

Member Contributions

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NEWSLETTER



WOMENSPIRIT
BOOK CLUB
PAGE 7

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ORGANIZATIONAL
NEWS
PAGE 8

SHE SPEAKS



Dear Sisters,

I think rather a lot about what it means to be Southern. I think about the things that shaped who I am, the things I experienced, the things I was told, the things I saw. I think about the myths and realities and what makes us who we are.

I think about front porch swings, box fans in the windows, and sweet tea; about loving your neighbor, taking care of your family, and doing what's right. I also think about greed, racism, bigotry and what my granny always called hatefulness and meanness.

I always wanted to live in a fairy tale. It turns out that I did. I lived in the myth of the loving South, of the caring South, of the generous South.

As an adult, I entered the real South, the one plagued by greed, judgement, and exclusion. I found out that the people who preached taking care of your neighbors opposed providing those neighbors with healthcare, childcare, or college education.

I learned that the people who preached generosity would rather live in poverty than risk helping someone they didn't deem worthy out of poverty alongside them. I learned that the Christianity of my youth did not extend to the actual words of Jesus I'd been taught to memorize.

When I learned enough that the fairy tale became a transparent, pale, unbelievable myth, I distanced myself from my Southernness. I tried not to say y'all or listen to country music, determined to prove my morals by shifting my cultural signifiers.

And then, I realized that if all the people who believe in the values of the fairy tale South abandon it, all that's left is the anger and desolation of the hateful. And frankly, we deserve better.

So, I'm going to vote for a better life for us all, and then I'm going to sit back, sip my bourbon, and listen to St. Dolly while I dream of a better South.

We deserve it, y'all.

Be well,
Shannon Browning-Mullis, editor

Save these dates for our next in-person event!

May 17 - 21, 2023

2022 New Members

We'd like to recognize the following new members for the 2022 calendar year. Many of you have been able to attend one or both of our events this year and we're pleased to have met you in person. We hope you enjoyed the events. Your membership is vital to the foundational support of our organization, and we hope you will renew in 2023. Look for next year's membership information early in January. Also, for membership information, you can contact Judy Padgett, Treasurer and Membership Coordinator, treasurer@uuwomenspirit.org.

Welcome new members! We're delighted to have you as sisters in UUWomenspirit and hope to see you next year. Thank you for your support!

Emilia Askari
Patrice Bennett
Crys Brockway
Beth Butterfield
Donna Carson
Rebecca Cooke
Beth Huestis
Cameron Ireland
Fredda Mangel
Sylvia Martinez
Michelle Quartermaine
Shelby Register
Judy Robison
Karen Smith
Barbara Stiffler
Sako Tumi
Beckie Wagner

(Note: New members are only listed with permission)





Samhain

The thinning of the veils is upon us and we begin to turn inward. It is the time to think of our beloved dead and remember the joy they brought us and the lessons they taught us. Traditionally, the dead have been honored during this time of year in many cultures, probably because the fading and dying of many plants reminds us of the temporality of life. The dead can be honored in many ways. Around the world, there are bonfires, ancestor alters, and feasts. Many people sit a plate of food for the dead outside. However you choose to honor the ancestors, make sure you're paying attention to the type of ancestor you'll be in the future.



Samhain Ritual

This Samhain, let's think about the past that will exist in the future. Create sacred space however you feel most comfortable. Try to include fire. It can be a bonfire, your fireplace, or a candle. Stare into the flames. Let everything go. Drop into trance. Think about your ancestors. Sit with them. Allow them to speak if they will.

Once you've given your ancestors all the time they desire, think about your descendants. What do you think they will need from you? What do you hope to offer them? What steps do you need to take in your life to become the ancestor you want to be? Mull it over as

Womenspirit Book Club

If Women Rose Rooted,
The Journey to Authenticity and Belonging by Sharon Blackie

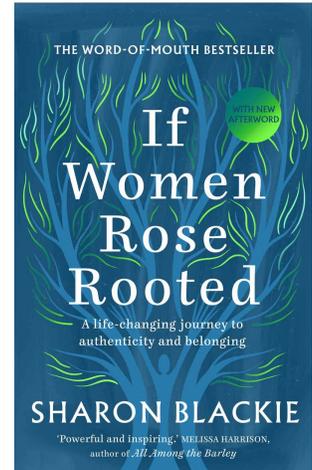
Notice: Date change: November 1st for this month only.
 In Chapter 6, Moor and Bog, Sharon Blackie shares about retrieving the buried feminine. She describes how women have been silenced and taught not to raise their voices.

