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Ministry Musings

March, 2011 - Rev. Paul D. Daniel, Minister

What's the Buzz?



What's the buzz? Tell me what's happening. There is a new spirit of excitement at UUMAN.

Your leadership team - the Board, the program council, myself and others - are all fired up about re-looking at our mission statement and vision for a new beginning at

UUMAN. Out of crisis comes opportunity, as the Chinese proverb goes. While it is true that our cash reserves are perilously low, our optimism is beginning to soar. Seems contradictory, doesn't it?

So, why the optimism? I am more than happy to tell you why. We have woken up to the reality that what strengthens our community and makes people want to support this congregation is not shouting, "the sky is falling", but rather, sharing our good news that UUMAN is a happening place committed to the betterment of our community. We are excited about all that we are doing to impact the world in a positive way. Under the enthusiastic leadership of Carolyn Bommarito we have expanded our Adult Enrichment program with at least three new course offerings: a spirituality group for our newest members, a men's and woman's group. Further, we are looking at beginning from one to seven new courses in the very near future. Our ongoing Friday night spirituality group is having a major impact on the lives of its participants. The Ken Wilber group is allowing its members to look deeply at their spiritual lives.

We have a newly revitalized Social Justice committee. We are looking to increase our 50/50 Sunday offertory to help local charities from one Sunday every other month, to every Sunday. Efforts are being made to coordinate the work of the Social justice and the Sustainability groups around issues of water. Just this past month, we were accepted by the UUA as an official candidate for Green Sanctuary status, in recognition of our efforts to become environmentally conscious. We feed the hungry through North Fulton Charities, and Sustainability makes environmentally friendly cleaning products for those with limited funds.

The Worship Committee is also working to bring our mission to life. The committee will be examining how to create a more exemplary, transformative Sunday service to meet your spiritual needs. In response to this call for creating a standard of excellence I am reexamining how I write and deliver my sermons. The worship committee and I will be looking at how we can improve our Sunday experience through further training to polish the committee members' skills. If you are excited about helping to plan worship, the committee needs a few new good men and women. Talk to me.

There is so much that we are doing right now to bring our mission and vision for UUMAN to life. Won't you join this

crusade? It is nothing less than a crusade to make UUMAN matter in our lives and in the world beyond these doors.

This new vision for an engaged community makes your financial support mean so much more than just paying the bills (which we must do). Your support in its many forms can build something here that you will be proud to be part of, because we are changing and transforming the world, one person and one project at a time. This is the buzz at UUMAN. Why not join the parade?

Yours in our shared faith,

— *Rev. Paul*

Remember that Mission Statement thingy we did?

Not really? Well, me either, at least not word for word. Participating in UUMAN's mission-statement-writing workshops, getting everyone involved was fun and a community-building experience and all (we love our community-building, don't we?). We're good, we think, at building community within our walls, but how about beyond our walls? How about truth and justice out there? Do you think we're really gonna do all that hopey-changey, save-the-world stuff?

I have to confess, when I came to UUMAN, I was very skeptical of church, and all things church-y. When Patti and I moved to Georgia sixteen years ago this month, I'd been religion-free and lovin' it for about 30 years. McP told me something I've, since, heard that other wives and mothers concluded, soon after moving to Atlanta: "we have to get a church." I wanted to tell her that she needed to get new husband, one who'd go to church with her. But I knew better than to sass a woman on a mission. ;-)

So, to cut to the chase – on this part of the story, anyway – UUMAN was the fifth or sixth – or sixteenth – church Patti visited before deciding she'd found one I might like. Actually, she knew me well enough then, after only four years, to know she'd found a church for me, her and Dillon, too. He was barely two years old. You can figure out how long ago that was. And you know what? I did like it. I like how I felt here: safe... safe to think and say what I wanted. Show up every Sunday and maybe one or two other days during the month, nice and comfy.

In all these years of membership at UUMAN, I've never aspired to much more for our relationship than a place where I find community, where I can go on Sunday morning and either sit in on the service, which I've been doing for the last year or so, or teach Sunday School, which I've done off and on over the years, too. I've been on one committee and the other and spent an exciting year of my own on the board. But really, facilitating the Coming of Age year for the junior youth, including Dillon,

three years ago and washing the dishes on the odd Sunday morning after coffee hour or a potluck are the things I've done or do at UUMAN that really make me feel my best.

My point is that I didn't think my church needed to have a mission other than a place for me to feel comfortable being me. That's been good for almost 15 years.

But a funny thing happened at the Program Council meeting Tuesday night: we got excited about UUMAN's mission. We decided we wanted to do more than focus inward, worry about how we're going to pay the mortgage, Paul, Toniann, Huu and the rest of the staff. We decided to really try to take our love of community, of standing on the side of love, out into the larger world, to make UUMAN's mission our mission. We believe in the hope that, if we reach out to the greater community, the world, that we might be rewarded with riches greater than the money we need to keep the lights on.

