

January 2023

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2023 Spring 2nd Hour Adult Religious Exploration Offerings

Here are the offerings for the Spring 2023 (with more to be added in late spring): Feel free to "drop-in" to any class at any time. Some classes offer the option of registration/signup simply to help the facilitators communicate with attendees in advance and plan programming. **Registration/Signup can be found on the Adult Religious Exploration page of our website:** <https://www.uuman.org/learning/adult-programs/>

Centered Leadership, Dates: 1/8, 1/22, 2/5
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM In-Person
Facilitated By: UUMAN Board

Description: The course is designed for people considering leadership, who are beginning to lead or who have leadership experience in contexts other than Unitarian Universalist faith communities.

Signup: <https://uuman.breezechms.com/form/8cad201846>

Stewards of the Earth, Dates: Once per month; dates TBD
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM In-Person
Facilitated By: Earth Ministry

Description: The UUMAN Earth Ministry Vision is - "We deeply embrace the natural world and are stewards of our Earth for now and for the next seven generations. We are respected in our community for environmental action." Come spend time with members of the Earth Ministry team as we explore and discuss together what we are doing and what more we can do at UUMAN to meet this Vision.

Possible topics: Climate action, climate crisis, climate justice

Eating to Extinction, Dates: 2/12, 2/19
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM In-Person
Facilitated By: Gus Hadorn and Jennifer Ratcliffe

Description: Based on the documentary "Eating to Extinction," we look at the global impact of mono-agriculture and what local solutions we can all implement.

30 Days of Love, Dates: 1/22, 1/29, 2/5, 2/12
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM In-Person
Facilitated By: Dave Dunn & Others

Description: Side With Love, the UUA's public advocacy campaign, is kicking off their annual month of spiritual nourishment, political grounding, and shared practices of

faith and justice. Each week will feature a spiritual theme overlapping with one of Side With Love's intersectional justice priorities.

Signup: <https://uuman.breezechms.com/form/8cad20184662>

MUUSICShare, Dates: 1/22, 2/26, 3/26, 4/23 (4th Sunday of the month)
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM In-Person
Facilitated By: Debra Burrell

Description: MUUSICShare is a just-for-fun music jam for all ages and abilities. All instruments, all voices are welcome, as well as all ears; come to play, come to sing, come to listen.

Sunday Service Reflections, Dates: Every Sunday
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM/In-Person
Facilitated By: David Kroeber

Description: Please join us to reflect on Sunday's service and service topic in a small group setting. What are your thoughts on the topic? What impact could the service/service topic have on your life?

Neighborhood Connections Ministry, Dates: 2/19, 3/26, 4/23
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM In-Person
Facilitated By: Dave Dunn

Description: Participants will agree to volunteer their efforts (8hrs/month) at a non-profit or social service agency in their local community. A list of potential agencies and their contact information will be provided but each participant may arrange their own volunteer service as their spirit calls them. Once a month, participants will meet to reflect on their experiences.

Poetry Forum, Dates: 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, 4/16 (3rd Sunday of the Month)
Time/Location: 11:15 -12PM
Facilitated By: Rollin Mathis & Others

Description: All are welcome to participate in UUMAN's monthly poetry discussion. This class will explore poets and their poems in a friendly and relaxed setting, paying particular attention to ways in which the author's writing reflects principles of Unitarian Universalism.

~ Dave



Notes from the Board:

Decision on Rental

First, we would like to start by thanking everyone who has participated in this conversation whether in-person, via email, or on Zoom. Personally, I have enjoyed gaining a better understanding of the concerns regarding rentals.

Next, the decision. The board has decided to move forward with the Friday rental to the Pre-K group; however, we did not arrive at this decision lightly and we are not simply moving forward without addressing the concerns of this congregation.

Generally, most congregants that we have heard from have expressed support for this most recent rental. Some of the positives noted are that it's nice to drive by and see the campus in use rather than an empty parking lot, and supporting this group fits our mission and serves our community.

In addition to the support, we did also hear some concerns. Here is a list of the main issues and how we plan to address each.

