

January 2022

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Back to Virtual – Take 2

One of my all-time favorite TV shows was the '70s sitcom "Soap." It was zany, raunchy and truly ahead of its time. (It also faced relentless protests from many religious denominations, some of them liberal.)

In the final season, I specifically remember a kitchen table scene between a mother, Mary (played by Cathryn Damon), and her openly gay son Jodie (played by Billy Crystal). It should be noted that at this particular time in the series, Jodie had been hypnotized into thinking he was actually a 90-year-old Jewish guy.

Anyway, Mary and Jodie are sitting at the kitchen table and she is facing some deep existential crisis. Like Job, she wants to know why she must face this crisis yet again. Jodie, a twentysomething with a 90-year-old mannerisms, slowly and deliberately replies, "God tests."

God tests.

In the last month, after hearing many of you express deep feelings of gratitude and relief that we have finally reopened after twenty-one months, we must now close all indoor activities and in-person worship services once again. We must go back to virtual – once again.

It feels as if God is testing us. We can ask interesting questions like "why would God test us?" or "how can a benevolent God do such a

thing?" or "how can I believe in a God who would test us so?" etc.

These are interesting philosophical and theological questions but ultimately, they are distractions. They distract us from the reality of the situation.

God tests...unless, that is, She doesn't. Maybe there is no test. Maybe what we are now facing is merely what we are now facing – the reality of a situation; nothing more, nothing less. And maybe what we do now is, as best we can, clearly see and assess that situation for what it is and respond with wisdom.

Actually...I think we're doing just that!!!

It's wonderful to be associated with such a congregation that can follow this approach when faced with the reality of this situation.

Our Covid Task Force and our Board are doing a wonderful job!

Back to virtual it is! 😊

See you on Zoom!

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

Dave

Adult Religious Education Classes

Adult Religious Education is pleased to offer the following classes in January.

Short-term studies, Sundays 11:15-12:00:

Civil Rights Protest Music continues on Jan 9 and 16. Facilitated by Dirk Bender.

Book study: "Defund Fear" by Zack Norris, which is the UUA Common Read for 2021-2022. January 23, 30; February 6. Facilitated by Bob Popp.

Ongoing classes:

The **All Souls United class** meets Sundays 4 PM. We open the group to new members whenever we start a new book. On January 9 we plan to start "You Are Special: Neighborly Words of Wisdom from Mister Rogers." Facilitated by Rollin Mathis with assistance from class members.

Spiritual Wisdom Studies meets on the second and fourth Fridays from 7 pm until about 8:15-8:30. We also open up to newcomers whenever we start a new book or topic. On January 14th we will be starting "Finding the Mother Tree, Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest" by Suzanne Simard. Facilitated by Janet Lacey.

For more information contact Rollin Mathis at adultenrichment@uuman.org

Winter UU101 Class

The next UU 101 will be held January 30, 11:15 am-12:30 pm and February 6, 11:15-12:30 pm. This 2-session class is for visitors, active non-members or even long time members - anyone who wants to learn more about our faith or who is considering becoming a member. You will learn about Unitarian Universalism, our welcoming culture and long history of social justice. You will learn all about UUMAN and our great programs. You will even get a virtual tour of our campus. We hold this class three times a year, so if you can't make it this time, we will look forward to having you attend later in the year. If you have questions about the class or about becoming a member, feel free to email the Membership Committee at membership@uuman.org.

Here are the dates for the Winter UU101 class sessions and the link to sign up:

Session 1: Sunday, January 30, 11:15am-12:30pm

Session 2: Sunday, February 6, 11:15am-12:30pm

[Sign Up for UU101](#)

~ Laura Keck

New Year. New You. New Wardrobe?

Do you like to start out your new year with a clean slate; out with the old, in with the new? Does that include your clothing? Have you been spending your holiday break cleaning out your closets and getting organized? If so, what are you going with the items that you no longer want? Of course, you are environmentally and socially conscious so you're not simply going to throw those items away. Donating them so that they end up in the hands of someone who needs them seems like the right thing to do, right?

You are right. Donating your clothing items helps to keep them out of landfills where some 12 million tons of clothing ends up each year (only about 5% of donations end up landfills). But have you ever wondered what happens to your unsold donated items?

In January of 2021 UUMAN Earth Ministries member Terry Alexander brought this very topic to our attention. While many of us were at least vaguely familiar with the problem, we did not have a good understanding of the enormity of the issue. As we each began to research, learn more, and share our findings we became more and more alarmed. We learned that only about half of what is collected is deemed saleable and, of that, only about 50% of those items actually sell. After about 4 weeks on the sales floor, the leftovers are sold to "re-purposers" who then sell the items to East Africa.

While the East African countries do derive some benefit from our unwanted clothing and shoes (they are able to run small businesses reselling these items and clothe their own families), we are sending them far more than they can use. Additionally, because they have so much of our old clothing, their local fashion industry is depressed. In response, in 2015, East African countries tried to ban the practice of receiving our unwanted clothing, but our then President imposed pressure via import duties which caused the bans to fail.

Several of the Earth Ministry members (and a few non-Earth Ministry peeps) became very engaged in this issue and formed a new sub-ministry called Keepers of the Earth. Keepers of the Earth is a task force within the Earth Ministry that works to lessen the impact of textiles and clothing on the environment and to seek justice for textile workers in underdeveloped countries and for those living in third world countries whose lives suffer from the pollution of their lands from our castoffs.