That's what happened at the Program Council meeting on February 15, 2011. We decided to start a journey and take each of you with us, to carry you and ask you to be ready to carry us, when we need it, to carry each other, as Bono said in [One](#).

"Where are we going?" you might be wondering. Let's find out together... starting right now.

— *Bruce Langston*

Ref: [Our Mission](#) and [Cornel West on optimism vs. hope](#)

Big Creek Wetlands Clean Up

The Social Justice Action Committee encourages UUMAN members to consider participating in the Big Creek Wetlands Park clean up on **March 5, 2011 from 9 am to noon**. Those who pre-register for the event by **March 1, 2011** will be offered a free lunch.

Wetlands play an essential part in our ecosystem, including the regulation of river flow, filtering pollutants and fertilizers, spawning zones for some species of fish, and providing a habitat for plants, insects, and birds.

The park is at **1600 Old Alabama Road in Roswell, GA**. Old Alabama is east of 400 and north of Holcomb Bridge Road. More information is available on the Roswell city internet site at <http://www.roswellgov.com/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=197>, where you will also find the link to the registration form.

— *Patricia Carter*

Heart's Desire

GOODS & SERVICES AUCTION AT UUMAN

Heart's Desire Auction Wrap-Up

February 12, 2011: UUMAN's Heart's Desire Auction delivers the best excitement yet

This was a record year for attendance and fund raising. In all, more than \$13,000 was raised auctioning off such things as paintings, movie nights, and song-banning.

The evening started at around 6:00 PM with hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

The auction proper began around 7:30 and after a riotous first half of bidding,



there was a brief intermission where the last of the silent auction and just-sign-up items were completed.

At 10:00 the auction ended with the attendees cheerfully leaving with their newly acquired swag.

Thanks to everybody who showed up this year. Everybody had a great time.



Heartfelt
Thanks to the committee:
Margot Bogue, Allan Brown, Ann Creech,
Marty Harvey, Kimberly Ecker Keeley,
Carolyn Lee, Jennifer Ratcliffe,
Merri Beth Stephens, Laurie Wheeler and
Elizabeth Rohan
Plus: Auctioneer Extraordinaire Randy
Blasch, Sue Hagood, the barkeeps,
chefs, helpers and all the
generous bidders

— Allan Brown

UUMAN Walkers



UUMAN Walkers enjoying the trail - Vickery Creek, February 13th

Our recent walks/hikes have included Leita Thompson Park, Jones Creek Trail, Vickery Creek Trail and Gold Branch Trail. So far, our walks have been on Sunday afternoons, but we are open to changing the schedule depending on your preferences. As we get into spring and summer, people get busy with other outside activities and afternoon walking can be very uncomfortable. We are thinking of taking one Saturday morning walk and one Sunday afternoon walk per month. Please feel free to give your feedback to Jan Wilson or Mike and Michelle Liebergesell.

Come and join us...bring your entire family, children and pets are welcome. Watch for information on your UUMAN Announcements e-mail.

— Jan Wilson

WHAT DO KIDS KNOW ABOUT RECYCLING ANYHOW?

NOTES FROM THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Curbside recycling has been a part of our lives so long now, since the early 80's, that it's practically second nature to most of us. Many of us wince when we see someone has tossed a plastic bottle in a regular trash can which is sitting right next to a recycling bin. Barely giving it a second thought, we dutifully clean and sort our recycling if we are not lucky enough to live in an area where they do the sorting for us. Some of us even enjoy an occasional trip to a local recycling center to drop off unusual items. We have also learned to pay as much attention to limiting our water usage, especially given the recent droughts in our area. But how much of this behavior is being actively taught to or perhaps even absorbed by our UUMAN children? We asked, and received some surprising answers.

All the children we interviewed knew a lot of basic information. When discussing littering, they were all in agreement that, in order to save the planet, "you don't throw trash on nature". They are all knowledgeable of the frequency of their garbage

and recycling pick-ups; they know which objects to place in the special recycling bins. Most of them understand that white paper is a separate item they must recycle. They even recognize that recycling includes "making old things into brand-new things".

Here are some other interesting comments made by our very prepared and vigilant children:

- Seven-year-old Calvin makes sure not to use too much water while bathing and has assured us that he walks around the school gym picking up trash and placing it in the proper receptacles.
- Alexis, age 7, is well-schooled to not let the water run as she brushes her teeth, one of which is currently loose!
- Five-year-old Troy saves any water he has not finished drinking in the fridge for later use.
- Raffaella, six, has firm plans to continue her mom's practice of gathering used water in a bucket and using that to flush the toilet.
- At nine years old, Olivia becomes frustrated when she encounters a dripping faucet in the school bathrooms. The noise drives her batty as does the waste of water. She quickly shuts the faucet and remedies the situation.

