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TO THE GLORY OF LIFE

I found myself stepping into leadership when I received an email from a UUMAN member, Jessica Baker, regarding her 2 young nephews who are afflicted with Cystic Fibrosis. She asked if UUMAN would join in the effort to raise funds for research for a cure by participating in a charity walk at the Atlanta Zoo in May. This presented the perfect opportunity, I figured, to do some good not only on a larger scale; but also within our congregation, since Jake and Gavin Baker and their parents (Pam & Jon) are also members of UUMAN. So this month you will hear about the walk and probably be asked to donate. But what I thought you really should hear is the Baker's own incredible story of courage, struggle, faith and hope:

Gavin and Jake were diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis after a lengthy (2 year!) search for answers to Gavin's multiple health issues. He had been misdiagnosed and treated for many different diseases/viruses, but never tested for CF. While at a routine follow-up visit with the ENT, the doctor discovered a polyp in Gavin's nose, which ultimately led us to the CF diagnosis. Gavin wasn't consider a "candidate" for CF (which I learned after insisting that he be tested), because he had never had the typical lung involvement. His symptoms were mainly malabsorption and sinus issues, including chronic ear infections.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a genetic disease affecting approximately 30,000 people – most of whom are children- in the United States. A defective gene causes the body to produce an abnormally thick, sticky mucus that clogs the lungs and leads to life-threatening lung infections. These thick secretions also obstruct the pancreas, preventing digestive enzymes from reaching the intestines to help break down and absorb food.

To maintain the health of Gavin and Jake,

they get regular breathing treatments, daily airway clearance through the Vest system (which vibrates them to loosen the mucus in their lungs), they have to take digestive enzymes with each meal and snack to aid in the absorption of their food, dietary supplementation, antibiotic use to keep their lungs free of infection and occasional "tune ups" in the hospital, where they are required to stay in the hospital for two weeks with aggressive IV antibiotics and respiratory therapy to give them a "fresh" start. They also require a diet high in fat, calories and salt, which helps to keep some extra weight on their bodies.



Gavin was diagnosed in 2002 at the age of 2 ½ years. I was 6 months pregnant at the time and decided to have an amniocentesis to find out if Jake had CF, as well. When we got Jake's diagnosis, Jon and I decided to channel our energies, confusion, sadness and anger into the Great Strides Walk, which is the single biggest fundraiser for CF in the country. Immediately, we formed a team – The "Baker Boys' Battalion" and went to work trying to fund a cure for our boys. Two months after Gavin and Jake were diagnosed, we had managed to find about 50 people who would come out to the walk and support our cause. We also had tremendous support from our friends and family who were unable to physically be there, which allowed us to raise \$30,000 for CF! We were blown away – and challenged



Happenings

Support our team “**UUMAN cares about hUumans**” as we walk for a cure to Cystic Fibrosis on May 21 at 8:30am at Zoo Atlanta. If you can't walk; then generously sponsor one of our walkers with a donation to CFF. Contact Patty Odom at patty@uuman.org for more details.

to do better in our second year. In 2003, Jon joined the CF Board of Directors (of which, he is now President) here in Atlanta and I was asked to chair the Great Strides Walk at Zoo Atlanta. We decided to go national with our team, as well and somehow raised an incredible \$49,659 across the country for the Baker Boys' Battalion! To date, we have raised over \$150,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation with the amazing support of our family, friends and even complete strangers!

We can't wait to see what 2005 brings, as well as the years to come, but we need your help to make it happen! We need walkers, team leaders, sponsors, pledges – anything that will help me keep Gavin and Jake around for a very long time. The CF Foundation is such an incredible organization and they have been recognized several times by Smart Money Magazine – including the December 2003 issue – as one of THE best charities in which to donate.

Almost 90 cents on the dollar goes directly to researching a cure and improving the quality of life of those with CF. It's working, too, because when the boys were diagnosed, the average life expectancy was 32 years. That has now increased to 34 and even better – 36 for boys!! All of our hard work is paying off already – after just 3 years! At this rate, Gavin and Jake will outlive us all!

CF is one of the few diseases that will realistically see a cure with the proper funding. We cannot leave the cure on the table just for lack of money – that is not acceptable.

Just a little more time is all we're asking for – please help us make that happen by asking Patty Odom how you can help.

