

What are the ingredients of the secret sauce that will inspire our wider UCG church family (however known) to further reconnect and “join as a spiritual community”?

- Love and inclusion of every guest
- Spiritual focus at the start of every gathering—keeping in mind that we are first and foremost A Church.
- The arts
- Our connection with the community (inclusivity) (diversity)
- “It’s not always like this every Sunday”
- Encouraging others to become more involved “New Ideas”
- Love
- Welcoming all others
- Invite others into the conversation, participation
- ENGAGE with others
- ENGAGE with people/friends you don’t know yet
- Vaccines for kids, air conditioning (return inside LOL)
- Spice – continue to add variety of opinions on how to approach this new age of remote interaction
- We can be open with each other
- We bring vastly different religious backgrounds
- We bring a keen awareness of social justice issues and strive to bring our faith to drive those understanding of social justice
- Diverse skills and talents that we share
- Celebrating happy things
- Creating new opportunities to physically come back together in groups
- Our openness to all in our community
- Concern for others
- Visual arts that enhance our environment
- Concern for others
- No one is left out
- Accessibility for all
- Prayer
- Song, seeing others, listening, touching
- Service, exploration, community involvement, freshness, courage
- Continuation of meaningful worship experiences
- Patience, stillness, togetherness, faith, divine love
- Our care for each other and for the wider community
- Personal connections and sense of being part of something bigger
- Our unique combination of tradition and openness to new ideas
- The power of “however known” perspective
- I think flexibility and creativity have always been a part of UCG-the pandemic has really flexed (over-exerted?) those muscles
- Continued openness and willingness to accept others, wherever they may be coming from
- Ways to reach people where they are comfortable, which may include social media, online services, community outreach, etc. Plenty of opportunity on Instagram especially. I like this idea! I think we could work on “branding” UCG as a safe place to connect in person with health/safety minded people.
- This has been a time to reconsider spending time outdoors. I think continuing to be in nature as a community will help us connect more with each other and the natural world.

- Control the virus and move inside
- More “however known”/more concern for nature and the environment and the effects on all creatures
- Small groups of varying subjects, as things return to normal
- Continue to include a variety of music, stories, readings, which are inspiring and expand this
- Be more inclusive of other traditions, including personal growth, rather than God and bible
- Worship gods however known/open to everyone regardless of religious background/ Many ideas, opinions-not just one approach/Friendly open/Buddhism, feminism, social justice threads-however known/Inclusive/Keep God and bible to a minimum/Focus on real-life experiences
- Emphasis on social justice and community outreach. Give members a chance to get involved more deeply. Pair ministers up with another minister to check on each other for support.
- Remembering our 10,000 Joys as well as our 10,000 sorrows!
- Humor, laughter, joy, fun/laughter is music-yes
- Personal invitation to participate in worship or seminars
- Spiritual nurture
- Vaccine for children (I miss the kids)!
- Song and fellowship through shared tasks. The more you give, the more you get.
- Make adjustments to long-term COVID pandemic/pray for God’s love and protection
- Willingness: To step out of our comfort zone/To reach out to others/To include those standing apart (kindness)/To say yes when asked (to say no when overwhelmed or even when “I don’t wanna”)/To acknowledge our collective grief (Yes!)
- Spiritual nurture that leads to community engagement/Be a “light” to those in despair
- Have tech support for elders maybe from youth (Great Idea!)
- Always connecting/ Gathering together as plants in God’s garden/Bond with all in spirit of human friendship with God’s grace
- Friendship
- Deep connection/Sharing one’s deepest being/Problem-sharing/Reinvent how we live/Taking care of each other
- Small groups/Everyone talks and leads (Yes, getting together in small groups is a source of energy and renewal and connection)
- Social opportunities when safe
- Thought-provoking sermons/More diverse readings
- Still use Zoom when people can’t come in person
- Small group study, prayer in person or online
- Risk = the path is what is ahead, not what is behind (Yes, so much of what we want is “on the other side of fear”)
- Grace for each person’s process with trauma and stress (Caring for one another)
- Together ID common goals (projects), and together work toward those goals.
- Seeing the nurturing care for one another
- Together again in the sanctuary
- Open-mindedness/To be challenged and have my in-built beliefs shaken off?
- In the immediate COVID time: Courtyard music and arts events
- Fighting for the underdog. Being a champion for the silenced
- Quiet internal searching accompanied by music/Doing work projects together
- Longing... for the presence and interactions with others/Excitement... to be sharing our wishes for peace and goodwill/Love... for ourselves, our community, and those who suffer
- Perhaps when we are able to meet in the sanctuary again, we could encourage people to reach out to contact 3 or 4 people they have missed seeing and tell them they would love to see them again in person!