Our planet has a very bright and rosy future if we are leaving it in such competent and brilliant hands. Make sure to check the Sustainability Committee's bulletin board in Fellowship hall during the month of March for more comments from UUMANKids.



— Margie Jacobs and Sarah Jones



MSD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

APRIL 1-3

The 2011 Annual Assembly, hosted by the Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Atlanta the first weekend in April, will mark transitions and new initiatives and promises to be as inspiring as it is enlightening.

Plan to be there! It's a year to be sure your congregation is represented with people of all ages and generations as Mid-South lives out the theme for the year, "Worshiping and Learning Communities, Celebrating Faith Beyond Belief."

Friday evening's annual "Service of the Lively Tradition" will kick off the weekend, which will celebrate Eunice Benton's fourteen years as District Executive and Connie Goodbread's taking up the role in July. On Saturday morning, keynote presenters **Michael Dowd and Connie Barlow** will inspire all ages as Connie offers a program for children called "River of Life," and Michael presents "Evolutionize Your Life: Coming Home to Reality" to the adult plenary. Mid-day events will include recognitions and awards (and lunch!) as well as Mid-South's annual business meeting, where new initiatives in the region will be presented. On Saturday afternoon, attendees can choose from a buffet of workshops before the closing worship at the day's end. Registration and more details are available at the Mid-South web site: www.msduua.org.

— Mid-South District – UUA

Announcing the UUMAN T-Shirt Design Contest!

Create a t-shirt design around UUMAN's new mission statement,

- ***We come together to create an environment that celebrates our differences, nurtures transformative growth, and promotes an open-minded search for truth and justice both within our walls and beyond***

and drop it into the box on the Membership Table in Fellowship Hall by **March 31st**. Use the design guidelines/specifications, below. If your design wins, it will appear on the official UUMAN t-shirt to be offered for sale. Judges will be the Mission Statement and Social Justice committees.

Remember it's the process that matters, not if you win, so let your creative juices flow!

Design Guidelines:

- Submit your design by March 31, 2011.
- Your design should be inspired by the mission statement of UUMAN: "*We come together to create an environment that celebrates our differences, nurtures transformative growth, and promotes an open-minded search for truth and justice both within our walls and beyond.*"
- Your design can only be on the front OR the back of the shirt.
- You may submit up to three designs, but they must be submitted as separate entries.
- Your design must be wholly original. By submitting a design you are guaranteeing that you hold rights to

everything in it, and that it does not contain any copyrighted material.

- Copyrighted material includes items found on the internet, unless clearly marked as published under a creative commons (cc) license.
- Designs will be judged on the following criteria:
 - Concept/originality
 - Captures spirit of UUMAN mission
 - Striking and recognizable design
 - Visibility- eye-catching and visible from a reasonable distance
 - Feasibility/must be easy to reproduce

Design Specifications:

- Artwork can be original. Drop design into slot in box on Membership Table in Fellowship Hall and remember to **label it with your name**.
- If you create your design on a computer, print it and drop into slot in box on Membership Table. Save the file for it will be needed should you win.
- Your design should contain a **maximum of five(5) colors** (plus the shirt color).
- The color of the shirt will be natural (off-white) so chose design colors accordingly.
- Your design can **only be on the front or back of shirt of the shirt**, and fit within the printable area. It is a **10" wide x 13"** high rectangular area.

Submission Agreement:

- UUMAN will have first printing right rights to the winning design. By submitting you agree that if your design wins, it can be used by UUMAN on a t-shirt.
- We reserve the right to make adjustments to the winning design.
- Judges will be the Mission Statement and Social Justice Committees.

— Michelle Liebergesell

Stewardship and Celebration A Letter from Dave Hudson, UUMAN President

On **Saturday, March 26th** we will hold an event that will serve both as our annual stewardship dinner and a celebration of UUMAN's 20th birthday. We have much to celebrate. There is excitement, energy, and momentum building for a vision of building a UUMAN that lives more in our mission – that boldly reflects our values. The Leadership Circle after the service on Sunday, March 6th, will be a piece of that movement – an opportunity for you to contribute your ideas to this process. The stewardship dinner will hold up and celebrate that vision and the momentum toward it, as it also celebrates how far we have come in the past twenty years. You will be hearing a lot more about the dinner and our canvass in the coming days; perhaps

you will be involved; hopefully we'll see you there.

You will also be hearing about our current financial needs. Like all institutions, we struggle in this tough economic climate to meet our many financial obligations and to keep our heads above water. As I mentioned a month ago, we can't do that at our current level of income. We are faced with a challenge; we must ask each other to dig deep into our pockets for the extra that can keep us moving forward.

