

UUWomenspirit Fall 2026
Waters of the Spirit
September 30 – October 4, 2026
The Mountain Learning & Retreat Center
Highlands, NC



Get ready to join the flow at our 2026 Fall Retreat Waters of the Spirit! In this event, we will dip into the waters of the spirit, exploring what we can learn from water in many of its forms – as river, as mist, as snow, as an ocean, as waterfall, and as well. How does the river current direct our journey? How does the mist give mystery to our lives? How does waters transformation into snow inform our transformations? How does the energy of the ocean open us to a sense of oneness with all that is? What can we find in the water depths of the well? How does the energy of waterfall enliven our experiences?

Come and explore these questions with a wonderful group of your sisters in a beautiful, rustic retreat center in the mountains of Highlands, North Carolina. The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center has partnered with UUWomenspirit since 1987 to provide the perfect, magical backdrop for our events. We'd love to have you join us.





With Gratitude and Love, We Welcome You!

If this will be your first or second UUWomenspirit event, this page is especially for YOU.

First, take a deep breath, refresh your cup of tea, and relax into your favorite chair. We know that this brochure has a LOT of content and many pages, but we will help you navigate through it all.

To set the stage, here is some general information you may find helpful:

- UUWomenspirit offers a unique event in the spring and the fall each year. Unique because an ad hoc Planning Committee of volunteers works for 6-9 months to lovingly create each one.
- Each event consists of two programs: the Institute runs Wednesday dinner through Friday lunch, and the Gathering runs Friday dinner through Sunday lunch.
- If you can come for both programs, as most participants do, we heartily recommend it for the richest experience-you travel on Wednesday and Sunday, with three full days to soak in all the beauty, peace, and sisterhood.
- Attendance is typically 65-75 women (18 and up).
- UUWomenspirit and The Mountain Retreat & Learning Center have Unitarian Universalist origins, but everyone is welcome-UU affiliation is not required or expected.
- UUWomenspirit was created in 1987 to explore and celebrate the Feminine Divine. A given event's theme will lead to more or less study of specific Goddesses and archetypes.
- Our event has three main components: (1) Worship, (2) Tracks & Workshops, and (3) All the Goodness in Between.
 - Worship is a time to gather in sacred space for reflection and celebration. Each worship service is uniquely crafted by members of the Planning Committee, aligning to the theme and with threads connecting one to the next. There is one per day for each day of each program. See page 3 to learn about what you can expect in our worship.
 - Institute Tracks and Gathering Workshops are times of learning, exploration, and experience. For the Institute, you select one track that runs for nine and a half hours: Wednesday evening, all day Thursday, plus Friday morning. For the Gathering, you can select one six-hour all-day workshop, or two 3-hour half-day workshops. You can also intentionally select Free Time for one or more of these time periods. Your track and workshop options are described on pages 4-13.
 - All the Goodness in Between includes meal times, social hours, and a breadth of activities in which you may wish to partake. In this brochure we highlight those that benefit from advance planning. See pages 14-15 for information about these.

On page 18 you'll find a checklist to assist you with registration. If you have any questions, please reach out to Melissa Christopher, our Fall 2026 Event Coordinator, at ecfall@uuwomenspirit.org.

Most importantly, know that UUWomenspirit is a warm, caring space of Love, Light, Peace, Joy, and Gratitude. We're glad you're here!



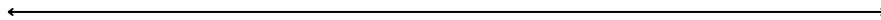
About Our Worship

When you arrive at the entrance to the treehouse, you will be greeted at the door and, if you wish, you may receive a gentle cleansing or anointing to prepare your body, mind, and spirit to transition into this sacred time and space. As you enter the room, you will find soft music playing and women may be circle dancing in the center of the room. Everyone is invited to join the dancers or to sit quietly in the large circle of chairs. This is a time of centering to prepare for worship.

We begin our time together with the creation of sacred space. Honoring earth-based traditions, we “call the directions.” This means we envision a protective sphere being created in all directions around us, bringing us into a safe and focused time together in which we may commune with ourselves, with one another, and with what is of deepest value to us.

Each 45-60 minute session we spend together will follow the theme of our event, “Waters of the Spirit” – connecting with water in its many forms, connecting with our bodies, being present to here and now, and expanding in our sense of grounding, safety, comfort, healing, strength, and love. This time might include storytelling, singing, chanting, drumming, readings, guided meditation, gentle movement, sharing, or crafting.