- A personal call from one of the ministers or a member of Kairos, perhaps other church members as well. I realize that this would be very time consuming, but for people who haven't been to church for a year and a half and haven't felt spiritually inspired by Zoom services, etc, I think it is necessary to bring them back. I realize that some members have felt very cut off from the church during this Covid time, even our ministers and leaders have tried their best to keep everyone "there."
- Consistency is important ingredient, even when "it's not always like this"
- Churchwide project, like reading Caste together, to have us on common ground. Similarly group work project/s

Which UCG traditions are so sacred that we should ensure their return without change? If we could transform one tradition of the church, what would it be and how should it be reimagined?

- UCG Retreat with reimagination
- All-Church Band
- Lessons and carols reimagined with fresh ideas-too traditional
- Pride service
- The labyrinth is a sacred tradition that we should preserve/Perhaps our music and arts traditions should be reimagined to involve more members of the congregation
- Wonderful Christmas service! Imaginative ways to continue church service during these challenging times (already doing a great job)
- Change enlistment to more joyfulness (Yes)
- Time for children/Kairos/Retreat/Lessons and carols/Youth work tours/Adult discussion opportunities/Sabbaticals
- All church retreat/Lessons and Carols
- Gathering of the waters/Communion/Enhance recording/live streaming abilities for special effects with backgrounds/lighting, etc
- Hospitality/Concern for earth
- Transform gathering of waters (less show and tell?)/Retreat
- Laying of hands/Prairie and all church potluck
- Keep food first/Food for kids/Halleluiah chorus at Easter/Gathering of Waters
- Modify communion—allow us to walk around while doing this
- Bring back children's story/Continue strong music and arts in services
- For change and tradition: Keep lessons and carols but consider adding readings that are more inclusive—there are other lessons of value
- No change: Compact-God however known/L. Reimer used to say UCG was like a tree with roots in the Judeo-Christian traditions and branches in all other traditions and he would name many of them: Hindu, Buddhism, Muslim, non-theist, agnostic, etc.
- Transform: Look at ways to change retreat-closer to home?/Expand readings from Bible reliance to other traditions/Communion-expand metaphors
- Music and the arts are important/Choir, drumming etc. should be continued in whatever manner that is safe for public health/Communion could be reimagined/Once or twice a year would make it more special than every month/Sacred readings on Sundays other than the Bible would be inspiring
- Keep: Lessons and carols/Retreat/Youth work tour
- Transform: New member Sunday is important but are there ways we can make it more dynamic or meaningful for both the new members and the congregation?
- I appreciate how collaborative, inclusive and welcoming this church is and wouldn't want that to change.