Thank you,
Pam Baker

Sabbatical Corner

We have lived in this house for 16 years. It has an attic, basement and a garage in addition to ample living space. Over the years having been to many (MANY) garage sales, store sales, and having monumentally accepted the acquisitions of the ages from both sides our acquiring families the above mentioned spaces are burgeoning with stuff. In those 16 years, I have mentally and verbally sworn to go through the dusty treasures and sort out the wheat from the chaff. Hasn't happened. Things are, despite my very best of intentions (remember that road to H-E- double hockey sticks?) still stacked from roof to concrete floor. That covers three stories of living space. I need to get going on it one of these old days. And I will. Some summer. Some winter. Some spring. Some fall. Some day.

So you can see that I mean well. I know just exactly what you are thinking. Each of you longs to tell me what amounts to the slogan of some popular, pricey and foreign made running shoes (AKA sneakers). “Just Do It” (Do I owe them royalties now? I hope not.) Each of you longs to give me advice. Pitch it. Put it in tidy well-marked containers. Give it away. Sell it. Start an antique booth in a mall... (we do have exquisite junque) or store it not too far away from an open flame. All excellent advice. I will take it. Some day.

However, isn't this like being at UUMAN? We all have things we want to do and excuses not to do them. Join a committee, get more involved with social issues or education, put our spiritual houses in some kind of working order, spring clean our theology. Here at UUMAN we have so many places to jump into....so many committees, covenant groups, healing groups, social groups. You may even be toying with the idea of joining UUMAN. But maybe you are waiting. Some April. Some May. Some June. Some day.

Greg is well into his Sabbatical. Maybe people are awaiting his return to join up or to jump in or to come back. But UUMAN has so much to offer, even in Greg's absence. If you wait you may miss something valuable. And I know for a fact that he wouldn't want to be the one to keep you from being a part of this group.

Life is shockingly short. You can hope for reincarnation or salvation or promotion (my nod to Urantia this month). Do not wait.... start to make your difference within this community. We can use your pleasant company, your clear sighted organization, your unique perspective, your crowd-pleasing talent, your sparkling personality, your precious time, your renewable energy, your natural resources and (if you're like me and know everything) your humble opinions. We need it all. Why spend the next portion of your life waiting for some nebulous signal in the Universe that tells you to “GO!”

Not some day.

Now!



Sabbatical Update

Dear Friends,

I have a drawer in my house which holds all of my un-mended things. Socks that need darning. A little piece of something that has broken off a piece of something bigger. A few things that need to be glued or sewn or un-frayed or bent back into shape. In every house I've ever had, I have had one of these drawers. When I left for sabbatical it was a drawer the size of a closet. A walk in closet. If I didn't shut the door.

Sabbatical has afforded me the luxury of time that allows me to begin mending. All stuff I never had time to get to. The kinds of things you trip over when you walk threw the house. The things you curse because their not there when you need them, and you just haven't gotten around to getting them into shape.

I have tried to start with the obvious stuff. The light stuff. The easy stuff. Straightening pictures and working my way up from there. It's a great gift to be able to spend some time with these broken things. Care for them. Reclaim them. In some ways it's like getting something new again. Even better sometimes because you get to put a little bit of your self in the mending. And you learn something.

Mending things about the house has done that for me. I started to gain confidence. I looked for bigger things to take on. But the interesting thing is the size of my mending drawer. It has overtaken the closet and is spilling over into other parts of the house. Sometimes I get into projects that take me deeper than I thought I would originally go. And it is the luxury of time that allows me to go with it. Go deeper. Work on things that need to be mended at the root instead of the surface. The chance to work on such a project is a gift for it allows me to live in a more comfortable, well put together place.

One of the things the luxury of time has given me is the discovery that we can have

many mending drawers simultaneously. All of which, in our busy lives, can experience pile-up. All of which call to us. But in the din of our daily lives we cannot afford to sit down and listen. Stop and mend. We don't usually have that luxury.

This sabbatical has helped me remember that I also have a mending drawer in my heart. A place where chipped understandings and broken dreams get laid because we couldn't stop at the time to give them the attention they needed. In the last stretch of time I have had a chance to open up that drawer.