We close the session by “releasing the directions,” calling our energy back into ourselves and grounding, preparing to return to the everyday world. Before we leave, there is time for announcements.



What do we mean by “worship”?

In today’s world, we typically hear the word “worship” associated with the worship of a deity. But the original meaning of the word in Old English is simply the act of honoring something we believe to be of great worth.

At UUWomenspirit, when we come together in a sacred circle for the time we call “worship,” we honor the Feminine Divine, and each participant is invited to take that in whatever way fits best within her own beliefs - literally, figuratively, symbolically. We come to this sacred space with our sisters to commune with our highest values, our deepest selves, and our own core truths - what it is that matters most to us. We support each other on our own individual paths, and we feel a sense of shared meaning, purpose, and connection to something greater.

EVERYONE is welcome at UUWomenspirit, whether or not you consider yourself affiliated with Unitarian Universalism. You might find it interesting to know that the UUWomenspirit approach to worship reflects its UU roots. In UU communities, there is no expectation that everyone will share the same beliefs about spiritual topics such as ultimate reality and the divine. Instead, UU community members come together around a shared covenant, a set of shared values. Centered around love, UU values include interdependence, pluralism, justice, transformation, generosity, and equity. Read more here: www.uua.org/beliefs/shared-values.



Institute Tracks

The Way the River Runs

Jay Woodward

Up to 15 Participants

No Materials Fee

“These rocks, they are like books, they tell us their stories, all we must do is learn their language.” And in this track, we will be discussing rocks’ most collaborative (though sometimes combative) ghost writer, water. Rivers and river systems have shaped our world and our lives for eons. Come meditate by the river and trace its origins back to the headwaters and follow its beds to the deltas that gave life and rise to early human settlements. In the afternoon, we will journey out to Dry Falls, a short drive from the mountain to participate in a meditative walk to the bottom of the falls before returning home for dinner. (Weather pending) For this, you are more than welcome to bring a journal, a camera, walking sticks, or just yourself. Volunteers for carpooling are needed and deeply appreciated. I will cover the parking passes. If you have a National Park pass, please bring it. They are accepted for parking fees at Dry Falls.

About Dry Falls from the Highlands Chamber of Commerce: The paved trail descends via stairs then takes a sharp turn to the left where the trail continues to the waterfall. The trail curves behind the waterfall, allowing you to stay dry while the water cascades over the overhanging bluff. There is also a viewing platform from the parking lot where the waterfall can be seen without going down the steps.

On a scale of 0-5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 3

Emotional Intensity: 2

Creativity: 1



Jay Woodward

Growing up in Maryland, Jay Woodard developed a love for stories early on. It wasn't until high school they found their second love in an earth sciences class at West Tech. Life has had a roundabout way of getting them to where they are, but here they are glad to share this deeply rooted passion for tradition and science.



Institute Tracks

The Sacred Power of Water

Elise Boren

Up to 25 Participants

\$20 Materials Fee

This workshop invites participants to reflect on the magnificence of water as a source of life, renewal, healing, and sacred connection. Through guided discussion and contemplative exploration, the session considers how water has inspired awe across various cultures and spiritual traditions, symbolizing cleansing, transformation, wisdom, and the flow of sacred presence.

The workshop also introduces participants to spiritual water rituals practiced in different traditions, including purification rites and nature-centered ceremonies. These examples are presented with respect and care, highlighting shared themes of purification, blessing, remembrance, gratitude, and spiritual rebirth. Water is explored not only as a physical necessity, but as a profound spiritual symbol that connects people to mystery, community, and the sacred.

This workshop creates a meaningful opportunity for learning, reflection, and a deeper appreciation of water as both a gift of life and empowerment in ceremonies. Participants will be taking home items used in the various water rituals and meditation practices that are explored during this track.

On a scale of 0-5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 1 -2

Emotional Intensity: Varies by person

Creativity: 1 - 3



Elise Boren

After a life-changing accident, I discovered sound's healing power and have used it to manage chronic pain for over 40 years. This path led me to become a nationally certified sound healer and life coach. Through spiritual practice and Dr. Masaru Emoto's teachings on water, intention, and vibration, I came to believe deeply in energy's transformative power. I believe true healing includes mind, body, and spirit, and that we all hold the power to heal within and beyond ourselves.