- Lessons and carols/Gathering of the waters/Senior Sundays: Adjustments and adaptations are always possible but keeping them similar to how they've been
- Keep: Retreat/Communion/Gathering of waters/Lessons and carols/Choir
- More-Grow: Potlucks-opportunities to share meals (Great idea!)/More outdoor gatherings like church on the Prairie/More connections with other progressive faith communities (Good idea eg Unitarian)/Communion more often
- Keep: Gathering of waters/Add: More integration with nature-more outdoor services/Transform: Mission trip for middle schoolers so they don't miss that experience due to Covid
- Very important: our inclusiveness-never change!
- Nothing is so sacred that it can never change but the most enduring aspect to me is the Compact which embodies our most important values of tolerance and inclusion—that said I love the labyrinth and it's individual and collective journey (Yes me too)
- Holiday traditions/Lessons and carols/Communion/Friday Prayer
- Acknowledge the traditions weekly, daily, hourly
- Keep justice in our awareness/Environmental and social issues
- How about winter party-all church party when it's safe to DANCE together!
- Lessons and carols is Christmas for me-let's keep it! Look forward to seeing it change and evolve with Phillip's leadership/Observing Lent
- Once we shared building a Habitat house/perhaps we could do something similar at this time when so many are suffering more than us
- Keep: Kairos cards/Singing Halleluiah/Lots of song, dance and silliness/Readings from lots of different sources
- Change: Lose reference to "Christian" in pledge
- Invite musicians of all races and religions
- Keep: Lessons and Carols/Children's pageant/I miss Fourth of July celebration-great music with all church band
- Keep: Senior Sunday speeches but alter with more "fun" celebratory activities/outdoor picnic
- United tribes could use more Biblical and other sacred text education
- More outdoor things (as mosquitoes allow)/Kill off "Bump-a-rump"-kill it dead!/Easter needs a more interactive routine (with kids?)
- The water ceremony is a favorite/The tradition of lighting candle on the altar/Also the music selection is very unique
- Keep: Inclusion: Worship Good as we know Him/Worship the one great spirit as we know spirit/Love and kindness (yes—worshipping God however known!)
- Avoid "insider" language and behavior/Radical openness
- Change: Recognize what is unique about UCG but be open to other perspectives/Don't be content with what we are but recognize need to always grow
- Sacred: Gathering of waters/Coffee time/Baptism
- I miss clergy vestments
- Needed change: How do we be an outreach-not an in-reach church? (yes!)/God's preference for the most marginalized-How do we live that?
- Keep the periodic walking of the labyrinth
- Retreats are sacred. I hope we can find ways to resume them safely in 2022/Services have been and can be adapted: continuing to offer Zoom links even when we will be in person can help those who are not mobile.
- The advent traditions are very nice. I wonder about the weekly Happy Birthday, which is also fun, if it could be monthly. But saying the names makes it special...not sure
- Singing the alleluia

- Singing together, both from the hymn and the songbook. Singing "Alleluia" at the end of the service!
- The Lord's prayer?
- Time with the children.
- Yes and children's books!!!
- Continue our strong tradition of social justice work.
- Contemplative evening services at pre Christmas and pre Easter time
- Education—Sunday seminars, small groups and inspiring readings and music from diverse sources.
- Joining in a collective prayer with a hand placed on the shoulder of the person in front of you
- Pride!
- Keep labyrinth walks, Gathering of Waters, Children's Christmas play. Possibly alter, hmmm
- Continue the diversity of small group offerings.
- Pride service and similar very meaningful
- Advent and Lenten Prayer are an important part of my spiritual life. I'm liking the way the Gathering of Waters service evolves over time. For instance, I appreciated the suggestion of blessing oneself with water when leaving the sanctuary that Andy gave this year. Also being able to adapt our traditions to changing times has been especially challenging and nurturing this past year. I hope we can always do this.
- Emphasizing the perennial spiritual basis of all religions and spirit paths
- Similarly, the advent and lenten devotional books are so lovely
- I miss the Worship Centers and find the "decorating" of the sanctuary by the Lively Arts Committee to be distracting sometimes. I agree with many of the other comments: yes, to laying of hands. The new way of letting us know about birthdays is preferable to doing it in the services, in my opinion. It allows us to send messages or cards directly to the birthday people.
- Re-think gathering of the waters

As UCG reunites more and more over the next year, what are the opportunities we should undertake to enhance our connections and nurture our spiritual development?