As I have been doing so I have had a chance to pick up some of the grief that I had laid there. Grief mostly over the ending of my engagement a year and a half ago. And I realize as I have started to work on this that I had put away a lot of disappointment and sadness that still needs mending. Broken dreams and dents in my ego. Hopes that were bent out of shape.

It is hard work. But how much harder it is to try to limp along with those broken things falling out of the drawer. Not being there when you need them. Pulling them out only to be disappointed that they don't work quite right. What a gift it is to have the chance to spend some time with them. To invest some care. To inherit the gift of suddenly being able to give such things the attention they deserve, that we may once again live in a good place.

I believe that my heart, like my house, loves the chance to mend. In some ways sewing things together is better than buying something brand new. We get a chance to sew a bit of our care into what was broken. Reclaim something dear that had been cast off. Learn something in the process.

I pray that this is true for all of you as well. I miss you.

Greg

Happenings

YOGA with Lisa @ UUMAN

On-going yoga classes in our beautiful sanctuary. Develop strength, flexibility and balance in mind and body. Learn poses, breathing & relaxation techniques & meditation to reduce stress, calm your mind, strengthen your immune system, and find more joy in life! Beginners & intermediates; men, women & teens. Newcomers welcome anytime. Sunday 4:45-6 p.m., Wednesday 10-11:30 a.m. 8 classes for \$80. Contact lisa@uuman.org or 770-395-7166

Happenings

Mindful Meditation

You deserve a few minutes to sit still; to turn off the phone; to stop thinking about what you have to do next; to be in the present moment; to let other people's needs wait a while. You deserve to be mindful for a few minutes. I'd like to invite you to be still with us every second and fourth Thursday night at 7:30pm in the sanctuary. You don't have to bring a thing. Just you. See you there! Merri Beth



Happenings

UUMANDRUMS

Classes will be 1st & 3rd Sunday's from 1:30-3:30 with practice on alternate Sunday's. Class price \$15.

Loaner drums will be available.

Pamela Reich –
770-552-2526

uumandrums@uuman.org

Happenings

Cohousing Meeting

What: Cohousing Interest Group meeting

When: April 16, 11 a.m.

Where: Fellowship Hall

Optional: Bring a brunch item to share

The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss:

- What cohousing is/isn't
- Existing area cohousing
- Is there sufficient interest to warrant creating another cohousing community?

If you think you might be interested in cohousing, please come!

Contribute!

If you are interested in submitting a piece for UUMAN Writes (creative writing, letter to the editor, etc.), please contact **Patty Odom** or send an email to newsletter@uuman.org.

UUMAN Writes

Spring naturally elicits the concepts of renewal and rebirth. We marvel at the blossoming flowers, newborn animals and pleasant weather. You can almost hear the collective sigh of relief as everyone packs away their winter coat and humidifier for another season. But while we tend to focus on all the exciting rites of passage that seem to crop up with the spring blooms and grow increasingly comfortable with the sunny weather; we may be tempted to think our spiritual journey is over-or at least on spring break. But much like those wandering out of Egypt and into the desert with Moses, it has only just begun. And perhaps we best not become too comfortable. (Maybe that's why pollen and allergies exist-as a reminder of the ever present turmoil of the human condition.)

Along with renewal, we also feel the urge to shed our bulk and and clean house come spring. This presents an annual challenge at my home. In our garage is the collective possessions of the last 34 years of my life, 35 years of my husband's life and 76 years of my mother's life. Each spring we try to make some sense out of all this "stuff" and thin its ranks some-usually by donating masses of it to charity. But we are packrats

by nature and refuse to let go of anything due to sentimental attachment.

My Mother has a rotting wooden rocking chair that we've been begging, pleading and bribing her to get rid of for years now. It sits in the garage, collecting dust and cat fur-since her basement apartment is too cluttered and the chair is too uncomfortable for her arthritic bones. We've offered to replace it with a new chair, but the offer falls on deaf ears. I finally asked her why she wanted to keep it-since it is ratty and uncomfortable to sit in. She related that the chair was the same one she rocked her 4 children in, sat alone in quietly after my father's death, and that sometimes being uncomfortable or reminded of being uncomfortable is a valuable lesson. I have since stopped trying to oust the chair from my garage and now look at it with a newfound respect. The chair has become a lesson and a legacy.