Institute Tracks

Crafting a Personal Finger Labyrinth

Carolyn Miller

Up to 20 Participants

\$15 Materials Fee

Water has long been a symbol of healing, intuition, renewal, and the deep currents of spirit that flow through our lives. We will explore the symbolism of water through meditation, reflection, storytelling, and the contemplative art of labyrinth creation.

Together, we will explore the history, symbolism, and spiritual use of labyrinths, experience the meditative practice of finger labyrinths, and create personalized finger labyrinths inspired by the theme Waters of the Spirit. Like rivers, tides, and streams, finger labyrinths invite us to move gently, intuitively, and reflectively along winding pathways that mirror the flowing currents within ourselves. Through guided meditation, journaling, artistic exploration, ritual, and community sharing, each participant will design and craft a meaningful portable labyrinth to support their own spiritual journey.

Designed to be welcoming to all artistic skill levels, this track emphasizes process, presence, and connection rather than artistic perfection. Participants will leave with a completed or nearly completed finger labyrinth, resources to continue their labyrinth practice, and new contemplative tools for grounding, renewal, and spiritual reflection. Most importantly, they will carry with them a deeper appreciation for the wisdom of water and the sacred currents that continue to flow within their own lives.

On a scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 1

Emotional Intensity: 4

Creativity: 5



Carolyn Miller

Carolyn Miller is an occupational therapist, contemplative creator, and UUWomenspirit participant with a deep passion for helping others connect with their inner strength and live in alignment with their true selves. Her work blends practical support with intuitive insight, inviting people to explore their purpose, make soulful choices, and embody resilience. Carolyn enjoys weaving together creativity, reflection, ritual, and spiritual exploration to create gentle experiential spaces for transformation and connection. Drawing from her love of symbolism, nature-based spirituality, and hands-on creative practices, she is honored to hold space for participants to deepen their connection to themselves, one another, and the wisdom that flows within.



Institute Tracks

Mermaids and More

Linda Myers

Up to 15 Participants

\$20 Materials Fee

Come join the Mermaids and other sea creatures by creating a book celebrating their beauty. This easy to create, hard cover book, inspired by Junk Journals, but on a beautiful level, will contain Mermaids and other beautiful creatures that grace our waters. These books may be used as gifts, to jot down your thoughts, or simply as an art object.

We will begin by folding and creating pockets and other elements to include and then move on to the fun stuff of creating and embellishing this book. This is an easy endeavor but due to time constraints, it may be necessary to finish embellishing your book at home. (All items needed will be available for you to take home.) No artistic talents or book making skills are required. Experienced book makers are invited to come and play with my toys and proceed on your own if desired.

All supplies are provided by the instructor but you are encouraged to bring scissors and any ocean themed items you would like to incorporate into your creation.

If possible, bring some water themed items for a small altar.

On a Scale of 0 - 5

Physical Intensity/Activity: 1

Emotional Intensity: 1

Creativity: 2 - 3



Linda Myers

Linda has taught at UUWS many times, and has an Etsy shop, attends multiple craft shows, and will be teaching a 1 day class for the Tampa Bay Surface Design Guild and an afternoon class for the Safety Harbor Book Club.

Gathering All-Day Workshops

Spiritual Bathing

Oreon Millard

Up to 16 Participants

No Materials Fee

This workshop invites participants into a shared, experiential exploration of spiritual bathing using hands-on techniques developed by Oreon. Together, we will create a safe, supportive, and trauma-informed space where participants can explore connection with self, connection to water, and connection to community. Participants will release what no longer nourishes them through the element of water in a supportive sisterhood.

For those who experienced Oreon's Energy Clearing Workshop at Spring Gathering 2026, this full-day workshop will add on to that experience and participants will be able to incorporate the energy clearing into spiritual bathing. For new participants this will be an entry point into energy clearing using the conductive powers of water to clear and connect.

Spiritual Bathing or "water clearing/communions" are ancient human practices found across many spiritual traditions. Rather than claiming expertise in a specific lineage, this workshop approaches the work with curiosity and respect, grounding it in connection to community and water. This technique supports emotional release, nervous system regulation, and a sense of balance.

Participation is always invitational, and personal boundaries and choice are honored throughout. This workshop affirms that we are humans having an energetic experience every moment of every day—and that, with care and intention, we can support one another in restoring balance and connection. Coupled with our inherent need and connection to water, this workshop allows participants to ebb and flow within their own energetic systems and those of the group.

Participants will engage in guided hands-on practices in pairs or small groups, with clear instruction around consent and communication. You may give, receive, observe, or opt out of touch at any time. No prior experience is needed—just a willingness to be present and curious.

