

September 2020

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The Five Practices of Welcome Renewal

In the late 1980s, the UUA's Common Vision Planning Committee issued a 21 page report upon the state of our affairs regarding our welcoming of gay, lesbian and

bisexual persons. Although we had been saying that we were open and welcoming to the LGBT community for three decades at that point, this report concluded otherwise.

Among other things, the report recommended the adoption of a Welcoming Congregation program. This program, to help congregations welcome gay, lesbian and bisexual persons was launched in 1990 and has been completed by over 800 UU congregations (including UUMAN). The Welcoming Congregations curriculum was last updated in 2002 and was discontinued in 2014.

Much has changed since 2002: how we talk about gender, identity, the nuance that goes well beyond the original gay, lesbian and bisexual categories. This necessitates further education. Last year, the UUA recognized this and has now launched a new program entitled the Five Practices of Welcome Renewal. Moving forward, Welcoming Congregations will be required to meet the following benchmarks annually to remain "current" as a Welcoming Congregation:

1. Become a Welcoming Congregation
2. Welcoming Worship Services
3. Welcoming Days of Observance
4. Annual Welcoming Congregation Module
5. Support a Welcoming Project

I'll describe each of them briefly:

1. Becoming a Welcoming Congregation

Complete the old Welcoming Congregations program. UUMAN has already done this and has satisfied this benchmark.

2. Welcoming Worship Services

Include at least two Welcoming Worship Services into the liturgical schedule that uplifts the themes of LGBTQ+ welcome and inclusion

3. Welcoming Days of Observance

Celebrate, reflect, observe the Welcoming Days of Observance throughout the year by featuring a prayer, Stories for All Ages, Chalice Lighting/Extinguishing, song, art form, etc. that honors the occasion.

An example could be the celebration of Coming Out Day (October 11).

4. Annual Welcoming Congregation Module

Complete a Welcoming Congregation Module – a webinar or seminar made available to the congregation and community that informs, educates, and raises awareness about the issues and needs of the LGBTQ+ community. As an example, we have purchased an online, six-session course entitled "Transgender Inclusion In Congregations." It is available to anyone in the congregation. It can be taken individually or as a group. 10% of our congregation must participate in a welcoming congregation module to satisfy this requirement.

5. Support a Welcoming Project

Donate to or volunteer with an LGBTQ+ organization, campaign, or project.

Mallory Cundiff has graciously volunteered to lead us in this Welcoming Congregation renewal process year over year. Thank you Mallory!!! We are grateful to you!

Please, do not hesitate to contact Mallory of myself if you have any questions or wish to be involved.

Thank you!

Nurture our spirit. Strive for Justice. Transform the world.

Dave



Notes from the Board

When Elizabeth Rohan and Bob Popp spoke with me about doing strategic planning for UUMAN as Special Projects Trustee, I thought, oh piece of cake, I've done that before. After I was elected, I went to the UUA website to discover "what's new" for church strategic planning. The first article I found was by a UUA consultant, Douglas Zelinski, which said, "Strategic Planning Is Dead". Uh-oh.

The article went on to say that no one needs a fat document that predicts (wrongly) the next 5-10 years. What we need now is to encourage strategic thinking in our leaders and a mindset that enables nimbleness and favors experimentation. Beyond that we need an easy-to-use document that sets out priority projects/goals for the next 2 years. That is what I am setting out to compile with all your input and I was really excited to hear that the Program Council is already working on goals for each committee.

First up though, along with other UUMANites, I will be attending the online Southeast Regional Leadership Experience starting in September. I am grateful to UUMAN for this opportunity. It will cover a wide variety of current topics including a yearly goal setting process.

On October 17, we will have a UUMAN Leadership Retreat. You may have seen my video about this. If not you can find it here. One of the things I have been hearing already is that we have many of the same faces again and again in leadership roles. It would be good to widen the circle of people who contribute in this way. That way we benefit from new voices and give the familiar voices a break!

