have hope, or to breathe into existence from our actions this thing we need so much. In the service this Sunday, December 7, we will share some of our dialog with you; and we will invite you to join in that dialog as well. Let your questions about hope be present this week. Come Sunday with them in your hearts and on your minds.

Is hope granted to us by some etheric process, like prophecy from on high? Is hope something we DO rather than something we HAVE? Can hope be dangerous? Does it evolve? Does it have to be realized to persist? We \*hope\* you will be engaged by these questions and others. We \*hope\* you'll be ready to join in the conversation. We \*hope\* that this time of year, and this service, brings something to your walk in life right now that makes it just a little bit easier to bear.

Our team (the Service Planning Committee) meets at least twice a month. We strive to create worship services for our congregation that draw on the strengths of our UU faith and the diverse resources from our community that speak to our way of understanding the world. It is a challenging and rewarding endeavor. It is best done with a deep connection to what we all, as a congregation, share in our spiritual home at GNH. If you ever want to share with us responses to or ideas about services here, please feel free to write to my email address: [khoalewis@proton.me](mailto:khoalewis@proton.me).

Have a most wonderful holiday!

Namaste, peace and Mahalo!  
-Khoa Lewis

## FROM NOWHERE TO NOW HERE

Tom Lottman

Last Sunday we talked about a recent research study that concluded that almost 90% of daily human activity is done on autopilot. The neuroscientist Christof Koch of the Allen Institute for Brain Science describes it as being *Nowhere* and the need to change our experiences to *Now here*. Our encounter with reality is constrained by what Koch calls our perception box. What we see, touch, hear, taste, and smell we assume to be reality, but in fact all of our experience of the world is mediated by our senses interpreted by our brain. For many of us, our perception box is quite small and limiting. It's useful to expand our perception box through some simple daily exercises, and for some even escaping our perception box through meditation, etc. The key lies not in the complexity of what we do, but in the quality of the attention we bring to it. Consciousness, awareness, and mindfulness expand not through effort alone, but through the presence, reflection, and intention we bring to everyday life.

One of the simplest yet most transformative practices is mindful breathing. It's something we never stop doing, so it's always available for increased mindfulness. Periodically during the day, stop and consciously attend to the rhythm of your breathing, noticing the air entering and leaving your body, the motion of your midsection as you inhale and exhale. And for a couple of breaths, intentionally make your exhale longer than your inhale. Or you can practice the physiological sigh doing two intake breaths with a prolonged exhale. These are strategies to activate your parasympathetic nervous system, your rest and digest system. This practice reduces stress and improves emotional regulation. A few minutes each day spent being aware of your breathing can recalibrate consciousness toward a calm clarity.

Expanding consciousness doesn't mean withdrawing from the world, but rather deeper participation in it. When you move from *nowhere* to *now here*, the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

If it's of interest to GNH folks, in future articles I will add other daily activities including mindful experience eating, walking, art, nature, gratitude, kindness, and reflection. Living horizontally means an intentional mindful connection to new ideas, new people, new experiences. It's not about being elsewhere, but rather being here, fully present in the simplicity and yet majesty of everyday life.

## **Annual Congregational Meeting—December 14, 2025**

### **Vote on 2026 Budget & New Board Members**

GNH's annual congregational meeting will follow Sunday's service on December 14. It's important for members to attend to vote on our 2026 budget and to elect two new Board officers to replace Ruth Kraus and John Suddarth, whose terms end at the end of 2025.

**Marcia Venus and Allen Jerome** are up for election to replace them.

Please mark your calendars now so you're sure to attend.

We must have a quorum of at least 30% of the membership present to take a vote.

**Members attending the meeting on Zoom are eligible to vote.**

## **WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK DONATIONS**

The Women's Action Network (WAN) is pleased to report recent donations of \$100 each to these charities that we support:

Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center,

Sheakley Center for Youth,

UpSpring for disadvantaged and homeless children,

and Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank.

These donations are from our Outreach Fund that depends on your donations and the Kroger Community Rewards Program.

You can help by signing up for the Kroger Program.