On a Scale of 0 - 5

Physical Intensity/Activity: 1

Emotional Intensity: 3

Creativity: 2



Oreon Millard

Oreon has been facilitating workshops, classes, retreats, and Circles for over 34 years within the Southern Appalachian Witchcraft Community and is excited to offer her Craft and Art to the UUWomenspirit community at The Mountain. For the past 21 years, she has been developing and sharing this form of hands-on spiritual bathing with a focus on women's circles and groups. Through this work, participants are invited to connect more deeply with themselves and one another, discovering the potential that exists both within the individual and within community.

Gathering All-Day Workshops

Seeing Wonder through Watercolor Painting

Elizabeth Thomas

Up to 9 Participants

\$20 Materials Fee

In this workshop, we will practice painting with watercolor paint to explore the natural world and invisible realms within it. In the morning, we will do a variety of beginning to intermediate watercolor techniques and create a painting to implement them. Pacing will depend on participants' prior experience but may include techniques such as working wet-on-wet and wet-on-dry, laying down a wash, dry brush, sgraffito, masking, and working with additives for textures. In the afternoon, we will relocate by car to a nearby stream or waterfall to paint en plein air (outside). Some walking on uneven ground while carrying up to 10 lbs may be required. We will greet water sprites along the way and invite them to guide our ability to see wonder through this creative process.

Supplies to bring from home: Folding camp chairs and water bottles for the afternoon outing, if you have them. All art materials will be provided, but participants are welcome to bring any watercolor supplies and materials they have and want to use. Participants will be able to take home all provided art materials - so you can continue to create at home!

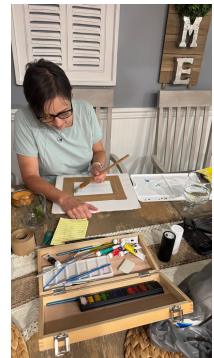
On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 1

Emotional Intensity: 1

Creativity: 2-3

Elizabeth Thomas is a longtime member of UUWomenspirit, attending her first Gathering in 1994. Professionally, she is an educator of the visual arts. She has taught students of all ages in schools, museums and other non-profit art centers. She is also a spouse and mother to three young men ages 11 to 22.



Elizabeth Thomas

Gathering Half-Day Morning Workshops

Breaking Like Waves: The Poetry of Grief

Claire Helton

Up to 20 Participants

No Materials Fee

On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 0

Emotional Intensity: 3 - 5

Creativity: 2

Grief is an ocean we will each wade through in our own time, and that we will each engage differently in different seasons of our journey. In this workshop we'll explore the ways that grief is depicted through images of water (waves, tides, tears, storms, and more) as a springboard into the many ways that poetry and metaphor can help us to process our grief. We'll read poetry and lyrics together that acknowledge the full spectrum of emotions that grief brings, explore exercises for writing our own poetry and/or creating our own metaphorical images through artwork, and weave in some of the most helpful models from grief and bereavement theory to ground and guide us.

Claire Helton is a hospice bereavement coordinator living in Nashville, TN with a deep commitment to creativity, presence, and communal meaning-making. She is a Mentor with OutoftheBox, a group dialogue tool she has used in facilitating a grief support group, among other settings. She is also a former congregational minister and healthcare chaplain, and finds life in creating spaces for deep reflection, community-building, and personal transformation.



Claire Helton

Letting your Voice Flow to Create Inner Harmony

Holly Christopher

No Limit

No Materials Fee

On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 0

Emotional Intensity: 3 - 5

Creativity: 2

You may be familiar with the healing powers of sound waves, but did you know your voice is a powerful healing instrument? Sound waves flow through your body similar to how waves move in water. When you are creating the sound using your voice, the effect in the body will enhance your well-being. Learning to vocalize certain sounds and harmonies gives you tools you can use wherever you are.

In this class, we will be vocalizing – singing, if you will – in ways to create internal harmony. Do you think you can't sing? Have you been told you can't sing?? This class is especially for you! You absolutely can sing and vocalize and I look forward to showing you how.

Holly Christopher lives and works in Chattanooga, TN. She and her husband, Michael, purchased an RV and are traveling with their pug, Gus, as much as possible, "practicing" for retirement. They have 2 adult sons and Holly is grateful for 39 years of continuous sobriety.