Keepers of the Earth hosted a few events last year and we are optimistic about many more in 2022. We've shared videos and information, we made dog toys out of old t-shirts and beeswax wraps from unwanted reams of cloth. We attempted to host a clothing swap, but.....COVID. We have grand hopes of involving the youth in an upcycled fashion show – any volunteers to lead this charge?

If you're interested in learning more or participating in our group, please drop us a note at earthministry@uuman.org or attend one of our meetings. We typically meet at 7pm on the first Monday of each month. In January we will be meeting on the second Monday.

~ Jennifer Phillippi

Welcome to January and a New Year at UUMAN!



We have so much to be proud of in what we've done over the previous year and what we plan to do in this New Year of 2022.

Last year, despite continuing uncertainty in the world, we were the epitome of a thriving and successful congregation. We were active in social Justice causes, we showed up at city hall to speak up for our Principles, we hosted numerous great book groups, our RE program is thriving for both children, youth, and adults, we put a new roof over our heads, our Earth Ministry and small group ministries are bustling, we donate to causes that reflect our Principles each month, and our Minister is out in the world making a difference in our community. Our Worship and Communication teams have been working harder than ever before with our congregation gathering mainly online and all the complexities involved in making that work, including making beautiful music to accompany the service. And we were able to safely meet in person for a short time and it felt so good to reconnect and renew old friendships face to face. I know we will carry that feeling onto the New Year and hold it close to our hearts.

I am so proud of our Church and all we've done and continue to do. We on the Board are making hard decisions on how we can best serve the congregation and also keep our members safe. The safety measures suggested by our dedicated Covid team have been a success, keeping our most vulnerable congregants safe and ensuring we are responsible members of our community.

This new year will no doubt bring new challenges, and I'm confident that our Congregation is up to anything that might come. We prove it every day in our dedication to our Principles and our Beloved Community. I can't wait to see what's next for UUMAN!

With Love,
 Elizabeth Norris
 UUMAN Board Secretary
 Pronouns: she, her, hers



Life Celebrations

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

Date	Celebration
1/4	Jamie Hagood is celebrating a birthday
1/15	Randy Jue is celebrating a birthday
1/21	Nelson Hagood is celebrating a birthday
	Dharma H. is celebrating a birthday
1/23	Tammy Dunn is celebrating a birthday
1/24	Donna Melcher is celebrating a birthday
1/29	Dave Dunn is celebrating a birthday



UUMAN Sharing the Plate—50/50

For every month, a non-profit organization is chosen to share our designated 50-50 offering. UUMAN receives half of the money for the work that we do and the charity receives the other half.

Last year our recipients were Project South, Fulton County Remembrance Coalition Roswell Chapter, Family Promise of North Fulton/Dekalb(3 times), Kids to the Country, Nourish Ecovillage, Groveway Community Group, NE India Partner Church-Mawsynjri, Lost-n-Found Youth, North Fulton Community Charities, and Foster Care Support Foundation.

I am stepping down from the position of Share the Plate Coordinator and have am pleased to announce that Merri Beth Stephens will assume the responsibility. I have learned a lot about myself through the serving UUMAN in this capacity and am grateful for having had the opportunity.

In memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, this month's recipient is Fulton County Remembrance Coalition(FCRC). The Fulton County Remembrance Coalition has partnered with the Equal Justice Initiative to engage our community in a process of healing and reconciliation with our history of racial terrorism. The money will be donated through FCRC's fiscal sponsor, Compassionate Atlanta, a 501 (c) (3) organization.

You can donate through the Givelify app (select 50-50) or by mailing a check to UUMAN. If you mail a check, make it payable to UUMAN and write 50-50 on the memo line.

In gratitude,

Michelle Liebergesell



Solstice Celebration 2021

On the dark night of winter solstice 2021, we gathered at UUMAN remembering, as did our ancestors, that we are nurturing the seeds of spring. There together we celebrated and gave thanks for the light and warmth of the returning sun. The trials of our dark days have shaped us and strengthen our resolve to live fully. We celebrate and nurture our connection with all our relatives of every species. The returning sun strengthens the fire of life within each of us and prepares us for the small but important part we play.



Together, with the help of the great mystery, we till the soil for new beginnings.

~ Gus Hadorn

Sunday Worship Service and many other activities will continue to be made available online for the health and safety of all our members and guests. Please check [our calendar](#) for more detailed information about availability.

January 2022: A Month of Sundays

Date	Topic	Service Leaders
Jan 2	<p>But I Didn't Get What I Wanted!</p> <p>The holidays can be full of hope and good cheer. They can also be full of stress and disappointment. Not getting what they wanted for Christmas might be a child's first introduction to such disappointment. Throughout life, how do we deal with not getting what we want?</p>	Rev. Dave Dunn
Jan 9	<p>Orthodox Christmas</p> <p>Orthodox Christmas is celebrated on January 7. Just what is Orthodox Christianity? How did it come to be? And how is it different from other forms of Christianity?</p>	Rev. Dave Dunn
Jan 16	MLK Service	Lay Led
Jan 23	Atheist Spirituality	Rev. Kim Palmer
Jan 30	<p>Is This Yours?</p> <p>We've all likely experience people who "push our buttons." Just what are our buttons anyway? Why do we have them? What do they tell us about ourselves?</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