Some people think leaders are born and cannot made. No one is a leader all the time and no one is a leader none of the time. If you have empowered someone, pointed the way, had impact, fostered growth, been positively surprising, demonstrated courage and self-respect, you have led! We ask you to bring this skill to UUMAN at whatever level is comfortable for you. For young adults in particular, these leadership experiences can be resume-enhancing. In these uncertain times that can really give you a **leg up**.

Church is a good place to learn leadership skills in a no-penalty environment. Skills you learn here can also be used just about anywhere in life. If you are interested in leadership at UUMAN, please speak with any board member and stay tuned for news about our Leadership Retreat.

- Donna Melcher



Leaders are positively surprising

Yes, I have these legs



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 marcwee@bellsouth.net

| Date | Celebration |
|------|--|
| 9/9 | Dirk and Ann B. are celebrating their anniversary of 30 years |
| 9/10 | Luc G. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |
| 9/18 | Nelson and Marcia H. are celebrating their anniversary of 10 years |
| 9/22 | Carolina P. and Sam F. are celebrating their anniversary of 20 years |
| 9/28 | Troy vdB. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |

WEEKLY MOBILIZATION MONDAY EVENTS

Every Monday until Election Day we will be contacting Georgia voters - reminding them to register to vote, request their absentee ballot or providing information about upcoming elections. We'll end our texting around 8:30. Stick around for 30 minutes for social time to get to know each other better.

We will use Hustle. Those unfamiliar with Hustle can join us at 6:00 PM for a brief training ([Quick Start Guide](#)) via Zoom and then Hustle together until 8:30PM. Couch party is **FREE**.

August 31 - Register here: <https://bit.ly/MM8-31>

September 7 - Register here: <https://bit.ly/CensusCounts9-7>

September 14 - Register here: <https://bit.ly/MM9-14>

September 21 - Register here: <https://bit.ly/MM9-28>

September 28 - Register here: <https://bit.ly/MM9-28>

~ Carla Kapeskas



The Value of Sunday School & Worship to Families

A few weeks ago I recorded a sermon on why Sunday school matters even when people say it is dead. Leading up to recording this I could think of little else. I contacted some friends whom I knew had made sure their kids were in church on Sundays while growing up. I asked them to reflect honestly about whether it made a difference or not. I was actually pretty surprised at the responses. Overwhelmingly they felt like it made a positive difference in their character and that their adult children would maintain a faith practice when they had families of their own.

That sense of carrying on a tradition seemed very important. And for practical reasons; research consistently shows that people who have a faith practice are happier than those who do not. And few will develop one later in life if they are not introduced to one while young. [Are Religious people happier, healthier?](#)



In my video I make a point that there are too few times during the day designated to showing our kids what we value. Oh yes, teachable moments do occur spontaneously but in the day-to-day grind they can be lost. We shop for and prepare food, clean our homes and ourselves, go to work, take care of pets, read, watch a little tv, pay bills, sleep etc. We are busy even during a pandemic. But on Sundays we set aside a couple of hours for sacred, elevated time- to spotlight what is worthy and to allow ourselves to be changed by it. Our children notice. How could they not?

If you have seven minutes to kill [here is the video](#) of why, in my humble opinion, you should care about Sunday school and worship.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to serve the families and children of UUMAN. You are a special group of people living through an extraordinary time. We can all thrive during this time.....together.

Blessings,

Melinda Mischik

Interim Director of Religious Education

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Harvest Moon Auction goes Virtual November 7!



It's 2020, and it feels like our whole world is uncertain and changed. With everything online and distanced, it can be easy to feel disconnected from family and friends. One UUMAN tradition is moving ahead, and we hope that the Harvest Moon Auction will be a chance for all of us to work together and connect in new ways. Some auction events sold last year changed to make sure they could be safely held. Team Trivia went online, the tofu cooking class was held virtually, and even a living room concert is going to be held outdoors, with social distancing. We need our auction now more than ever, not only to help raise funds, but to help us stay connected to each other and to our community.