Being (occasionally) uncomfortable is an important component of growth and spiritual awakening. It reminds us that our journey is just beginning...

patty@uuman.org

Music With Young Children

A WORKSHOP WITH Kathee Williams

for Parents and others who work with young children and wish they had the skill and confidence to sing with them.

SATURDAY APRIL 16th (9am-Noon), UUMAN SANCTUARY

In the world of education, it is well known that speech pieces that rhyme and simple songs are valuable tools to help children memorize lists of facts. In the world of UUism, there are very strong historical ties to song. And music is a powerful tool in opening hearts and minds to living and loving in truth.

In this workshop, participants will get a mini lesson in vocal technique, and we will sing a lot of songs together to build confidence in group singing. Simple steps in teaching a song to children will be introduced, and opportunities to "practice teach" will be provided. Adding simple instruments and movement will make the experience even more exciting.

* Childcare available upon request *

Wear comfortable clothing and leave your inhibitions at home!

RSVP: to Joan.Armstrong.dre@uuman.org

Please join us!



Letters to the Editor

Manifesto for Participative Democracy:

Our congregation has been through a lot of change recently and it looks like we're not done yet. We've gone to 2 services, our minister is on sabbatical, the board has been working on a policy governance model, we're being canvassed and we're about to vote for a new slate of regents and on the new policy.

And we're still doing the things that we usually do around here: come to church, volunteer where we can and pay our bills.

However, I confess I'm a dissident. I have a different opinion on changing the way we run things. No, I haven't gone to any of the meetings about it, but I've talked to DeeAnne Clowes, our President, I've heard from Bruce Langston (a member of the Board), e-mailed Laurie Wheeler (in canvassing), I've gone to an Ends and Means meeting. Heck, I'm on 3 different committees and I wasn't asked for my point of view until after the whole set-up was rolled out.

I don't doubt that the people that have spent long hours deliberating on all of this do mean well. But long hours don't guarantee success either. This may be a perfect model for us to live by but if it's imposed on me I won't take nicely to it. When what we're trying to accomplish is a new way of working together, the process has to involve all us who are affected by the change, from the beginning. It takes longer, it's more painful. It's also more rewarding, it's owned by all of us, it's getting there that empowers us. Change has to come from within. That's the part I've missed all these months, the involvement from our members, the feedback, the healthy debate.

I consider it a moral obligation to voice my dissent in a respectful and civilized way. I owe it to myself, and to other members of UUMAN, especially the new ones, who might feel they're caught in the line of fire. In my view there are 2 things we'll inevitably find ourselves dealing with: communication and conflict resolution. None of which the Board has shown to be adept at. But then again, nor have I, until today. That's where all our solutions will come from: from the exchange of ideas that come from diverging opinions and the will to create a common ground for us to succeed as individuals and as a community.

Yes, I think there are many things that don't work, but changing the structure at this time will only give us a new set of problems. Do we need that much change in the midst of all that we are going through? I say let's slow down and think about it. I say I don't have enough information to make an educated choice on the Policy Governance Model, so I'm going to vote NO on May 15th.

Jennifer Tangney

Don't Give up on Change

UUMAN is the first church of my adult life. My wife and I had not been attending very long before we knew that we had found someplace special; that we had found a spiritual community of extraordinary individuals. We had only been members for about a year when I was approached to sit on the Board. At the time, I had only a vague idea of what church governance was. I certainly picked quite a year to learn on the job!

When the Board voted to revise the governance structure, I knew that it would be an incredibly difficult process. But I also knew that the same extraordinary individuals who welcomed me into this community would be up to the task. We started with a basic framework of a governing structure. Though the Board and the Policy Governance Committee have worked hard throughout this process, we would not be where we are today without the feedback of the Congregation. Many of the best ideas we've incorporated originated from Congregational meetings. But this work is not yet finished.

I know there are people who have felt left out of this process so far. To these individuals I say, "Do not despair!" There are still many opportunities to become involved. I want everyone at UUMAN to be proud of our new structure and to feel like they have had a say in it. As Communications Trustee, I wish I could have done a better job of personally reaching out to individuals who were beginning to feel marginalized, but this only points out one of the major limitations of our current Board structure. When the Board focuses too much on the future, many day-to-day responsibilities suffer. The new structure we are working on will better equip UUMAN to deal with the day-to-day as well as the future. That is why there is no time as vital as the present.

