



UUMAN TIMES

Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North

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To Talk of Money

By the time you read this, we will have likely completed our “Next Steps Weekend” with Liz Coit, the UUA-affiliated stewardship consultant.

To reiterate the purpose of this engagement:

The Next Steps Weekend aims to provide UU churches and fellowships with a constructive foundation of reflection, information, and strategies as they plan and forge ahead with stewardship programs and other means of growing their resources.

I’m not going to start this article with the same old worn-out trope about how “UUs don’t like talking about money.” Maybe that used to be the case in the 60s, 70s or even 80s, but since I became a UU in the 90s, most UUs I know have been mature enough to have tough conversations about money. Most UUs I know understand its importance.

Of course, I didn’t pursue ministry to get rich or to give my version of the “Sermon on the Amount” each year. Of course, you didn’t come to UUMAN because you were looking for a place to part with your hard-earned income. Of course, UUMAN’s mission statement doesn’t include financial “return on investment” targets.

None of us are affiliated with UUMAN in order to further our financial goals.

Raising money is not part of our mission...however, to deny that money is an integral component that makes the fulfillment of our mission possible would be burying one’s head in the sand. You simply can’t get there from here without money. (You most definitely need other things too!)

Although not the dominant narrative by any stretch of the imagination, I have heard “UUMAN is all about the money” whispers here. (And I’ve heard similar whispers at every UU congregation with which I’ve been associated.) It’s sad to hear this but fortunately, it is a view held by a small minority of individuals.

Let’s be clear. When we talk about money, we’re talking about people. Like it or not, our former choir director left UUMAN because of money. In the future, your ability to attract the best Minister, Director of Ministry of Children and Youth, Music Director, Pianist and any other future staff - the very best staff that you deserve - will depend, in part, upon money.

Let’s be clear. When we talk about money, we’re talking about ministry. Ministry is the work that we do “both within our walls and beyond.” Ministry is mission fulfillment. It’s why we exist.

One year, I was part of a large congregation that experienced a 25% dip in stewardship revenue. That translated to layoffs of staff and elimination of ministry programs. That hurt! Two professional musicians, two religious education staff, one social justice organizer and one associate minister let go – not for lack of performance, but for lack of money.

Significant social justice initiatives, adult enrichment and religious education curricula curtailed. Again, not for lack of performance, but for lack of money..

We need to be mature and pragmatic when it comes to money...and I think we have been...and I think UUMAN’s financial leadership is keeping us on a healthy financial trajectory. I am grateful for their leadership. (We should all be grateful for their leadership.)

In the coming months, we will be undertaking our stewardship campaign and there will be further talk of money. Moving forward, it is my hope that we can continue to be mature and pragmatic in this regard.

Take Care,

Dave



Family Promise Reflection

Quite an eventful day! I got to help feed and hang out with some really energetic and delightful young'ns! My church is part of a network of faith communities that partners with an organization called Family Promise.

Did you know that homeless shelters separate men and women? And that boys over the age of 12 have to go to a men's shelter? So where does that leave homeless families with a mom and a dad, or a mom with a son over 12? That is where Family Promise steps in. Faith communities house up to 14 people for a week, with a once-a-quarter commitment. We feed them, provide them with a place to sleep and a place to shower. This week we hosted five adults and nine youngsters, ages 3 to 14.

Every adult in this group works for a living. One family will be moving into their own apartment in Cumming in March and the mom was telling me that she is just so thrilled to not have all their belongings in plastic tubs that they haul from church to church to synagogue to mosque to church, week after week. Times are tough for folks who live paycheck to paycheck and then suddenly lose that paycheck for a bit. I am glad Family Promise exists.

—Merri Beth Stephens



New Member Sunday Pot Luck Luncheon

Our next **New Member Sunday** is **February 11**, where we will officially welcome our newest members. Please let the Membership team know if you are considering joining UUMAN by sending an email to membership@uuman.org. A pot luck luncheon will immediately follow services. Please bring a dish to share as we celebrate our new members.