Holly Christopher

Gathering Half-Day Morning Workshops

Crying is Good: Make a Teardrop Necklace as a Reminder

Judy Padgett

Up to 15 Participants

\$13 Materials Fee

What is more precious than your tears? Whether shed in sorrow or joy, in pain or ecstasy, they are the physical manifestation of the spirit. They cleanse and nourish your inner self and also perform very important physical functions. In this workshop, we will make a beautiful necklace with antique brass findings, crystals in watery colors and faceted Amazonite teardrop pendants. Amazonite is universally known as the “Stone of Courage” and the “Stone of Truth”. It empowers you to freely express your authentic self without fear of judgment. Making this necklace won’t be too difficult but will involve close handwork. Bring your reading glasses!

Suggested Reading: Research by William Frey II, known as the “tear expert”; The Empath’s Survival Guide by Judith Orloff, MD, which discusses the numerous health benefits of tears; any other online articles about tears and crying! It’s all very interesting and I’d love for you to share what you learn.

On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 2

Emotional Intensity: 2

Creativity: 4



Judy has been a jewelry maker and crafter most of her life, and she owned a gallery for 30 years where she curated and sold a collection of American made crafts and art. In jewelry making, she loves the aspect of finding elements that complement each other and look pleasing together. She also loves working in a group setting with other women while creating something together. Judy is a longtime member of UUWomenspirit and has served as a volunteer in many roles including workshop facilitator, planning committee member, and Coordinating Council member.

Judy Padgett

Gathering Half-Day Afternoon Workshops

Reflecting on Water: Photographing Nature's Most Expressive Element

Shauna C. Ireland

Up to 12 Participants

No Materials Fee

Water is constantly changing, flowing, crashing, freezing, reflecting, evaporating, and transforming. Each state carries its own emotional language. This workshop explores moving beyond just photographing water as a subject and instead using it as a powerful visual metaphor for emotion, tranquility, strength, mystery and resilience. Through discussion, demonstration and photographic examples, participants will learn practical techniques to photograph water in its many forms. We will examine how light, composition, perspective and timing influence the emotional impact of an image.

Supplies to bring from home: camera / cell phone with camera.

On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 3

Emotional Intensity: 3

Creativity: 5

Shauna has been attending UUWomenspirit since the fall of 2015. She has experience in professionally photographing everything from nature, animals, portraits, events, travel, concerts, etc. She resides in Greensboro, NC with her wife Rosemary and their 2 dogs, Parker and River. They have twin daughters and recently welcomed their first grandbaby, Winter.



Shauna Ireland

Embodying the Flow of the Goddess

Betsy Bickel

Up to 20 Participants

No Materials Fee

Embodying the flow of the Goddess - using dance, massage, Goddess Grace moving meditation, and conversation we find greater flexibility, ease and resilience in turbulent times.

Supplies to bring from home: a yoga mat or towel or blanket, clothes you can move freely in.

On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 3

Emotional Intensity: 1

Creativity: 2

Betsy has been practicing massage therapy for 43 years. She is the creator of Goddess Grace: A Moving Meditation and has also taught bellydance for many years. She is a recidivist WomenSpirit teacher.



Betsy Bickel

Gathering Half-Day Afternoon Workshops

Rhythmic Wisdom: Introduction to Frame Drum

Farrunnissa Rosa

Up to 13 Participants

\$3 Materials Fee

The frame drum (or "tar") is an ancient hand-held instrument from the Mediterranean and Middle East played with the fingers. We'll learn the basic drum strokes and a traditional Middle Eastern rhythm. We'll also explore improvising together. For those familiar with frame drumming, some easy optional interlocking rhythms will be provided to play while beginners practice the basic strokes. We'll begin with "Being in Rhythm," a simple but powerful stepping-breathing meditation, and close with a participatory ritual connecting our rhythm-prayers and personal intentions with the universal Waters of the Spirit. Loaner drums will be provided.

On a Scale of 0 - 5:

Physical Intensity/Activity: 2

Emotional Intensity: 1

Creativity: 3



Farrunnissa Rosa is a devoted frame drummer and long-time student of master frame drum artist Layne Redmond (1952-2013), author of "When the Drummers Were Women" who taught frame drumming as a musical discipline within a spiritual framework. Farrunnissa has been a musician since early childhood and a drummer for over three decades. She has shared frame drumming classes and gatherings for more than 20 years, and has taught at UUWomenspirit many times. She loves creating rhythm-prayers with others.