There are two very important Congregational meetings in April. If you feel like you need to learn more about the new structure, I encourage you to attend. If you have opinions that you want to voice, I encourage you to attend. And if you downright disagree with the new structure, I encourage you to attend. For every voice only makes us stronger. Every one of us only wants what is best for UUMAN, and only by working together can we achieve our biggest goals.

If you can't attend these meetings, please stop by the Governance table in Fellowship Hall. A member of the Nominating Committee is there every Sunday between services to help you understand the new structure as it currently stands. If you have any ideas to share, they are welcome; please call me at 770-569-5175, or call any member of the Board. Stop one of us at church, email the Board, or leave a note in someone's box in the office. But please don't give up on this process before it is finished. Nothing is written in stone, and it is my sincere hope that by May 15th everyone will have participated in preparing UUMAN for the next step in our evolution.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Dave Lakly



You Are Invited

By Karen LoBracco

“You are invited”.... The beginning is the same whether it’s a baby shower, a homeowner’s association meeting, an investment scheme, a shoe sale or a religious community. Same words - different implications.

Today I invite you to become a member of the Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North congregation. Wisely you ask “Why? What are the implications for me?” Certainly you don’t need a church to believe what you want, to think for yourself, or to do good works. UUMAN cannot offer you salvation, a refuge from personal or global problems, free or easy anything. Rather than answering your questions about the ultimate, you will be challenged to explore more places for answers. Joining a religious community is not contractual like a golf or book club (you do this, I’ll do that, and we’ll have a good time together until it’s not fun anymore), nor does it have the “brothers forever” implications of being born into a family. Becoming a member of UUMAN will not involve you swearing a belief in the 7 Principles, but it will involve a commitment to be in relationship with the congregation as a whole, as well as with the individuals who comprise the whole.

“OK, OK” you say, “Nice words, but how does it work? And what kind of ‘relationships’ are required?” Those are great questions, because they show that you have some

understanding of our unique covenantal community. In a sermon our minister Greg Ward preached November 16, 2003, he spoke of how as Unitarian Universalists “we are communities who are not united by a common belief, but instead, united by a common practice of bringing our individual beliefs into one place that we may learn and teach and grow from one another”. This is a dynamic relationship that implies change, growth and transformation, both for us as individuals as well as UUMAN the institution.

I might join as an agnostic who adores bright colors, hand-clapping, foot-stomping hymns, and who thinks recycling should be the 11th commandment. My promise to this religious community then is to share who I am, and to listen with my heart to the stories of others. While it is unlikely that the sanctuary will ever be repainted in stripes of primary colors, a pastel room or mural might appear. I may never wear a cross, but I may gain enough of an understanding of how Jesus’ social justice message can be interpreted to be able to partner with Christian churches to bring curbside recycling to unincorporated Fulton County. You just never know! Join UUMAN if you seek personal spiritual growth. Join UUMAN if you seek social transformation. But join UUMAN only if you can answer, “YES, I’m willing to try” to the question posed by the prophet Amos, “Can two walk together except they be agreed?”

I invite you to join us on the journey!

Welcoming Congregation Workshops

The Second Series

Two Schedule Options for Your Convenience!

- Two Saturdays, May 7 & May 14, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
- Seven Consecutive Tuesday Evenings (except the week of spring break) beginning March 31, 7:30 – 9:30 pm

No need to have attended the first series. Come to a few or come to all. You’d be surprised at what you can learn, even if you are already gay-friendly. In the last session, we learned:

- The fight for “gay marriage” leaves transexuals and intersex individuals unrepresented. The inclusive fight is for “marriage equality”.
- Telling a mixed-race child “you’re hair is so pretty” may be intended to make her feel good about herself, but what it actually does is remind her that she’s different.

- Most gays, bis, and transgenders welcome questions from the curious, as long as they are respectful and not hateful.

Please sign up to attend! Why?

- Help bring many perspectives to the table.
- Get to know and bond with others in the congregation.
- Enjoy yourself. [The workshops are actually quite fun!]
- Learn surprising tidbits that illuminate the wider world.