- Provide ways for each minister to meet with small gatherings to get better acquainted with all members-pods? (Good idea!)
- Go to one service for a while to "gather us in" (good idea)
- Small groups—do a survey to assess needs and interests
- Small group in person activities/Maybe opportunity for meet up with ministers in outdoor setting/Church on the Prairie/Take advantage of fall weather/hybrid activities in person and zoom
- Connections: Some way to connect old and young—maybe voluntary pairing or groups of 4-could be integrated in morning coffee (I love this!)
- Retreat/Choir/Potluck dinners
- Bromleigh loves theatre (as I do!). How about putting on a play? (comedy/drama)
- Invite black church members to attend/Meet with their ministers/Invite their musicians/Share ours/Support each other in and outside the church/When the plague leaves, have dinners together
- Provide tech help training (Yes!)/Continued use of Zoom and streaming to expand our outreach/Emphasis on intergenerational ops/Creative expansion of funding ops
- Bring back pet blessings!/Meet with ministers and their families in small groups
- Continue to reach out to homebound/Make Zoom and other recordings easily accessible on website
- Work on the "age divide"/Music

- Create structures which surpass hierarchical structures, so we can all speak and be heard and be leaders and followers
- Scripture book study groups/connect children and youth with older folks
- A just “social” time-cookout maybe? Block party? Block party at UCG could connect us with our 5th Ave. neighborhood/Maybe get together for block party by neighborhood we live in/Doing more things outdoors in nature/Outdoor games that are for all ages/Cookouts
- Small group offerings/Gatherings/Interactions inside during worship?/Randomized small group dinners throughout/Incorporation of guided meditation during worship over specifics of the theme-worship
- Good ole Bible study-explain the bible to us from an informal, progressive Christian point of view/Probably minister-led small group
- Have fun!!!/Outside activities, small groups, church picnics
- Bring the youth/children into services/Singing
- Embrace the risk and touch more than we have
- Each member can express their passions so we can all know each other better/If we got to ascribe any spiritual tenet, what would we choose?/Express our best version of what brings us towards faith, ritual, spirituality and care of others (is it compassion, desire to be better, etc)
- It’s difficult to envision what’s next/Trying to interact with others will hopefully come about/Try to stay upbeat and welcome the slow steps in reuniting
- Develop new opportunities and ways to assist the community i.e. Habitat for Humanity/Henceforth sharing the love of Jesus by serving those in need
- Paper registration for small groups would help-not everyone can negotiate Shelby Next
- More safe gathering options/Music in the Courtyard/Get more families involved and out of their homes
- For our mental health more meditation/Enhance the children’s ministry/Create connections
- Continue doing what you have been doing (push it more)
- More UF student involvement/More outreach to other churches-mixed activities
- Love this-some ministries have a campus presence/recruitment/How can we?
- Less big picture, more granular/Send SHORT emails the day before service to remind folks of time/place options to worship since this has changed a lot/Make it easy for folks to join/Nature walks (Yes!)-include a passage people can reflect on; could be as a group of self-directed/I love the daily posts on FB-thank you for those touchstones
- Connect with other progressive faith communities/Create more social opportunities to build friendships/Spend more time outdoors (picnics, camping trips, outdoor meetups, etc)/Bible studies, devotional groups
- Emphasize a variety of personal growth options, through sermons, small groups and adult programs. For me, that would include subjects that are not centered on God!/Coffee time!
- More themes and sermons and readings emphasizing personal, spiritual and interpersonal growth and wisdom/Lay people from congregation are often good at this because they are not so rooted in Biblical, God-based and social justice themes/More coffee time/More stuff way beyond Christianity
- More small groups (with Zoom option)/Expand spiritual teachings beyond Christianity in Sunday Services/Continue live streaming options for public health and safety/Coffee time!
- Coffee and tea time again/Each week have one person or family what they did New during the hiatus
- As the baby boomers age, are there ways we can include broader congregational participation in “in-reach” to homebound sick members?/Beyond what Kairos already does
- Continue offering online worship for those who can’t attend in person
- Outreach efforts to UF
- More opportunities to serve the community together (e.g. tree planting, other outdoor activities)