I have great faith in UUMAN, and I am excited about where UUMAN is going. I am hopeful that the wonderful fellowship of souls we call UUMAN can rise to the challenge.

One evening a few weeks ago, on my way to meet with a fellow member to talk about just these things, I heard this on *All Things Considered* – in an interview with a playwright, Anna Deavere Smith, about a conversation she had with Princeton professor Cornel West about the difference between optimism and hope.

West said, she relates, "Hope and optimism are different. Optimism says you look out the window and you say, 'It looks pretty good out there.' Hope says, 'It doesn't look good at all; doesn't look good at all; evidence doesn't look good at all, but I'm goin' to go beyond the evidence, create new possibilities, based on new vision, become contagious, allow people to engage in heroic actions, always against the odds, no guarantee whatsoever!"

Amen – that's where we're going – whether you call it optimism or hope (or faith).

In the spirit of love, peace, and faith,
— Dave

A Month of Sundays

Rev. Paul D. Daniel, Minister

Sunday Services: Adult RE: 9:15 Children's RE:
10:30 AM AM 10:15 AM

Please join us for coffee and conversation in Fellowship Hall right after the service.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
3/6/11	TBA	Guest Speaker
3/13/11	Does God Evolve? I will explore the nature of God, the Ground of all being, the holy within, nature (no, I am not hedging my bets) and whether he or she or it is immutable or evolving.	Rev. Paul
3/20/11	Youth Service—The Kids and the Rev This is our much-anticipated youth service.	Rev. Paul
3/27/11	How we live our daily lives Our much-admired Merri Beth Stevens will share the pulpit with Jim Saunders.	Rev. Paul

More March Events

- Sunday, 3/6/11 **Leadership Circle meeting** — after the service, noon - 1:30 PM
- Monday, 3/7/11 **Nia, Joy of Movement classes resume** — Monday evenings 6:45 PM - 7:45 PM, in the Sanctuary
- Thursday, 3/10/11 **UUMAN Women's Book Club** — 2nd Thursdays at 7:30 PM in the living room of Discovery Hall. Our first book is Kevin Roose's "The Unlikely Disciple".
- Sunday, 3/13/11 **21st Century Humanism** — after the service, 11:45 AM in the Sanctuary. The topic will be "To what extent will Muslim religious extremism interfere with the success of the separate yet disparate revolutionary movements currently under way in the Middle East and North Africa?" This is a complex issue, so join us in attempting to achieve a consensus.
- Saturday, 3/19/11 **UUMAN Men's Group** — The newly formed Men's Group is having a Cookout, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM in Discovery Hall. Please RSVP to Bob Popp.
- Friday, 3/25/11 **Fourth Friday MOVIE NIGHT!!** — Sponsored jointly by MCY, The Social Justice Committee, and The Sustainability Committee.

About the UUMANTimes

UUMANTimes is the newsletter of Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North (UUMAN), located at 11420 Crabapple Road, Roswell, GA 30075, on the web at www.uuman.org. We welcome almost all imaginable newsletter submissions, and publish as many as possible. We go live with each issue by the first Sunday of the month. The deadline for submissions is close of business on the 20th of the month preceding the issue date. Please email your articles and artwork, riddles, rants and recipes to c.news: newsletter@uuman.org

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH

MCY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

MARCH 2011

Mar 1 - MCY Council Meeting
Mar 6- 8 - Sr Youth Mountain Con
Mar 11 - Family Ministry Gathering
Mar 18 & 19 - 'OWL' Overnight
Mar 19 - Youth Service rehearsal
Mar 20 - Annual Youth Service!
Mar 25 - Social Justice Family Movie Night



CONTACT TONIANN

Office Hours

Tuesday 10.00am-2.00pm

Friday 10.00am-2.00pm

Sunday 9.30am-2.30pm

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Potluck supper at 5.45pm
followed by;
Childcare (movie)
&
'Covenant Group' style
Parent's meeting
6.30-8.30pm



Join us for our next
Family Ministry Team Gathering
with a focus on 'Early Childhood'

'Diapers to Potties'

Thinking creatively about supporting our young ones (and each other) as they grow and begin to develop healthy body awareness...

Friday March 11th

MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN & YOUTH



Young Religious Unitarian Universalists



‘Our Whole Lives’

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Padraig
Ian
Gabrielle
Elianna
Lucy
Billy
Lexie

Congratulations Graduates!



Annual Youth Led Worship Service

Sunday March 20th

“UU According to Neo”

Join our fabulous Senior Youth Group as they share an insightful and creative Worship experience for EVERYONE!

MidSouth District Annual Assembly

April 1st & 2nd

Youth (gr 8-12) who will be attending Annual Assembly are invited to stay overnight at UUMAN.

ADVISORS WANTED!



At the OWL Retreat in February