See the Schedule and Workshop Topics posted on the Welcoming Congregation Bulletin Board in Fellowship Hall. A sign-up sheet is provided, as well as contacts in case you have questions.

We hope to see you there!



UUMAN Inspirations...

My Good Fortune-Dan Ben David

The first day I walked into UUMAN in 1996, I was awed. There was a minister, a woman who spoke with fervor and determination. She kept hitting the nail on head. So hard, in fact, that some people were ducking for cover. I think that may have been part of her undoing. But I never looked back. I thoroughly was enamored with her style and conviction. When I first read those seven principles, I felt a strange familiarity. It was several years later that I put together that my father was a Unitarian in the 1930s and that the familiarity was not a coincidence. But there was something else. A certain familiarity with the intellect. My parents were European, so I was accustomed to a certain "old school" of thinking... a classical way.

Here at UUMAN I found an oasis among the mire of the South. In Georgia I found and continue to find many people's minds... "simply closed". But not at UUMAN. I quickly realized the excellence in intellect and felt a bonding with the community. I never thought I'd set foot into any religious

institution. But then, UU can be viewed as a congregation, a community and religion is there only as an option. But this spirituality thing. It took me a long time to start to grow that facet in me. And then, one day...

One day I was singing out of the hymnal with the congregation. There was a voice behind me that sounded like an angel had come to earth. There I turned and my eyes met his. We smiled. After the service I came to him and said "You have such a beautiful voice!" That was Amby Holford's first visit to UUMAN. How was I to know? Amby has touched and continues to touch so many lives with his masterful gifts. Thank you, Amby. My life is more complete now.

The point is really not about any one person. It is about excellence in this community. I am awed and humbled to be a member here. There is so much talent, insight, compassion... I could go on and on. But thank you!

Passover Seder

The annual UUMAN Passover Seder will be held either Saturday evening April 23rd or Sunday evening April 24th. Start time will be 5:30pm. The date has not been firmed up due to the coordinators' scheduling conflicts that won't be resolved until two weeks before the seder. If you are interested in attending, then please reserve both dates, if you can, on your calendar. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause any of you.

(We are aware that that is also the weekend for the Midsouth district meetings in Alabama but the following weekend was not going to work out as originally planned and there was no day during the week that would accommodate the coordinators' and UUMAN's busy calendar).

For those of you who have never attended a seder before, seder means service in Hebrew and the first 30-40 minutes is dedicated to the telling of the story of Exodus, when the Hebrews escaped Egypt with Moses' help. This is a family oriented seder and parents and kids alike participate with short readings during the service (if you want to). There are also a lot of fun Passover songs to sing and the food is great!

The sign up poster will be up in Fellowship Hall two weeks prior and will have the firm date on it. We will need everyone who wants to attend to sign up and bring food, etc. We will also need an accurate count of participants for table setup.

Also, watch for email announcements and info in the order of worship about this fun and worthwhile event.

Please direct questions to: Carolyn Lee at clee@uuman.org (preferred method of contact) or 770-516-4226 or Linda Ritter at 770-9889-0176



“A Week in the Life of the New UUMAN”

Unveiling the New Governance Structure

The past three newsletters described what was going in the development of UUMAN’s new governance structure and process. Well, we are almost done. We have all four policy areas completed (Ends/goals, Operational Parameters, Board/Operations Team Connection & Structure, and Board Governance Process). Copies of these policies are available at www.uuman.org (under Governance) and on the Governance table in Fellowship Hall along with a chart, job descriptions and a PowerPoint presentation of the new structure.

The Board and many others have been working extremely hard to get the Congregation ready for the July 1 implementation date. In order to meet that goal, at the Official Congregational meeting on Sunday, May 15th, the Congregation will vote on new bylaws and a new and different Board of Trustees consisting of a President, Past President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. In addition, the Congregation will vote on an Operations Team Chair. (The Board changed the name of the Management Team to Operations Team as it more accurately describes their role.) To that end, the Nominating Committee is fully informed about the new process and is looking for people interested in getting involved at this exciting juncture. You can’t miss the huge chart of opportunities on the wall! If you are interested, just email the Nominating Committee at nomcom@uuman.org.

Throughout this process, we have received lots of great feedback and ideas, all of which was carefully considered and many implemented. Along those lines, most recently the Board developed the following to capture the essence of the new UUMAN:

Just say YES...Empower someone!