1. Friday is the only weekday available for operations to schedule maintenance and repairs – since the pre-k is taking up only a small portion of the campus (2 rooms in Discovery Hall and some outdoor space) operations is comfortable with proceeding.
2. Fridays were reserved for the congregation to utilize the campus.
 - a. Use of the campus is encouraged. Please feel free to schedule a Friday event on campus using Breeze that utilizes the available space—other rooms in Discovery Hall, the Sanctuary, and Fellowship Hall. If you require the use of the entire campus, please connect with the Treasurer, who will coordinate with the rental team, at least 2 weeks in advance so they may contact the renter.
 - b. We will circulate a blank calendar where each member can identify dates and times for future congregational events. The hope is that this calendar will create more balance in the use of the campus. NOTE – this calendar will not replace Breeze but instead will be used to supplement and populate the official UUMAN calendar.
3. Campus wear and tear – the rental agreement includes a \$500 deposit which will be used for any needed repairs.
4. Rental policy – the Board is in the process of up-

dating policies, including specifically creating a process for approval of rental policies, in collaboration with the rental team.

5. Approval by Premo – Dave and Lexi have spoken to Premo and they approve the rental.

As a reminder, the agreement for the Friday night rental runs through the end of April and the agreement for the Pre-K agreement will run from January through the end of May. Beyond those dates, we encourage members and groups to develop activities on campus on Fridays (and Saturdays!) that reflect our values and connect us with our neighbors and allies

We hope this process reminds us that every member has a voice, that your opinions and feelings are heard, and that we can all join in support of this decision and in growing our UUMAN community.

As a final note, the board would like to emphasize that we view these rentals as something more than a source of income, we believe that these rentals are evidence of us living our values. The HA group illustrates a way that we are doing our part to Strive for Justice and the PreK group is part of helping to Transform our World. May living these values serve to Nurture your Spirit.

With Gratitude for all,

Jennifer Phillippi

Covid Risk Level Update

The Board has continued to monitor current Covid risk levels, using Covid Act Now. We've enjoyed a long stretch of time with very low risk. We've watched it creep slowly back up after Thanksgiving, and it continues to rise.

At least one of the counties in which the majority of us live is currently in the Moderate Risk category. Masks are required for indoor activities, and indoor congregational singing cannot take place.

While UUMAN remains highly vaccinated and boosted against Covid, you all are likely aware that there are a number of contagious respiratory viruses that our community is affected by—including a nasty strain of flu.

This is not the message I wanted to send, nor is it one any of you wanted to receive, I'm sure. We are tired of the masks, the restrictions, the inconveniences. But none of us want Covid, or the flu, or RSV, or any of the other viruses that are out there right now. We can do this—mask up, wash your hands, keep a healthy distance. And if you have a housemate who is sick—please stay home.

In health –

Miriam

Board President

Another New Book in UUMAN's Cynthia Prescott Library

"The Handy Religion Answer Book" by John Renard is available for you to borrow from the Library located in the Fellowship Hall. The cover description states "One of the noblest and most useful tasks to which we can commit ourselves is a greater understanding of how and why people believe as they do. What people believe - and why they believe it - profoundly influences the way they act." The book answers questions such as: What is the significance of keeping kosher? How did so many churches come into being? What is the Buddhist Eightfold Path? What sort of symbols and signs can be found in a Hindu temple?

This and other books that reflect UUMAN's principles are waiting for you in our library.

- Linda Etheridge

UU 101 Sessions

The next UU 101 will be held January 15, 11:15am-12:45pm and January 22, 11:15-12:45pm. If you are new to our congregation or to Unitarian Universalism, or are considering becoming a member of UUMAN – or just want a refresher on the basic tenets of our faith, this 2-session class is for you. You will learn about Unitarian Universalism, our welcoming culture and long history of social justice. You will learn all about UUMAN and our great programs, and get a tour of our campus. We hold this class twice a year, so if you can't make it this time, we will look forward to having you attend our spring sessions. If you have questions about the class or about becoming a member, feel free to email the Membership Committee at membership@uuman.org. You may register at the greeter table in the lobby on Sunday mornings, or by using this link:

<https://uuman.breezechms.com/form/a4b43076>

We look forward to seeing you!

~ Laura Keck

Water Damage at UUMAN

On December 28, an exterior sprinkler outside the choir room, beside the sanctuary, malfunctioned and dumped a lot of water that made its way inside to the sanctuary, choir room, and foyer. The damage is primarily to the sanctuary and foyer floor, and there is some drywall damage in the foyer, sanctuary, and choir room.

I'd like to give a huge shout out to those who came in today to help with the initial clean up—Don Groce, Susan Wilson, Mike Liebergesell, Bob Popp, Lexie Tangney, and Jennifer Ratcliffe. Our Operations Team does too good of a job flying under the radar most of the time—doing a ton of work to keep UUMAN in tip-top shape. It's in times like this where we get a glimpse into just how much they do. THANK YOU!!! And thanks to Rev Dave for coming in to see what had happened and for staying to talk with ServiceMaster.