It will look A little different this year as we plan a week long online silent auction, ending with a virtual online auction on November 7th, with auctioneer extraordinaire, Randy Blasch. We will Also be using an online bidding system called Auctria , which you will get plenty of information about later.

For now, we want to ask each UUMAN member and friend to start thinking about what you can do to help make this Auction a success! Our procurement team will be contacting everyone in the next few months, so start thinking about what Items you can offer during this time of social distancing. Think outside the box! Everyone can contribute something: Got a gift with the tags still on? A beautiful piece of silver that you never want to polish? Do you knit, sew, make pottery, jewelry, paint, bake , cook ,have a vacation home, have a signed book, photo, piece of art, sports memorabilia, rare doll or anything? We want it! Do you babysit, design gardens, cut hair, have a business that offers services such as cleaning, exercise classes, camps, massages, music lessons? We want you! Could you ask your dry cleaners, hair-dresser, barber, massage therapist, dentist, therapist, mechanic, dog sitter, veterinarian, house painter, favorite restaurant, caterer, etc. to provide gift certificates? They get new customers and great advertising. We want them! Please commit to helping UUMAN's Harvest Moon Auction with your donations and participation. Also, if you'd like to help with the planning please let us know.

So mark your calendars, think about what you can offer, and when the procurement team reaches out to you, just say YES! Harvest Moon Auction, November 7th!

Put it in your calendar Now!

Thank you!

Laurie Wheeler and Jill Brooks

On behalf of the Harvest Moon Auction team



Workshop: From "Not Racist" to "Anti-Racist"

I am so excited to announce the 6 part workshop **From "Not Racist" to "Anti-Racist"** which will be launched on September 20th.

The idea behind this workshop is to mobilize us to **actively and intentionally** use our privilege to create the loving and just community we all aspire for. We will be discussing white fragility and privilege, history, false narratives, unlearning and anti racist activism.

I truly hope you embrace this opportunity because **without your voice this workshop will not be as impactful.**

We have invited [Dr. Tarece Johnson](#) (click on her name to learn more about her) to be the facilitator for the workshop.

Please save your calendar for the upcoming sessions, always at the same time, from 3:00 to 4:00 pm: **9/20, 9/27, 10/4, 10/11, 10/18 and 10/25.**

The supporting materials will be videos, articles, podcasts, Ted talks and such. We will be sending those ahead of each session.

[Click here to go ahead and sign up now!](#)

Thank you!

The Social Justice Committee

No one is born racist or antiracist; these result from the choices we make. Being antiracist results from a conscious decision to make frequent, consistent, equitable choices daily. These choices require ongoing self-awareness and self-reflection as we move through life. In the absence of making antiracist choices, we (un)consciously uphold aspects of white supremacy, white-dominant culture, and unequal institutions and society. Being racist or antiracist is not about who you are; it is about what you do. (National Museum of African American History and Culture).

NFCC Food Pantry Donations

UUMANS.

You are so generous with your donations to NFCC's food pantry. They really depend on us and other churches to feed hungry clients. Did you know that all the big grocery stores also donate to NFCC every day. NFCC has an army of volunteers that pick up food every day from stores and restaurants in our area. Unfortunately some of those volunteers need to retire.



NFCC is looking for 1-4 people who can pick up from Whole Foods in Alpharetta Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and some Thursdays on a regular basis. Mel, the manager at the food pantry, specifically asked if UUMAN volunteers could help since we have been so dependable. They need us starting next week. You must be an early bird because you need to be at Whole Foods by 8:00 am, pack up the food in your car and drive it to NFCC. You will need to take your own plastic bins or cardboard boxes to pack up the food but NFCC volunteers will help you unload it. You will be finished by about 9:00 am, maybe earlier. Mel says it can be one person doing all the days or 4 different people, each taking a day.

UUMAN already has 1 dedicated volunteer picking up from Pizza Hut and Olive Garden on Thursdays (ML). Bob and I have picked up from Target before and it is actually fun. You never know what you will be given as donations and it is so nice to see the needy families receiving the high quality food that these stores provide.