—Robbie Kohn

Unitarian Universalist Lent

For the past three years, I have been practicing UU Lent. I have found it very affirming to pause each day and reflect on a specific word. It is also fun to see how others in the larger UU community are practicing our faith. This year you are invited to join me in observing UU Lent on the "UUMAN Grows Together" Facebook page where we will post our photos and reflections. Lent is observed Wednesday, February 14 to Sunday, April 1. Families are encouraged to complete the activity together (children may wish to draw a picture).

The creators of UU Lent request that the following instructions be shared: "Join the Unitarian Universalist practice of Lent! Each day, Unitarian Universalists and our friends and family will intentionally reflect on a daily word, carry awareness throughout the day, and capture an image that represents the word for us. We'll share our reflections and images on social media with the hashtag #UULent. On Sundays, we challenge each other to reflect on the daily word and also embody and enact it in our lives."



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| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--|-----------------|--------------|
| FEBRUARY | | | 14 love | 15 focus | 16 recovery | 17 pain |
| 18 mercy | 19 prayer | 20 power | 21 comfort | 22 wisdom | 23 hope | 24 mistakes |
| 25 acceptance | 26 music | 27 surrender | 28 bravery | | | |
| MARCH | | | | 1 confession | 2 devotion | 3 insecurity |
| 4 partnership | 5 dance | 6 truth | 7 dedication | 8 consideration | 9 possibility | 10 dust |
| 11 hospitality | 12 beauty | 13 struggle | 14 curiosity | 15 understanding | 16 forgiveness | 17 trust |
| 18 sanctuary | 19 art | 20 grace | 21 dream | 22 vulnerability | 23 patience | 24 doubt |
| 25 resilience | 26 work | 27 gratitude | 28 receive | 29 growth | 30 anticipation | 31 awe |
| APRIL | | | | | | |
| 1 rejoice | | | | NURTURE Your Spirit. Help HEAL Our World. | | |

(Used with permission. Created by Mr. Barb Greve; designed by Alex Kaplan).

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sheila K. Smith

piercingthrutheveil@yahoo.com

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta Event



UNDERGROUND COFFEEHOUSE SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24 "WON'T BACK DOWN": CELEBRATING THE MUSIC OF TOM PETTY

Join us at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta for a fun evening of great music: "Won't Back Down: Celebrating the Music of Tom Petty." Local musicians will be singing their favorite tunes by Tom Petty (& the Heartbreakers) – whether recent or classic, hit single or deep cut! At the end of the night, we will all join in a sing-along of "Refugee" and "Free Fallin'." Doors open at 7:00, show starts at 7:30. Suggested donation: \$10, but no one will be turned away.

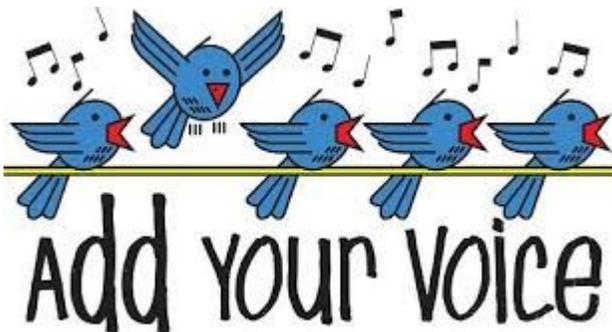
The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta is located at 1911 Cliff Valley Way, NE, Atlanta 30329. Address for the adjacent parking lot is 1597 Interstate-85 Access Rd-N, Atlanta 30329

UUMAN Chalice Choir Sing-In

The UUMAN Chalice Choir would like to cordially and warmly invite you to a choir sing-in on **Wednesday, February 28th at 7pm**. No previous singing experience required. Just bring your voice and your enthusiasm. Alex will provide the music and the fun.

Oh, and there will be snacks!

We want to see you there! Mark your calendars now!