Linda Bloedau will weave her magic in presenting this Chapter.

Everyone is welcome if you have read the Chapters or not. Contributions by everyone offer a rich interchange as we expand our thoughts by sharing our own stories.

Join us on **Tuesday, November 1st at 7:30 pm (EST)** as we continue our conversations about empowering Women. The Zoom call starts at 7:20 p.m. for informal conversation. The discussion begins promptly at 7:30 p.m.

The UUWomenspirit Book Club usually meets on the second Tuesday of each month on zoom, at 7:30 pm (EST).



First Event by Shelby Register

I wrote this on a small group of which I am a member (us women friends who have known each other awhile)...

This weekend I attended the UUWomenspirit 'Magic in the Cauldron' event held at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center. I walked away with a feeling I am unable to describe other than a weight lifted from my heart.

It is rare in this age to bring together a group of women ranging in age across decades who are all beautiful, kind, caring, intriguing, open, not catty, no cliques...just empowered women empowering other women.

I went with an open mind and a shy heart and ended Saturday night unable to attend worship or the cabaret because I had a wonderfully cleansing and cathartic moment that led to a waterfall of tears, deep breaths, and a need to reflect on the beautiful Meditation Rock. None of it was negative. It was like chains had been broken. I found my Tribe. I found my place in The Mountain, and I can fully understand why the women who have been attending events for years continue to do so. Alas, I had to leave early Sunday with a panicked call from my mom (she is okay now.)

I thank all of UUWomenspirit and everyone at the event for welcoming us new women without hesitation. I can honestly say it was the best, soul-strengthening and empowering time I have ever had.

News from the CoCo

The Coordinating Council, or CoCo, is the governing body of UUWomenspirit. The current members are Nina Brewer-Davis (Marketing and Outreach Coordinator), Tammy Sadler (Volunteer Coordinator), Christine Grewcock (Registrar), Judy Padgett (Membership Coordinator and Treasurer), Maggie Lovins (Program Resource Liaison or PRL), and Susie Sherman-Hall (Communications Coordinator).

Greetings from the CoCo!

We had a wonderful fall event October 5 - 9, on The Magic in the Cauldron. 69 women attended in total across both programs (Institute and Gathering), and 16 of those women were attending for the first time. It was delightful to see so many new faces and meet new people. We are glad you are here!

Our Registrar is now Christine Grewcock, who volunteered to take over a partial term from Linda Sterner. Linda has been on the CoCo for 4 and a half years, wow! Thank you Linda for holding the position of Registrar so long and well. Christine has experience in this position too and we welcome her to the CoCo. In our post-event meeting, the CoCo resolved to work with future PCs and the Mountain to plan menus for future events. Thanks to having a new registration system, our Treasurer was able to reconcile our costs with the Mountain during the event. Final reconciliation for the event is still underway.

The CoCo is discussing ways to bring more value to membership in our organization, to encourage women to become members and continue their memberships, even if they are unable to attend events. We now offer many resources for women beyond the events. Stay tuned for more details about that. (Membership renewal time is the end of the year!) We are also discussing ways to bring conversations and education around anti-racism and how to recognize and avoid cultural appropriation to UUWomenspirit, from online groups to special, in-person programming during events. We welcome your thoughts and ideas on this.

Our newsletter, She Speaks, is now available both in its traditional newsletter form and in a new blog format. We will be sharing content both ways as we try out new ways to connect with each other. Our online monthly book club continues reading *If Women Rose Rooted*, by Sharon Blackie. Our monthly online social hour also continues with faces both new and familiar. The next Book Club meeting is Nov 1 at 7:30 eastern, and the next Social Hour is December 9 at 6:30 eastern. Please check your email and social media for reminders and links.











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