- Further and deeper connections to UF and SFC students that want a church home like ours
- Perhaps a pandemic grief service, or moment or symbol to recognize collective grief. We lack unity as country, but can have it as a community.
- Small groups/Work projects/Coffee hour/Seminars that include participation and sharing
- Agree about a service commemorating the grief that Covid has brought to our community
- Small groups dealing with spiritual issues and questions.
- Communion more often or for those who might like it after
- Small groups in daytime as well as evening opportunities
- A pandemic grief service is an excellent idea, especially if acknowledging all who have died and suffered - by name? by query of our larger Gainesville community?
- Wider communications with easier access to newer folks
- Small groups... excellent!
- Highlight the healing powers of art to heal us and unite us in gratitude: whether it is music, visual or performance
- As much in person interaction as possible!!! Even if we love zoom...
- I'd like to deepen the spirituality without "fixing it into place"
- I truly hope that as our community becomes safer again that the members will make a deep commitment to returning to worship together. Having streaming services is a wonderful addition to what we offer but if I'm able to be there, I truly feel part of the gathered church. I think an all-church service project would be great.
- The small groups build our sense of community. We are able to make real connections in them. I look forward to the return of those I enjoyed before Covid
- Support for our medical personnel, who have put their souls into serving the sick and suffered to do so (Yes!)

Over the next 5-10 years in what ways should we, the UCG community, challenge ourselves within our ministries to adapt to the changes of a post-pandemic world?

- Continue-strive to be the change we want to see in the world. In Gainesville/Stand with/beside those most in need/Be there-Be a part
- Encourage outreach/One-on-one conversations/Invite someone to church
- Develop greater financial resilience (definitely)/Develop and provide Gainesville community leadership/Seek to become a bridge for greater unity in a diverse/polarized world (so important)
- Encourage diversity/Continue to provide online services but make them interactive/Reach out to UF/Santa Fe staff, students and faculty through Vinery program
- Speak out against repressive legislation! (yes)/Continue to have clear email communications/Protect women and minorities/Advocate for equal rights-voting, life decisions
- Address inequality
- Renew the connections we've lost during covid/Find ways for church boards to work together on projects
- More courtyard activities (opportunity for collaboration)/Mental health sessions/More children activities to involve families (connection)
- Music before and after the service/Invite special musicians and vocalists (UF)/Renewed lessons and carols
- Continue bringing everyone who enters your doors into the UCG family/Focus on inclusivity (already do a great job)/Keep Christmas program!
- Keep using Zoom to avoid driving in the ever-increasing GV traffic/Make sure we maintain physical facilities
- Find ways to connect-maybe including varieties of media-Zoom, livestream, and in-person/Also be sure to include the arts in programming-hard to do but rewarding for all