Farrunnissa Rosa

Choosing Free Time at UUWomenspirit Fall 2026

While we encourage participants to explore a Track or Workshop as part of the Fall 2026 experience, you are always welcome to choose Free Time instead—an intentional option designed to honor what you need most during your days on The Mountain.

Free Time is an option on the registration portal, just like Tracks and Workshops. This option allows you to rest, wander, reflect, and follow your own rhythm while staying rooted in our shared theme, Waters of the Spirit.

During these open periods, you might visit Meditation Rock, linger on the Lodge deck, enjoy the quiet beauty from your cabin balcony, take in the view from the top of the firetower, or explore the grounds on a self-guided hike. For those drawn to water and wonder, the surrounding area offers many breathtaking waterfalls to discover. However you choose to spend your Free Time, it is a valid and valued part of your UUWomenspirit journey—an invitation to listen deeply and be fully present.



Meditation Rock



The Lodge Deck



About Your Track and Workshop Selections

Tracks and workshops are filled on a first-come-first-served basis. Register early for space in your preferred sessions.

Each track and workshop facilitator estimated the levels of Physical Intensity/Activity, Emotional Intensity, and Creativity, as shown on their page above. If a range is shown, the participant determines her level of engagement. These are offered to assist in your selections; your actual experience may vary.

Some tracks/workshops and worship service can involve emotional growth experiences which may include triggering content.

All the Goodness in Between

When we are not in workshops or worship, or eating or sleeping, there will be a variety of activity offerings. Below, we highlight those that invite consideration in advance of arrival at The Mountain.

Cabaret

A highlight of every event is the Saturday night Cabaret when you are invited to share your gifts with our loving, grateful audience. Music, dance, poetry, comedy, etc. From the silly to the serious, from the novice to the professional performer, in group or solo—all are welcome! Sign up when you arrive.

Drumming and Dancing

Another highlight of every event is after Cabaret, when drummers drum and dancers dance. Some women take turns at both, and others do neither but sit in the circle closing their eyes and feeling the rhythms. Bring your drum or other percussion instrument(s), and/or your dancing attire (whatever that is for you—no judgement here).

Sacred Circle Dancing

We will offer time to participate in Sacred Circle Dancing two times and facilitator led. You are also encouraged to lead your favorite dance with the group, just bring your music that can be shared (like Apple Music). One of our members who is an enthusiastic Sacred Circle dancer will also offer a morning meditative Sacred Circle dance. Check the schedule for details.



All the Goodness in Between, Continued

Social Hour

Daily before dinner we gather informally in a social hour, when you are welcome to bring your beverage of choice (ice available in the dining hall). The Mountain offers snacks and beverages, with cash donations appreciated. This is also a time when some women will gather for a self-led recovery meeting.

Silent Auction

Bring your gently-used spiritual items and clothing to donate to the silent auction whose proceeds go to the UUWomenspirit Scholarship Fund. Bring cash to purchase others' gently-used spiritual items that call to you.

Community Cookie Jar

The dining hall is open 24/7, with fruit, beverages, and snacks. We augment those offerings with a table full of cookies of all kinds. Bring a package of your favorites from the store or make a batch if you'd prefer (ingredient labels are helpful).

UUWomenspirit Membership Meeting

Members and non-members are welcome to join for the membership meeting on Friday before dinner. If your travel plans can allow it, join us for the most fun business meeting you could attend. Snacks and door prizes are offered.

Sound Bath Healing Circle

In this immersive sound healing experience, guided by a certified sound healer, Elise Borden, participants are invited to explore crystal singing bowls and resonant sound as tools for grounding and restoration. Through intentional listening to music, ambient sound, and the subtle cadence of breath and voice, participants are supported in reconnecting with their natural rhythms.

Brigid's Bazaar

One of the goals of UUWomenspirit is to pursue, nurture, and affirm creativity. In that spirit, we provide a space and opportunity for women to show and sell their arts, crafts, and other items. Even if you are not a vendor anywhere else, this is a great venue to offer Sacred Shopping to your sisters. Vendors agree to pay a commission of 10% to UUWomenspirit. To apply, submit the online agreement form found on www.uuwomenspirit.org/fall by September 9.

Massage Therapy and Reiki

If you are a NC-licensed massage therapist or Reiki/alternative healing practitioner, we would love to include your offering. Anyone offering these services agrees to pay a commission of 10% to UUWomenspirit. To apply, submit the online agreement form found on www.uuwomenspirit.org/fall by September 9.