Nurturing creativity, supporting passion, making it happen

We have one final Congregational Input meeting scheduled for Sunday, April 3rd from 1 – 3 pm in Fellowship Hall. Please join us to give us your thoughts and ideas regarding UUMAN’s new governance structure and process. Childcare will be available.

Then, please, please join us on Sunday, April 17th from 1 – 5 pm in the Sanctuary for an exciting presentation entitled “A Week in the Life of the New UUMAN.” This presentation should be exciting, fun and educational. Hopefully, when you leave you will have a much better sense of how things will be run starting July 1. Childcare will be available.

As always, anyone and everyone is invited to attend the governance meetings. These are the final meetings are as follows:

Sun. 4/3 1 – 3 pm FH Congregational Input Meeting

Sun. 4/10 7 – 9 pm FH Board to finalize Conflict Resolution Policy;

Review draft Bylaws

Sun. 4/17 1 – 5 pm FH/SA Presentation: A Week in the Life of the New

UUMAN

Tues. 4/19 7:30 – 9:30 pm FH Board wrap up meeting

Sun. 5/15 FH/SA Official Congregational Meeting

If you have any questions about Governance, please contact any member of the Board of Trustees, look at the information available in Fellowship Hall or on the UUMAN website or contact any member of the Governance Committee: Robyn Henry (Chair), Lisa Haynesworth, Karen LoBracco, and Dave Lakly.

Registration for the 2005-06 Church School Year

During the month of May we will be registering for church school classes for next year. The registration fee will remain at \$40 per child or a maximum of \$120 per family and the fee will be accepted at the time of registration. Families will be expected to specify their registration for either the first or second session. Scholarships are available. Contact Rev. Joan Armstrong for questions or to ask about scholarships.

Youth Reflection

by Toniann:

I can hardly believe that I am sitting here writing my piece for the APRIL newsletter!! This year is just whizzing by...

As always, I am full of admiration and pride for our Youth and the incredible Sunday Services that they presented for our congregation on March 20th. I am thankful for the love and devotion of our Advisors, Parents and our entire church community here at UUMAN.



Youth Reflection cont'd

That Sunday evening (after the Youth Service) I was sitting back and reflecting on how our youth/adult relationships have changed and grown over the past couple of years. We are a congregation with a (now stated) mission of commitment to our young people and each other. Long before I joined UUMAN there was a passionate support for youth. It was that passion and commitment that created the job of Youth Director that I applied for and, lucky for me, I was hired! We were a fledgling youth program and we needed every bit of love, support and nurture that our congregation could give, and YOU gave!! I go to 'cluster' (Atlanta) meetings and 'district' (Mid South) meetings and 'continental' (N America) youth events and those folks are jealous...I mean they turn green when they hear about the incredible support our youth program has from our congregation! Nowadays, it seems to me, our relationship is much more complex. As adults and youth come together, each bringing our own unique gifts, what results is a reciprocal relationship built on a solid foundation of sharing.

In many ways our program is typical, but the way WE love one another and support one another is EXTRAORDINARY! Some of us, individually, still show up to youth events to 'support the youth' and that's OK, but as a community we have moved beyond that. As a community WE show up to youth events because "we are UUMAN and that's what we do!"

April is going to be a busy planning month over in Discovery Hall. The Youth Adult Committee (YAC) will meet for a much needed retreat to tie up loose ends and get ready for May elections. Youth Membership and the 'Bridging' Committee will be super busy making plans for the events that will honor this year's graduating seniors! The Youth Social Action Committee (YSAC) will continue to work on the upcoming 'Kick-Off Carnival' for next year's Mission Trip to Jamaica. Meanwhile youth groups will meet for fun and fellowship!

And remember, whatever we are up to 'over there' in Discovery Hall, there is ALWAYS room for one more....whenever you are ready, we are waiting with a warm welcome and something to 'keep you busy & off the streets'!!!

Presidential Musings

I'm leaving Atlanta 27 days after this newsletter is published. I have never been prouder to serve and to be served by an organization in my life, and I regret that our family move takes us from this place we love. In our five years at UUMAN, we've been both (my family and the UUMAN community) through a lot of change. And today the only thing we know for sure about what is around the corner is that it involves more of the same.