ServiceMaster came out late this afternoon to assess the damage and brought in 3 industrial size dehumidifiers. The sanctuary and foyer floor will likely need to be replaced, some drywall will need to be replaced, and there will need to be some painting. There may be other repairs needed, but we won't know the extent of the interior issues until contractors are able to get inside the walls. We have filed a claim with Church Mutual Insurance Company. ServiceMaster said that they had been at several churches today for this exact same issue (i.e., sprinkler system failures). It will take approximately 1 week to do the demo and drying portion of the project but the timeline on the installation of the new floor and drywall is an unknown at this time.

We are planning on moving our Sunday services into Fellowship Hall. There will be a group at church tomorrow moving chairs into Fellowship Hall from the Sanctuary – we will likely need to move the remaining chairs and items from the Choir Room into storage.

This is all in a state of flux while we figure out our path to repairing our building. You may have questions—we may or may not have answers at this point but will do our best to keep you updated as we know more.

I hope that none of you are dealing with the after-effects of our deep freeze now that we've begun to thaw out. And if you are, please let your care circles know if you need some help!

~ Miriam Patanian

Board President



Religious Exploration News

A Review of 2022

By Lexie Tangney, Director of Religious Education

Where to start! As we say goodbye to 2022, the Ministry for Children and Youth (MCY) wants to invite you to look back at a few exceptional moments. Starting with our most recent event, the Christmas Pageant.

This pageant is sure to go down in UUMAN history! We hosted our first pop up pageant. I'm sure more than a few of you wondered what exactly a "pop-up" pageant is? My hope was your curiosity would get the best of you and you'd come to find out. Did it work?? A pop-up pageant is meant to be an event that can more or less be "thrown together". No rehearsals or extensive planning committees needed, especially when participation is expected to be low. And a wonderful twist, the audience was asked to participate in different ways.

In four of the five scenes, the audience was told to listen for a phrase and give an answering phrase in response. In the first scene, two villagers were walking home and noticed a particularly bright star and pondered its implications (both spiritually and logically). Everytime they say "It's so bright!" the audience would answer "What's up with that?" effectively participating in the conversation on stage.

While a pop-up pageant does not need rehearsals, we weren't going to miss an opportunity to gather and practice. And we were that much better for it. For both rehearsals we had -9K companions to motivate us along! We even had a "behind the scene" crew helping to guild the audience. They made posters at home with the appropriate prompt phrases.

Our amazing live screen crew joined us so all could enjoy the pageant both in real time and for years to come. If you haven't watched it yet, What's up with that?? Stop what you're doing and watch it now!! <https://youtu.be/OdB2MJ2idU8>

A HUGE thank you to Mandi Winders who helped direct and narrate, Jim Nickens and Hayden Brown for streaming, all the parents of youth who brought their children to rehearsals, made costumes, practiced lines at home and so so much more. Some of our parents even participated in the play, including my mom and John Burkhardt! The amazing, Alex Peitsh, and the talented choir led us in song. Our wonderful behind the scenes crew Davis and Thomas made the prompt cards. Thanks to the very surprised angels pulled from the audience and, last but not least, the AMAZING children actors and actresses!



Gabe and Melody Andrews, Eli Lansdowne



Presley Callen, Norah Winders, Josie Burkhardt



Reece and Ever Bralley, Jennifer Ratcliffe



Clara and Thomas Romano

continued on next page →

Religious Exploration News - A Review of 2022

What else did the youth do in RE in December?

The month of December was packed full of fun memories!



Dress up at rehearsal



After enjoying a fun game between youth and adults, the kids worked hard decorating the tree



Enjoying the day after some crafting courtesy of Debra Burrell and Jake K. We crafted with a few of UUMAN's alumni including Rafeala Shanahan, Joss Hufnagel, and Nick Danielak. And several of the other young adults joined in on the fun.



Enjoying their well deserved pizza with our nursery staff member, Meara.



Learning about different holiday traditions



Their masterpiece!

continued on next page →

Religious Exploration News

What to look forward to in 2023

We are welcoming 2023 with big plans. But we need YOUR help. We are in need of:

- **THREE RE instructors**
The responsibilities include instructing RE 2nd hour 1-3x a month, reading over the provided UUA curriculum, discussing lesson plans with co-instructors, letting DRE know what supplies will be needed, and working with your co-teaching to provide a short summary of class activities.
- **RE team members.**
Attend one meeting once a month via zoom. Taking on specific tasks when able. Providing input on MCY matters.
- **Nursery Volunteers.**
Commit to an hour or two of assisting in the nursery. <https://uuman.breezechms.com/form/3e7779>
- **Multi-gen Activities**
Create a lesson plan for roughly 10 kids usually ages 5-9 for 1 hour
- **Substitutes**
There are some days we know a sub is needed and other weeks emergencies will arise and we will need a sub last minute.