And So Much More!

The full schedule of activities will be provided when you arrive. You are encouraged to mindfully participate in any and all of the offerings to fill your heart and your cup. You are also encouraged to choose self-care as needed so as to ensure your experience is exactly what is right for you in this time on The Mountain. No stress, no pressure.

Remember to dress for the weather, with layers, hat, gloves, warm jacket, rain jacket. Even if an activity is not outdoors, you will be in the weather to walk between activities. Check the forecast for Little Scaly Mountain before finalizing your packing.

Also remember we are staying on the top of Little Scaly Mountain with some uneven terrains so be mindful of your walking shoes and bring a walking stick if that makes you more comfortable. Most of the walkways are paved or boardwalks but some are not.

UUWomenspirit Fall 2026 Keepsakes

Stainless Steel Water Bottle - \$12

This gorgeous, 20 oz Tumbler is made of stainless steel, double insulated walls to keep your tumbler cold or hot for hours. It comes with a metal straw, lid and a straw brush for cleaning! The perfect companion to take home and remember your experience at our “Waters of the Spirit” event.



Get a Grip Jar Opener - \$5 each

This jar and bottle opener is a budget friendly memento, available in blue or green with event logo.



Women's Hoodie - \$50

This is a luxuriously soft women's hoodie with a unique bottom stitching and slightly curved hem. Made with a 7 oz cotton/polyester blend, it is of medium weight and thickness. Printed by a woman owned Big Frog franchise, the graphic features a lifetime guarantee against cracking or peeling.

Choose from Misty Blue, Sage, or Gray, sizes XS - 2XL

A unisex hoodie is also available in sizes XS - 5XL on request. Contact Krista at kmeinersmann@yahoo.com for colors and details.



Long Sleeve Shirt - \$30

This super soft, 100% cotton long sleeve shirt is women's cut. It features a relaxed fit with a slightly curved hem. Printed by a woman owned Big Frog franchise, the graphic features a lifetime guarantee against cracking or peeling.

Choose from two shirt colors, Navy or White , sizes XS - 3XL.



About Pricing and Lodging

The event costs are in the table below. Your total cost depends on:

- Are you a UUWomenspirit member? (Dues are \$45 for the calendar year; join at uuwomenspirit.org.)
- Are you submitting registration and payment during the Early Bird period, or after August 19th?
- Are you interested in staying in a multi-person bunkhouse, which provides a discount?
- Are you attending Institute or Gathering or Both?

The Mountain accommodations are rustic, all with indoor plumbing, electricity and heat. Single occupancy is available on a very limited basis in the Lodge and Duplexes, if you attend both Institute and Gathering, for an additional \$240. Details about housing options are here: www.themountainrlc.org/lodging-spaces.

	Early Bird Rates (until August 19)	Regular Rates (August 20 - Sept 9)
UUWomenspirit Member	Housing in Bunkhouse (2+ women, one bathroom) • Institute Only: \$260 • Gathering Only: \$260 • Institute & Gathering: \$520 Housing in Lodge, Duplex, or Family Cabin (double occupancy) • Institute Only: \$300 • Gathering Only: \$300 • Institute & Gathering: \$600	Housing in Bunkhouse (2+ women, one bathroom) • Institute Only: \$280 • Gathering Only: \$280 • Institute & Gathering: \$560 Housing in Lodge, Duplex, or Family Cabin (double occupancy) • Institute Only: \$320 • Gathering Only: \$320 • Institute & Gathering: \$640
Non-Member	Housing in Bunkhouse (2+ women, one bathroom) • Institute Only: \$285 • Gathering Only: \$285 • Institute & Gathering: \$570 Housing in Lodge, Duplex, or Family Cabin (double occupancy) • Institute Only: \$325 • Gathering Only: \$325 • Institute & Gathering: \$650	Housing in Bunkhouse (2+ women, one bathroom) • Institute Only: \$305 • Gathering Only: \$305 • Institute & Gathering: \$610 Housing in Lodge, Duplex, or Family Cabin (double occupancy) • Institute Only: \$345 • Gathering Only: \$345 • Institute & Gathering: \$690

UUWomenspirit maintains two scholarship funds:

- Partial Scholarship, available to any UUWomenspirit member in need, covers up to half of the double occupancy rate for Institute or Gathering or Both. Members may apply for a scholarship once per calendar year.
- Young Women's Scholarship Fund pays the full cost of attendance for first-time attendees under 40 for Institute or Gathering or Both, not including membership fee, workshop material fees, and merchandise. You must join UUWomenspirit before receiving a scholarship.