—Merri Beth Stephens



Mindfulness Meditation Group

Our mindfulness meditation group meets Saturdays in the Sanctuary (or Discovery Hall if the Sanctuary is not available) at 1:00.. If you would like to have lunch beforehand, please RSVP by emailing me at jkevinkinglaw@yahoo.com, and I will meet you at Noon. Childcare is available from 1:00 to 2:30.

Whether you have been meditating for years or are curious about possibly starting a practice, we offer a peaceful space to sit as well as a time to share and learn in a community of fellow meditators. Whatever your belief system or spiritual practice, all are welcome and encouraged to come and sit with us. If needed, we offer a brief instruction period in basic mindfulness practice before we start. Afterwards, if you would like to participate, we will discuss our experiences. Please join us as we sit together in community.

We live always in the present moment, right now.. Yet most of us spend most of our attention in thrall to our thoughts without even realizing it. Mindfulness meditation is a way of training our minds to let go of that cycle and more fully attend to the totality of our lived experience in the moment, as it unfolds.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program at the University of Massachusetts, has defined "mindfulness" as "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally." While the practice of mindfulness meditation in the West comes to us via the ancient Buddhist tradition of Vipassana (the Pali word for "Insight"), one need not accept the tenets of any particular religion or ideology to practice..

This adaptable method of contemplation practice can be incorporated into any theology, preexisting religious practice, or secular worldview without doing violence to the practice. Moreover, researchers have found more and more scientific evidence that mindfulness leads to reduced stress, more focus, patience, resilience, and even better cognitive function. Millions of all stripes around the country have gained these benefits, coming to the practice with varied intentions running the gamut from gaining a tool to better themselves, to supplementing to their preexisting spiritual practice, to searching for metaphysical insight, to finding a way for secular people to engage in a spiritual life without needing to accept any dogmas.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

(470) 723-4070

jkevinkinglaw@yahoo.com

We hope you join us.

Sincerely,

J. Kevin King



UUMAN Sharing the Plate—50/50

Once each month, half of our undesignated plate funds go to a non-profit organization or a worthy cause.

Last year, we gave twelve different 50-50 recipients a total of **\$3,127.15!** The beneficiaries were **Black Lives Matter, Child Development Association, Every Woman Works, Chattahoochee Riverkeepers, The Link Counseling Center, Citizens' Climate Lobby, UUMAN's Partner Church Scholarship Travel Fund, Black Hills Unity Concert, International Rescue Committee, Pride School Atlanta, UU Service Committee,** and the **Eli Project.** Thanks for your generosity UUMAN!

This month's 50-50 recipient will be **El Refugio.** El Refugio is a hospitality house located in Lumpkin, GA – right outside the gates of Stewart Detention Center. Their purpose is to serve the family and friends of men detained and, thus, separated from their loved ones. For more information, go to <http://elrefugiostewart.org>

- Michelle Liebergesell



Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation Event

Northwest Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 1025 Mount Vernon Hwy, Atlanta, GA 30327 presents a FREE Program: "Faithful to the Future: Big Picture Inspiration for Chaotic Times", with Rev. Michael Dowd: Sunday, February 25, 7 PM – 8:45 PM Child care will be provided.

This program, geared for adults and teens, builds on Rev. Dowd's two TEDx talks and material in his bridge-building book, Thank God for Evolution: How the Marriage of Science and Religion Will Transform Your Life and Our World, which was endorsed by 6 Nobel Prize-winning scientists and by religious leaders across the spectrum.