Part of sustaining the growth we've experienced -- which this congregation has been about from day one, reiterated once more in last year's mission process -- is regularly transforming how we look at and how do things. We can no longer afford to take every issue, each concern, every need to a Board of Trustees. Because that Board is left with no time to plan for the future, or make sure we fulfill the mission we've created. That's what UUMAN's new model is about; it's about fulfilling our mission.

UUMAN is an amazing model for church communication, participation, and democratic process. Which is how so many congregation leaders, members, and even visitors have come to be involved and included in the process of creating this model for governance (which is not just about power and org-charts, it's about how we get things done). It's why we've held so many meetings and skits and published so many articles that if you read your email, newsletters, and attend church on Sundays, you may be sick of hearing about it. It's how we've come up with a most extraordinary prototype for our future.

The thousand plus hours that have been put into this project over the last two years probably include some of yours. If they don't, and if you don't understand the new governance model, I hope you'll take advantage of the April meetings, discussions with the Nominating Committee and Board members between and after services on Sundays, and the current drafts of all the governance documents available at uuman.org.

If you do, you'll find answers to most of your questions. If you don't, you'll be asked to support something you may not fully understand yet, but safe in the knowledge that many fellow members, including those you've entrusted as your church leaders, who know the limitations of operating without our current model, have worked hard to create a structure to improve even more how things are done at UUMAN. How people are empowered to make things happen. How we are challenged to be agents for positive change, in our community and the world. How we institutionalize the habit of saying yes! to new ideas, and thank you! for good works.

Say yes to UUMAN's potential. It is one of the things in this world I most cherish. Be proud of everything that we are, and are becoming. I'll be there, in spirit and in proxy, as I continue to be a member of this incredible institution from across the miles, and you will always be in my heart.

Say yes. Make it happen. I love you all,
DeeAnne



UUMANTIMES is the monthly newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North Congregation.

Our minister, Rev. Greg Ward, is on sabbatical until the end of June. When he is here, he does not have specific office hours; he is available to meet with people every day of the week except Fridays, at a wide variety of times by appointment. While he is away, we will contact him in the case of dire emergencies (deaths or death-threatening or severe illnesses). For other care needs, please contact your Care Circle coordinator or Diantha Horton, our Crisis Intervention Coordinator, who will find the most appropriate care resources.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.uuman.org

Worship Schedule

April 3rd – “Conceiving the Divine Feminine”

Speaker– Miriam Bellamy - Service Leader – Merri Beth Stephens

Ever wonder how it came to be that God is considered male in the hearts of billions around the globe? I wondered about this in my journey to personal freedom, and the results brought me hurtling from a life of evangelical Christian bondage to a life I could call my own.

Come Sunday and be inspired.

Children and Youth begin in the sanctuary.

April 10th – “Spring is Sprung”

Speaker – Rev. Robert Flanders; Service Leader – Martina Queenth

Science and religion have been moving closer together in recent years. People on the leading edge of cosmology and particle physics speak in increasingly theological terms to describe what they are finding. Rev. Flanders believes the world needs a new, "green" religion, one with a new creation story that does not conflict with what science is discovering about our universe.

Rev. Flanders is a graduate of Starr King ('84) and has served a number of two-year interim ministries in UU congregations all across the country. He is currently the interim minister in Montgomery, Alabama.

Children and Youth begin in the sanctuary.

April 17th - “The Coyote and the Marshmallow Buddha”

Speaker – Rev. Don Southworth; Service Leader: Jim Saunders

Religion is serious business. So serious we sometimes forget to laugh at it and ourselves. We will explore the role of laughter on our spiritual journeys.

Rev. Don Southworth has been the minister at the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation since August 2001. He is a graduate of Starr King School for the Ministry where he discovered laughter, religion and ministry can dance together.

Children and Youth begin in the sanctuary.

April 24th - Passover Service "Are we there yet?"

Speaker - Jennifer Tangney, chair of the Social Justice Committee; Service Leader - Randy Blasch

Better known in her role as new member coordinator, Jennifer plays an accidental tourist during a trip to the beach, but what does that have to do with the Passover story of Exodus and her committee's search for a successful Social Change program for UUMAN?

Children and Youth begin in the sanctuary.



UUMAN
11420 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA 30075

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