Contact me if you are interested in doing this on a regular basis or if you might want to be a substitute. Please consider this. Wouldn't you like to have something productive to do during the sheltering that involves very little human contact? NFCC really needs us.

Rosie Popp

dr_rosie@att.net



Some Things I Learned at Happy Hour Recently

Bob and Rosie's dog has been experiencing foot pain. They had the pup with them on camera, and <pronoun> did their best not to show it. (Since the dog couldn't speak, I didn't want to make assumptions about which pronouns it prefers).

Carla Kapeskas is a native of Brazil. Her husband Rimas is native to Lithuania. Carla is actively and passionately engaged in UU the Vote, and shared some of the ways people can get involved.

Sue Greenspon has begun a job being a nanny to a new family! Sue also shares some Lithuanian heritage.

Dirk Bender was recently provided an iPhone for his new role as a census taker and, like me, is coping with the learning curve involved with transitioning from Android to IOS. Note: the Sunday service looked and sounded spectacular on my new iPhone!

Bruce Langston was the Worship Associate for the week. He shared a little about what's involved in the preparation and production. Bruce has had the good fortune to be able to work from home.

Monique Williams is beginning a foray into composting and growing squashes. Rosie offered some tips.

Some things I already knew about Happy Hour:

- It meets FRIDAY evenings at 5:30 for about one hour, using Google Meet. [Go to Happy Hour](#)
- It's a fun and relaxed way to connect and stay updated.

Hosts include Sue Greenspon, Bob Popp, and myself. The Host Emeritus is the Rev. Dave Dunn. I host the meeting the first Friday of each month. Hope to see you there !

Steve Allerton

Peace Poles Installed!

The grounds of UUMAN continue to improve because of the loving hands & hearts of our congregation. Ann Bender's newest Peace Poles have now been installed.

Melinda Mischik
Interim Director of Religious Education
Pronouns: she/her/hers



Humans at UUMAN...let's get to know each other even better.



John and Miriam Patanian have two children. Jacob is in 7th grade and Olivia in 5th. They have assumed many volunteer positions since coming to UUMAN. Teaching religious education to children & youth, serving on the RE Committee, the Committee on Shared Ministry, and the Ministerial Search Committee to name some of those things.

When did your family come to UUMAN? October 2011

From? Olympia WA

Why did you choose UUMAN? We wanted a church home here so we could connect and raise our children with others who shared many of our values. We felt at home right away when we first came to UUMAN.

How do you spend your professional life?

John - I manage a data science team for a contact lens manufacturer.

Miriam - I'm a public health consultant, and work with state health departments to ensure they have the tools they need to carry out important work to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, reduce smoking, and increase the use of cardiac rehabilitation

You both have done many things since you have been here: what has been the most fulfilling?

John: Teaching RE

Miriam: Serving on the Ministerial Search Committee and finding Rev Dave

Where would you like to see UUMAN in 5 years?

John: Healthy, diverse, financially stable, active in the community

Miriam: Strong, active membership from all life stages—youth through adults, continued commitment to engage in social and environmental justice issues in our community

When you are not working and not volunteering, what is your favorite thing to do? Would really love all four Patanian's to answer.

John: Play tennis, spend time with my family

Miriam: Hiking and gardening

Jacob: Basketball

Olivia: Dance

~ Melinda Mischik

Earth Ministry Sweeps the Hooch

On Saturday August 29th several UUMAN families got up early and participated in the Chattahoochee Riverkeepers "Sweep the Hooch". A morning of community service where we help keep the Chattahoochee River clean by removing tons of trash, mostly aluminum cans, plastic bottles and tennis balls. This year we also separated out what could be recycled!

Participants this year included the Phillipi Family, John Pruitt, Donna Melcher, Bob and Alex Popp. We all feel blessed to have such a beautiful river nearby, with plenty of opportunities to see wildlife, like this hawk.