## **Holiday Gift Donations Requested for VICRC and Lighthouse**

Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center (VICRC) and Lighthouse are again requesting gift donations for the holiday season.

In 2024, we donated **(14)** \$50 gift certificates to Lighthouse and **(31)** \$25 gift certificates to VICRC

This year, **VICRC has asked for \$25 gift cards** from either Walmart or Target and will also accept children's toys and clothes for toddlers/babies (unwrapped).

**These are due at GNH by This Sunday, December 7.**

If you prefer to purchase a \$25 gift card for Lighthouse, we can pair two given by two different donors to equal one gift.

All donations can be given to Betsy Anderson, who will also accept money to use toward either gift cards or children's gifts, whichever you specify.

**Donations received so far** include \$275 in cash, (4) \$25 Amazon gift cards, (1) \$50 gift card to Walmart, (5) \$25 gift cards to Walmart, and (2) \$25 gift cards to Target.

## **Curtailment of SNAP Benefits Heightens Need for Donations to VICRC**

Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center (VICRC) is especially in need of our support since SNAP benefits have been curtailed as a result of the government shutdown. Food and toiletry donations are encouraged, including such items as **pasta, cereal, tuna, canned fruit, and paper products (particularly diapers and feminine hygiene products)**. Please put your donations in the large basket or plastic tub at the base of the stairs in the Quimby Room foyer, and they will be delivered to VICRC.

## **Kroger Community Rewards Program: GNH's Latest Quarterly Dividend**

GNH has received a dividend of **\$47.60** from Kroger for the quarter beginning **August 1, 2025**, through **October 31, 2025**.

This amount is based on **28** GNH households registered for the Kroger Community Rewards Program and how much they purchased with their Kroger Plus Cards during that period.

### **Register Your Kroger Plus Card to Support GNH!**

You can help earn “FREE” money for GNH’s support of local charities, including UpSpring, Sweet Cheeks Diaper Bank, Lighthouse, and Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center.

If you shop at Kroger and have a Plus card, but haven’t registered for this easy way to support GNH’s outreach projects, go to [www.kroger.com/communityrewards](http://www.kroger.com/communityrewards) and follow the links.

**Please sign up for the former Northern Hills Fellowship and use our NPO# SR254.**  
If you need help or have questions about registering, contact Betsy Anderson or Pete Patterson, or call Kroger’s tech team at 1-866-221-4141.

**Thank you for your support!**



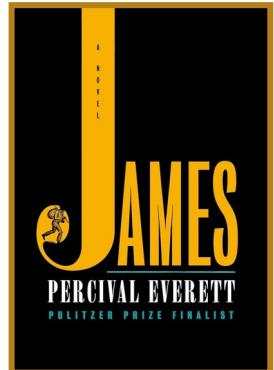
# Book Club

Will Meet on the 1st Friday each month

December 5, 2025

GNH Quimby Room at 1:00 PM

December 5, 2025 James by Percival Everett



January 2, 2026 Belgravia by Julian Fellowes

February 6, 2026 Becoming Madame Secretary  
by Stephanie Dray

March 6, 2026 Why Fish Don't Exist by Lulu Miller

April 3, 2026 Life And Art by Richard Russo

May 1, 2026 Football Sissy by Jack Brennan

June 5, 2026 The God of The Woods by Liz Moore

# GNH BOOK CLUB

## **TUESDAY DISCUSSION GROUP**

**Every Second Tuesday  
Discussion via Zoom**

**The next meeting will be on The Second Tuesday,  
December 9, 2025  
from 3:00 to 4:00 pm via Zoom.**

This is an informal meeting of a casual group of GNH members and friends.  
**ALL are welcome and encouraged to join this session.**

If you are not already on the mailing list to receive the Zoom link and preparation email, contact Susanne Bjorner [susanne.bjorner@gmail.com](mailto:susanne.bjorner@gmail.com) or Sue Cline [scline0149@gmail.com](mailto:scline0149@gmail.com).