<https://nwuuc.org/>



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 newsletter@uuman.org

| Date | Celebration |
|------|--|
| 2/3 | Elizabeth S. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/4 | Phillip Seaver is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/12 | Jacob C. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/14 | Mike and Michelle Liebergesell are celebrating their 30th anniversary! |
| 2/15 | Dan Cipperly is celebrating a birthday Maud vdB. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/16 | Claire Sullivan is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/22 | Riahna Lee is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/23 | Elizabeth M. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/26 | Marin G. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |
| 2/28 | Raffaella S. of our MCY program is celebrating a birthday |

A Month of Sundays

| Date | Topic | Service Leaders |
|------|--|---|
| 2/4 | <p>The Spirit of Stewardship</p> <p>When facing today's political headwinds, it is most important for UUMAN to be spiritually connected to its ministry (i.e. how we serve our mission both within our walls and beyond). Such ministry is impossible without a forward-thinking plan for financial sustainability and resilience. Are we prepared for the future?</p> | <p>Rev. Dave Dunn</p> <p>Liz Coit, UUA Stewardship Consultant</p> <p>Bruce Langston</p> |
| 2/11 | <p>Everyone Touches The Disc</p> <p>Sometimes community happens by accident. After a hurricane wipes out most of the infrastructure of a city or a human disaster takes many lives. People line up to donate blood for people they'll never know. They share food and help where they can.</p> <p>Sometimes community happens intentionally, but the recipe is the same: the mutual sharing of gifts. Today we talk about what it means to be part of, and create conditions ripe for, community. In Ultimate Frisbee terms, where everyone touches the disc.</p> | <p>Rev. Cassandra Howe</p> <p>Brian Kohn</p> |
| 2/18 | <p>Multi-Generation Service</p> | <p>Multi-Generation Team</p> |
| 2/25 | <p>Wrestling with Spirit</p> <p>How do we hold a notion as ephemeral as spirit—an idea we invoke regularly? What meaning does it have for Unitarian Universalists? What power? That depends, of course, on where one falls on the UU theological spectrum. Dave will share his own understanding (if he can hold the idea long enough to get a good look at it).</p> | <p>Dave Hudson</p> <p>Adam Fajardo</p> |

February Connections

| Date | Event |
|---|--|
| <p>Wednesday nights from 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM in Fellowship Hall.</p> | <p>UUMAN's Painting Group</p> <p>Learn to paint in a relaxed atmosphere (with a glass of red wine if desired). We have easels and tray tables; just bring your paints and a canvas. A portion of the fee goes to UUMAN. Contact: Annette Pate painting@uuman.org</p> |
| <p>Weekly on Wednesdays at 12:15</p> | <p>Daytimers</p> <p>The Daytimers group discusses contemporary, thought-provoking topics such as current political issues or social trends that may affect everyone at some level. All are invited to attend. For information, contact Dan Ben-David. dan@uuman.org</p> |
| <p>Third Saturday of the month at 7:30 p.m.</p> | <p>The Common Grounds Coffee House</p> <p>Connecting people who love to play music with those who love to listen! Doors open at 7:00 pm and the show starts at 7:30 pm. Live music and delicious refreshments, \$5 suggested donation, held in the Sanctuary.</p> |
| <p>Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. In the Sanctuary</p> | <p>Centering at UUMAN</p> <p>Silent meditation Saturday mornings at UUMAN. Please come at 9:00 for some basic instruction if it is your first time. The meditation itself begins promptly at 9:30. Please be in your seats on time. Those who wish to may stay after for 30 to 45 minutes of discussion about our experiences. For more information, contact Carolyn Bommarito at campoften@aol.com</p> |
| <p>2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 in Discovery Hall</p> | <p>Circle of Women</p> <p>We aim to develop a warm nurturing circle of trust where we can share ourselves and our lives. Contact Kate Hudson hudsonkd@bellsouth.net or Linda Etheridge l etheridge1@gmail.com</p> |
| <p>Saturdays , 1-2:30 in the Sanctuary, or Discovery Hall if the Sanctuary is not available. Childcare is available .</p> | <p>Mindfulness Meditation</p> <p>Whether you have been meditating for years or are curious about possibly starting a practice, we offer a peaceful space to sit as well as a time to share and learn in a community of fellow meditators. Contact J. Kevin King at (470) 723-4070 jkevinking@yahoo.com</p> |

For more information about other offerings at UUMAN, go to www.uuman.org.

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 proceeding the issue date. Please email your news articles and artwork to Becky at newsletter@uuman.org