January

1/8- Restarting RE curriculum

We will go back to 4 classes (K-2, 3-4, Junior and Senior youth). We will be kicking off class with a campus scavenger hunt!

1/15 - MLK JR Multi-gen Day

1/16- Day of service with FurKids Headquarters and Cat Shelter

Lend a hand to FurKids (no kill) Cat Shelter. Bring a book to read to the cats (yes, really), or join a project, like making care packages for families who foster animals. FurKids staff will have several projects for us to complete. Can't wait to see you there! <https://uuman.breezechms.com/form/f4360f>

- **Where:** FurKids, 5235 Union Hill Road, Cumming, GA 30040
- **Time:** 1:30-3:30 p.m.
- **Who:** All UUMAN members and friends (all ages)

1/22- 2nd hour-RE Curriculum

3rd hour - Parent and Youth Potluck to discuss Little Kids, Big Projects

1/29- 2nd hour RE curriculum

Little Kids, Big Projects

This year, MCY wants to foster more community with parents and youth outside of Sunday 1st and 2nd hour. One of those projects is Little Kids, Big Projects. Hear all about it from John Burkhardt:

“Looking for a new youth movement? We got that! Our very own Josie Burkhardt watched closely as I helped raise funds for the new solar panels at UUMAN. She wanted to help! It turns out she had bigger ideas and strives to inspire children the way I did for her. Josie told me, “age is just a number and you can do anything.”

Little Kids, Big Ideas is a team dedicated to fostering a sense of community in our youth, focused on charity, support and leadership training. We want members to participate in all steps of the fundraising process. With the help of adult leaders, the kids will select their causes, plan events and see them to completion.

Our first event is already underway! At the Harvest Moon auction, the Spring Garden Refresh fetched a high bid. We're looking forward to a lovely afternoon greening a yard. Over the next year we hope to guide the team in a refreshment stand, crafts, activism or whatever else they decide. Josie is interested in helping our church, homeless shelters and children's hospitals. She was also excited when I explained to her what the minister's discretionary fund was!

I'm already very impressed with this generation's creativity and spirit. Please support us and look forward to some great experiences for our congregation. For more information, please email Lexie Tangney at

DRE@uuman.org or John Burkhardt at johnb@5kph.com “

-John Burkhardt

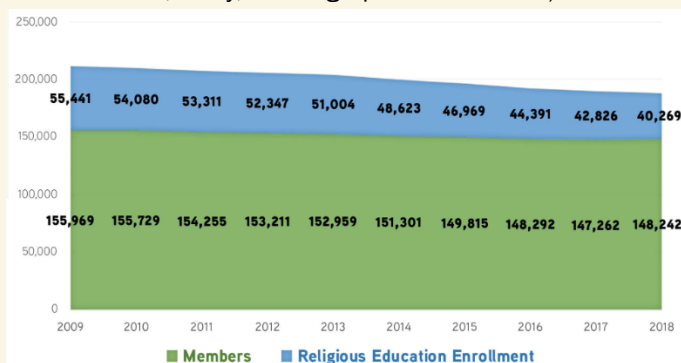
Growing Membership: A Shared Responsibility

Members are the lifeblood of any church. You might wonder, whose job is it to grow membership? Is it the job of the Membership committee? Is it the minister's job? The DRE's? The Board's? The Program Council's? I would say, all of the above, and more. Membership should be a shared responsibility of all UUMAN groups—in fact, of all UUMAN members.

I don't mean that every group should go out and actively solicit new members, going door-to-door and distributing seven-principles pamphlets. (That ain't our style.) But to the extent that every group should have at least an ancillary goal of making UUMAN a better, warmer, deeper, safer, happier place to pursue spiritual growth in a liberal community, then yes—we are all in charge of growing membership. The term growing membership has two elements: (1) expanding the fulfillment and engagement of existing UUMAN members, as well as (2) adding new members. Achieving the first goal enhances the prospects for achieving the second.