## **Lighthouse Shelter for Youth**

**December 15, 2025,  
Third Monday of the Month, at 12:00 PM.**

**All drop off food is welcome.  
Cook and/or Serve Lunch for homeless youth**

**We arrive at the Lighthouse at 11:30 and serve at noon.  
Contact Cheryl if anyone wants to donate food.**

## **GNH Community Garden**

**IT'S A WRAP!  
See Everyone Next Spring!!**

## **GNH CARE TEAM**

### **For Emergency Contact Information**

We would like to keep basic emergency contact information for any member who lives alone or anyone who feels they would like the Care Team to have the information. This would include a family member or friend who could be contacted if there is some concern when someone has not been seen at services & has had no contact with anyone for a while. Participation is purely voluntary.

If you are interested please contact your Care Team members through our designated email ([gnhcareteam@gmail.com](mailto:gnhcareteam@gmail.com)) or speak to one of us at services.

Anita, Becky, Betsy, Linda, Marti, Sue Woodruff, Susanne Bjorner, Ruth

### **CARE TEAM BIRTH DATES REQUEST**

The Care Team would like to get birthdates for as many members as we can who would like to receive greetings on their birthday. We ask that you email the Care Team with your birth date. Including the year would be optional. "The Care Team would like to celebrate you on your birthday.

Please send your birth date (year is optional) in an email to the Care Team at [gnhcareteam@gmail.com](mailto:gnhcareteam@gmail.com) if you would like to receive birthday greetings. If you have a birthday list you are willing to share we would surely appreciate it. "Please contact Ruth Kraus at [ruth.kraus@yahoo.com](mailto:ruth.kraus@yahoo.com) if you have any questions.



***There is a basket at the back of the sanctuary for anyone who would like to donate cards for the Care Team's use. All donations will be appreciated.***

## THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

**Please offer prayers and good thoughts  
For all our members' and friends' peace and wisdom**

**Please contact Adrienne at [ghnuu460@gmail.com](mailto:ghnuu460@gmail.com)  
If you know of any member or friend with care needs.**

## Ways to give to GNH

GNH is grateful for all those who have kept up with their pledges during the pandemic and days of virtual services.

As you know, there are several ways to give of your financial resources to GNH:

- Mail a check to GNH.
- Ask your bank or credit union to mail a monthly check automatically. Many banks do not charge fees for this service. Check with your bank.
- Set up monthly or quarterly automatic payments from your investment accounts. Talk to your financial adviser.

◊ Use our online giving app, Givelify. Set up your personal confidential account at <https://giv.li/phv85q>. Download the Givelify app to your smartphone using the Apple Store or Google Play. Once you have the app, donating to GNH is as easy as Tap. Give. Done. (Note that Givelify charges GNH a transaction fee of 2.9% on each transaction, so you may want to increase your online donation by a small percentage to compensate.)

## **NEWSLETTER POLICY (September 2008)**

All items that appear in the Harbinger should be of general interest to the members and friends of GNH and be consistent with GNH's mission, purposes, and policies.

Newsletter submission should be as brief as possible, with a 500 word maximum. The editor has the right and responsibility to edit as needed to ensure conciseness and readability. The editor also has the right to delay publishing non-time-critical articles as available space may require.

The newsletter editor may refuse publication if a submission is considered inappropriate.

The editor shall consult with the minister and the Trustee who holds the communication portfolio for guidance in what shall be published.

Members of GNH shall have the choice to receive the Harbinger electronically or via paper mail. The newsletter shall be posted on the website. Do not submit names or contact information without the consent of other persons.

The Harbinger mailing list shall not be used for business purposes or for any type of mailings

### **The Gathering at Northern Hills, A Unitarian Universalist Community**

**460 Fleming Road  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231**

**Phone: 513-931-6651  
Email: gnhuu460@gmail.com**

### **OFFICE HOURS**



## **NEXT Harbinger**

**Our Next Harbinger will be  
Tuesday, December 16, 2025**

**Please have all articles to the  
office by  
10 a.m. by the deadline, Monday,  
December 15, 2025 before the  
Harbinger is published.  
Space can be  
reserved on the rare occasion an  
article needs to be late.**