Bob Popp





Rapid Response

We are hearing from many of you loud and clear: we are ready, what can we do?

To which we answer: Hallelujah! Let's go!

Announcing the next big UU the Vote Georgia Action: Friends, Family & Faith Text Bank to GA Voters! Join us for a massive text bank with New Georgia Project. We are calling on Georgia UUs to join us on Sunday, September 27, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm to show up for Georgia voters!

We know that some of our leaders have abandoned their responsibility to support voters in November. We the people, have to step up! We have the power to make sure every who can vote, gets an opportunity to cast their ballot. We can do this if all of us do our part.

Text banking is a fun, easy way to contact voter a MASSIVE number of voters. Bring your friends, family and faith to the event!

We are calling on Georgia UUs to join us on Sunday, September 27, 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm to show up for Georgia voters!

Join the Faith, Friends & Family Text bank! Join me and the Georgia UU the Vote team in helping us hit our goal of contacting 1 Millions voters before Election Day.

Join the Friends, Family & Faith Text Bank

Every other week until election day, UU's from across the country are making non-partisan calls together to register, mobilize, and persuade voters in 2020.

[RSVP for the Next Phone Bank](#)

Here how we do it:

1. Have 20% of your congregation join the text bank.
2. Sign up friends and family member.
3. Share this info in you congregation's newsletter, on social media, and share through your congregation's groups.

Registration ends on September 18th. Reserve your spot, today!

In faith & hopefulness,



Nicole Pressley
National Organizer



UUMAN Sharing the Plate—50/50

Once each month, a non-profit is chosen to receive half of our offering. This month's recipient is North Fulton Community Charities. North Fulton Community Charities' mission is to build self-sufficiency and prevent homelessness and hunger in our community by providing emergency assistance and enrichment programs. UUMAN helps by doing special projects, working in the food pantry and thrift store. Our help is needed more than usual as they have seen a dramatic increase in requests for help as a result of COVID-19.

You can give through Givelify or by mailing a check to UUMAN. Designate on the check in the memo line "50-50".

~ Michelle Liebergesell



A Note from the Premo School

Our first two weeks of the new school year at The Premo School have been full of connection, collaboration, and joy. Our students have been busy building relationships, beginning their academic studies, practicing mindfulness, learning yoga, spending time in nature, and expressing themselves through art. We feel incredibly blessed to have ample space both indoors and outdoors to meet in person as safely as possible. The additional space we are utilizing in Discovery Hall has afforded us the opportunity to hire additional teachers to keep our class sizes below eight students. We value face-to-face engagement and collaborative hands-on learning opportunities, none of which would be possible without the gracious sharing of space by the UUMAN congregation.

Kerry Edgington
Director of Lower School
The Premo School



September 2020: A Month of Sundays

All in-person Sunday services and any meetings or groups at UUMAN are canceled until further notice. See [this page](#) for more details.

We plan to continue live-streaming Sunday services on [YouTube](#).

| Date | Topic | Service Leaders |
|------|---|-----------------|
| 9/6 | <p>Blessing of the Animals</p> <p>Please join is in our annual Blessing of the Animals service. Please bring your furried, feathered, crawling (and hopefully controlled) friends with you for an experience that is always wild and fanciful.</p> <p>NO RE</p> | Rev Dave Dunn |
| 9/13 | TBA | Shelley Nagrani |
| 9/20 | <p>Love, Not a Lesson</p> <p>Next week will be New Member Sunday. How can we display “radical welcome” to our newest members? And just what is “radical welcome” anyway?</p> | Rev Dave Dunn |
| 9/27 | <p>People of Their Time</p> <p>Recent events have led to the removal of Confederate statues. Statues of some of our founding fathers have also been vandalized and pulled down. Defenders say, “They were people of their time.” Yom Kippur begins this evening. How would these founding fathers seek atonement? How would we?</p> <p>NEW MEMBER SUNDAY</p> | Rev Dave Dunn |

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