Submit a scholarship request during the registration process by **August 12**.



Ready to Register?

Checklist for Registration

- Would you like to become a member, supporting our organization and getting an event discount? Do that first, at www.uuwomenspirit.org/join.
- Institute or Gathering or Both?
- Which track and/or workshops do you prefer?
- Do you have a roommate you are naming (and they're naming you)?
- What is your preferred housing option?
- What are your dietary needs/ preferences?
- Do any of the keepsakes call to you?

Registration is only online: www.uuwomenspirit.org.

Important Dates

July 22	Registration opens
August 12	Scholarship request deadline
August 19	Early Bird deadline
September 9	Deadline to register, and last day to order keepsakes
September 9	Vendor and massage/reiki application deadline
September 30 - October 2	UWomenspirit Fall 2026 Institute
October 2 - 4	UWomenspirit Fall 2026 Gathering

Fall 2026 is brought to you by the letters U U W S and...

Our Planning Committee



Left to Right:

- **Linda Sanders**, Scribe
- **Margaret Schmidt**, Tracks & Workshops
- **Krista Meinersmann**, Sales & Activities
- **Melissa Christopher**, Event Coordinator
- **Carole Eagleheart**, Worship

In Memoriam

Our Planning Committee consists of five members instead of the usual six. We chose to leave one place open in loving memory of our dear friend, longtime Womenspirit member, and Krista Meinersmann's sister, Reid Suchanec.

It was Reid who first suggested creating a Planning Committee, with her serving as our Event Coordinator. By the end of that spring gathering, our team was formed and excited to begin planning together.

When a hurricane forced the cancellation of an event, our gathering was rescheduled for Fall 2026. Tragically, Reid passed away in August 2025 before she had the opportunity to fulfill the role she had so enthusiastically embraced.

After her passing, our committee reorganized, and Melissa generously volunteered to serve as Event Coordinator. But we knew we could never truly replace Reid. Instead, we chose to honor her by continuing our work as a five-member committee, leaving one place forever reserved for her—a reminder that she remains with us in spirit as we plan, gather, and celebrate together.



**Reid Suchanec at
Dry Falls 2025**

Our Chaplain

Nancy is a Professional Speaker, Business Consultant and Coach. She has a Master of Education in Guidance and Counseling and is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor. She has been a member of UUWomenspirit for 25+ years and credits Womenspirit for her continued spiritual, mental and emotional development. She always looks forward to arriving 'home' on The Mountain with her spiritual friends.

After three decades helping people discover their worth, Nancy now helps leaders discover their teams' greatest asset—their strengths. As a speaker and coach in "Discovering What's Right with You" Nancy provides leadership workshops and training, "Transforming Teams through Strengths."



Nancy Hagman

UUWomenspirit Volunteers

Our UUWomenspirit Coordinating Council

- Christine Grewcock, Registrar and Web Weaver
- Rev. Maggie Lovins, Program Resource Liaison
- Victoria Fredrick, Marketing
- Gail Stephenson, Treasurer
- Shauna Ireland, Volunteer Coordinator
- Raven Stephenson, Scribe

Special thanks to **Iris Padgett**, Editor of our newsletter, *She Speaks*

About UUWomenspirit

UUWomenspirit is a semi-annual retreat where women have gathered since 1987 to explore and celebrate the Feminine Divine. Weekday tracks, weekend workshops and daily sacred circle gatherings guide our way as we explore our connection through ancient and transcendent spiritual practices. Additional activities during the event offer opportunities for conversation, connection, laughter, and quiet reflection.

The purpose of UUWomenspirit is to create, conduct, and support activities that encourage and empower women to explore their religious and spiritual origins, experiences, and beliefs. Pursuing, nurturing, and affirming creativity and diversity are major emphases.

All women (18 and up) are welcome at UUWomenspirit, regardless of sex as assigned at birth. Here, we believe and affirm that transgender women are women. While we recognize that we are still learning and growing, we aim to be a welcoming place for all women who wish to Celebrate the Feminine Divine.



Photos and Video at UUWomenspirit Events

If you bring a camera, be sensitive and request permission before taking any type of photographs or video that may include attendees. No photos, videos or clips should be posted on the Internet without specific permission of those pictured. Worship times are Sacred so we request no photos be taken during the actual services.