- Keep it simple/Let go (of our collective conditioning)/Open to awareness/"We long to reunite: with one another, with our truest selves, with the Sacred." From the call to Worship/Be rooted in "love-care"
- More Zoom and live-streaming of events, committee meetings and Sunday services (longterm). Continue social distancing, encourage vaccinations and consider masks per CDC guidelines/focus on community health issues-access to care, affordable care and prevention
- Continue to grow our focus on physical and mental health/Modeling dignity and clear headedness when it comes to public discourse/debates (post-Trump America...)/Continuing to have a positive impact on local community and continue to educate around local history-current inequities/Find new ways to use technology well while also building in-person connections and connections with the natural world
- Create home/Special group gatherings/Large groups will stay a "no-no"/"Roving church teams/Go to the mountain-not try to make mountains come to us
- Keep stretching-I love how quickly the leadership rallied to create online services during the initial shutdown-this was a huge stretch/I'd love to see us keep leveraging technology as a way to create connection, both for existing members and to reach prospective members/Keep supporting people-we need human connections more than ever/To feel seen; to feel heard; to feel not alone; to feel connected to something larger than us
- Keep youth program vital
- Share the work with youth with us elders too!
- Continue on-line presence/hybrid services as needed
- To maintain an open and positive attitude toward each other and the larger world even when we disagree/To practice gratitude and generosity of treasure and spirit to our community and beyond (Yes how to bridge these divides!)
- Basically we are living with effects of climate change now-need to adapt and be proactive
- Learn more about human illness/Share our concerns about plagues/Care more in the medical aspects of living/Understand our vulnerabilities/Visit the ill-care
- Incorporate youth and young adults
- I believe we will see pandemic after pandemic (sadly yes)/Need major structural change to support kids, schools, care workers esp. in poor areas
- Be allies with Black community
- Work towards acknowledging our white privilege-look at historic ways our denomination has harmed and make amends/Seek to hire black people in leadership positions (Yes)
- Keep doing tech updates and training to adapt to the new world (I need this!)
- Work towards utilization of clean energy/Explore options like solar energy, etc. (Yes)
- Foster hope-there is enough fear!
- Know if people have a safe home/If people have enough food/If people need medical care/If people are suffering in ways we can help
- Nomadic theology (diaspora, exile, etc.)/Theology against culture of narcissism/Study resilience, vision making-receiving/Purpose
- Empathy for those whose pandemic was different from ours/More emphasis on combatting global warming so it doesn't bring our whole planet crashing down
- Climate/Environment now!
- Community sometimes means putting others needs ahead of your personal comfort and freedoms/The pandemic made this clear and church can be a way to teach community
- Don't assume we're in the same boat in recovering from pandemic-different pandemic had impacts on different groups (correct!)
- Define our community broadly/Continue to find innovative ways to be together, even when we're not all physically together

- I don't really know other than this: please keep reaching out to people, checking in with people, inviting them into your space-whatever that "space" is or looks like
- Seek new ways to better integrate worshippers who can't be physically present/Continue racial and social justice focus in outreach (Yes!)
- Embrace celebration and joy/We need to get past the undercurrent of fear and doom that is prevalent at UCG/Open ourselves to risk-UCG has been the most restrictive and risk averse organization I experienced in 2021/I think it sent many people away/Explore traditional Christian messages, traditions, readings-we are not Unitarians
- Retreat can adapt...how? You're asking the wrong person here but it's so dear to many of us and is a *little* exclusive and a luxury for some/Positive stories n services can lift our spirits more/There are good things out there. Let's find them!
- Zoom more and expand online interactions, musical events on YouTube for talented group of artist(s) within the church community
- I agree with emphasis for college students, and that may mean new groups and ways of connecting outside of Sunday worship
- Encourage Namaste greetings
- Committee totally to Zero Waste within and outside the UCG community
- We will need extra measures to bring people back to church
- Great idea, walk the walk. Build our environmental consciousness
- Explore how we can be a hub for community life, and what are the needs of diverse populations in our city
- More "church" experiences beyond Sunday mornings (Yes).
- Phillip is such a "show must go on" musician...even with pages not cooperating
- Also the arts are a strength that should grow, as it allows many to participate and feel connected when words are not enough
- I love others' suggestions: sustainability of all our operations, namaste greetings (even if I would love to continue to hug those who like hugs like me :)
- I think we could find more ways to assist others in our community. For instance, UCG members could join the volunteers who volunteer in our schools, perhaps adopt a particular Gainesville school to tutor or mentor students. It's good to work for desirable political changes, but let's not forget to act individually.
- Stay present, even when planning for future
- As one who has become a church elder—still astonishing to me—I hope we develop more ways to attract more our adults and younger families and find ways to support them in becoming active participants in all aspects of church life. I hope we continue to find ways to use the technologies we've adopted to include those who cannot be at church in person. I hope we work towards living without fear so that we remains a vibrant and meaningful place and community for ourselves and for our city.
- Fun with technology! We should sing this song every month