When you attend or lead a second-hour offering and share your story and a sympathetic ear with other members, you're helping to fulfill others. When you teach RE, you're making UUMAN a better place for our parents as well as our kids. When you serve on a committee, you're helping UUMAN to function smoothly and make improvements, thus presenting a brighter face to the world. When you greet new attendees, or brew coffee, or tend our garden—you're making UUMAN a warmer, friendlier place. All of these things contribute to growing membership.

We have to face the fact that we are a minority, especially around these parts. According to Wikipedia, 800,000 people in the U.S. identify as Unitarian Universalists. Contrast that to the 210 million who identify as Christians, and it's clear that getting new members will always be a bigger challenge for us than for many of our neighbors. On the plus side, our church membership is declining at a lesser rate than other religions in America. (Although RE enrollment has declined at a faster rate, sadly, as the graph below shows.)



Source: UUWorld

UU membership nationwide actually grew in 2018. And not very long ago, in 2013, the Washington Post reported that our membership grew by 15 percent over the previous decade, when other established churches were shrinking.

Although Covid was certainly a setback, over the long haul, our inclusive and open-minded perspective should position us for growth.

I've actually been encouraged by the number of new members and visitors during the pandemic, with all of its challenges. We added seven official members in 2022 and four in 2021, along with many new attendees who haven't become members yet. Yes, we have lost people—that will always happen. And we still have a significant number of people who have stayed away because of Covid, but hopefully we'll see them again in the coming year.

Maybe the best thing we can do as individuals to grow membership is to start a new group or class. Think about your hobbies or interests, what gets you excited. Odds are that others at UUMAN might share your enthusiasm, or might be searching for just such a new experience. Jump in there and get the ball rolling. UUMAN's space is very underutilized these days, especially at night and on weekends. The more we increase the diversity and depth of our offerings, the more appealing we become to new and existing members.

Mike Chambers
UUMAN Member

Stewards of the Earth

This past fall UUMAN's Earth Ministry team facilitated and led three 2nd hour adult enrichment classes. If you weren't able to attend, you can now click on the links below to see the presentations. Stay tuned for more Stewards of the Earth adult enrichment classes starting in January. Hope to see you there.

[UUMAN Solar](#)

[This Sustainable Life](#)

[A Green Holiday in America](#)

~ Bob Popp

UUMAN's Board of Trustees uses [Covid Act Now](#) to monitor current Covid risk levels. Go to uuman.org for the most recent information.

January 2023: A Month of Sundays



Life Celebrations

We want to commemorate the happy occasions in the lives of our UUMAN members and other friends of UUMAN. We are looking for Naming Ceremonies, Graduations, Marriages, Anniversaries, Retirements, and Birthdays. Please submit the information about your special day, in the month prior to the event, to

membership@uuman.org.

Date	Celebration
1/7	Lexie T. is celebrating a birthday
1/23	Tammy D. is celebrating a birthday.
1/24	Donna M. is celebrating a birthday.
1/29	Dave D. is celebrating a birthday.

Date	Topic	Service Leaders
1/1	Your Vision for the Year If 2023 were to be the year in which the best of things happened, what would those things be? What would we have to do to bring them about? Please come willing to share some of your "best of things" ideas along with a plan to achieve them.	Rev. Dave Dunn
1/8	TBA	Amanda Bralley
1/15	The Dream is Still Alive Singer/songwriter Jim Scott has written many songs in our UU hymnals. In this service, he'll mix songs and personal reflections on the life of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and his relationship with musician, activist Pete Seeger. Jim knew Pete for 4 decades and heard the stories of their collaborations and their legacy. In story and song we'll celebrate these two American heroes.	Jim Scott
1/22	Reimagining Our Principles and Sources Throughout our history as Unitarians, Universalists and Unitarian Universalists, we have had principles and sources. Our current principles and sources are the result of numerous reimaginings across this history. We are being asked to reimagine. How will we respond?	Rev. Dave Dunn
1/29	Fierce Love Most of us would say we live with the intention to love. Oh, but then comes the practice of it! Can we 'practice' a kind of love that is so large, so fierce, that it can stand the fire of anger, frustration, judgement and perhaps most challenging our inertia? This is often a very personal challenge in our relationships and it is our faith's challenge at this time of political and societal divisiveness. After so much 'distancing', what will bring us together?	Rev. Deborah Bennett (of Emerson UU)

ABOUT THE UUMANTimes: The UUMANTimes is the newsletter of Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North (UUMAN). We go live with each issue by the first Sunday of the month; deadline for submissions is typically on the 22nd of the month preceding the issue date. Please email your news articles and artwork to Becky at newsletter@uuman.org