

June 2023

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What a Year!!!

I write this article as we come to the end of a momentous church year...and I can't believe that I have now completed seven full years as your minister!

It seems as if during each church year the gods throw some type of thunderbolt at us in an attempt to test our mettle...and this year the gods did not disappoint!!!

We made it through the holiday season without incident yet during the thaw in the first week of January, the pipes of our fire suppression system burst and flooded our beloved Sanctuary and Foyer. The floors were ruined and significant drywall and insulation was damaged as well. "Try that on for size UUMAN!!!"

Of course, as we seem to do every year, we responded quickly and with renewed energy. Our services shifted to Fellowship Hall. Our livestream and sound crews adapted that space so that every service could still be livestreamed. We didn't miss a beat.

Our Operations Team (& others) responded with the hiring of contractors to do the remediation work. Our Treasurer, Jennifer Phillippi, kept after the insurance company to see that our claim was processed quickly.

Long story short, we are back up and running in the Sanctuary with new flooring in the Sanctuary and Foyer, a new fire suppression system, insulation and drywall. We even installed a new door with outdoor access to what was the choir room.

...and we did all this with NO OUT-OF-POCKET cost to UUMAN. What a team!!!

And, by the way, while we were addressing these obstacles, we managed to achieve some significant accomplishments this year.

By far our most significant accomplishment was in the hiring of Lexi Tagney Brown as our new DRE. Her enthusiasm and her love for this congregation is infectious.

People, families, parents and children feel this... and this is something that can't be taught. In her care, the sky is the limit with our Religious Exploration program. (And we can't wait to welcome little baby Koda!)

Also, this church year was our first year of in-person 2nd Hour programming. There were a few bumps in the road, and that is to be expected, yet the participation has been more than healthy throughout the year; and people are understanding the POTENTIAL for new initiatives, programs, etc., that can be launched during 2nd Hour. And perhaps, most importantly, 2nd Hour gives new visitors more time to experience us outside of worship. It gives them more face time with us; more time to begin to get to know and build personal relationships with us.

And then there was Covid. We've answered its challenge for three years now and we have always and will continue to respond to it in measured, healthy ways.

And I almost forgot...by the time of the printing of this newsletter, we will have launched a brand-new website!!! Special thanks to our Special Projects trustee, Carla Rizatti, for such skillful project management in this effort. Truly an amazing job! Jennifer Ratcliffe, Greg Waggoner and Dave Prager were also instrumental in the visioning of the new website and deserve much credit!!!

I'm so very proud of this congregation!!!

The gods may yet hurl another thunderbolt at us next year but after years of overcoming their obstacles, we're immunized and FEARLESS now!

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

~ Dave

Highlights of the Revival Weekend



UUMAN represented well at the Spring Revival over Beltane weekend! We enjoyed a lot of outside time and fellowship and fun for all. The Talent Show (with Todd Callen as our fantastic emcee) was a TERRIFIC success and loaded with hilarious comics including a reprisal of the peanut butter sagas with Canedy and Kelly. Eli was a hit with his

circus spinning act and Johnna did not disappoint with a musical duet.

Our Sacred Fire and Social Fire were well appreciated and thank you to all who took a turn tending the fires (especially our main fire tender Bruce Langston). We were so happy to have our young adults with us in force around the fire.

Firewood donors, we love you! Thank you also to Miguel and John Pruitt (Stars are born!) for their exciting violin/guitar rendition of Jethro Tull's Cup of Wonder with servings of wine or juice all around courtesy of Janet Kaplan. Did someone say s'mores? (Thanks, Miguel).



Our young ones (led by Josie Burkhardt) showed us how it is done with Randy Blaush leading them in our Play Space dedication (see separate article). Corn hole with Lynn Hannon was raising the roof outside as we danced to our hearts' content in the Sanctuary as Embodied Womyn. I heard there was an awesome Wiffle Ball game with Bob Popp at the helm too.



Ann Bender was everywhere outside with the children painting rocks and identifying plants around the campus. Shelly had the table games ready to roll on the portico and there were even bridge lessons in the narthex. Somewhere in the mix, John Pruitt planted in the garden and Rollin showed the ropes

(literally) to Rosie Popp on how to hammock camp. Much appreciation to Betty Brown for being at-the-ready with a discussion on Saging (Aging Well) at UUMAN. The campus was literally buzzing with activities!



In our finale, our Jennifer Philippi was boss with her awesome fire spinning talent on the Labyrinth. I'm pretty sure there was some awe and wonder going around and a UUMAN first for sure! Thank you to everyone who brought veggie food for the potluck and goodies for coffee hour.

I'm sure I'm forgetting things that went on (please forgive me) and probably things that were never

even planned happened around the campus (like impromptu sing-along by Laurie and Marc) and that is the best fun ever. When you put it all down on paper, it adds up to a great event thanks to all the UUMANites who made it happen. I am so curious what next Beltane will bring, are you?

~ Donna Melcher

Embodied Womyn

Would you like to be more fully present in your body? Together we will explore this practice of breath and movement. All abilities are welcome. Donna Melcher will lead us in gentle pranayama (breathing exercises), then some seated warm up exercises. Then we will go further in body awareness and simple dance movements. Barefoot or soft shoes are welcome. Wear comfortable clothing. Bring a water bottle. Class is for those identifying as women.

The dates are: June 24, July 22, August 19, Sept 16, Oct 14, Dec 9, located in the Fellowship Hall, from 10:30 AM to 12:00 noon.

Donna J. Melcher



UUMAN's New Website

SUNDAY SERVICE IN-PERSON (AND ONLINE) AT 10:00AM

UUMAN

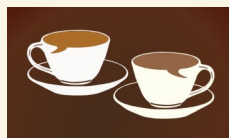
HOME FM NEW WORSHIP CONNECT RESOURCES EVENTS GIVE

DIFFERENT BELIEFS, SHARED VALUES

- LOVE
- CONNECTION
- WONDER & AWE
- COURAGE
- JUSTICE

Online Service

Contact Us



Common Grounds Coffee House

Common Grounds Coffee House will be restarting on the third Saturday of the month beginning June 17 after a three-year hiatus. The Coffee House is held in the Sanctuary and we invite the larger local community to join us in enjoying performances from talented local musicians. Doors open at 7pm with the show starting at 7:30pm. Suggested donation is \$5 at the door, cash only. You may want to have cash to tip the performers and to buy some treats from the kitchen.

If you would like to volunteer to be a greeter at the door or to help out in the kitchen serving refreshments please contact Janet Lacey at coffeehouse@uuman.org.

We are going to start out with a simplified set up, we are not going to set up tables, we will leave the sanctuary set up as it is for Sunday service with a stage set up on the risers.

Our performers for June 17 will be George Hergen and Bob Bakert.

Hope to see you there.

Janet Lacey, Coffeehouse chair



George Hergen



Bob Bakert

I joined the UUMAN Board 2 years ago as Special Projects Trustee. Together with Jennifer Ratcliffe, President of the Board at the time, we decided to focus on growing and retaining membership as the main goal for my tenure on the board.

With that in mind, we determined we needed a new management software that allowed more flexibility, friendly interface, attendance taking, and directory capabilities that everyone could easily use, among other things.

In February of 2022 we launched Breeze. After launching Breeze we started working on the new website which will be launched by the time this newsletter is released! The launch of the new website was made possible by the generous donation of a UUMAN member family who wishes to remain anonymous.

This new website reflects how UUMAN has evolved with times. It is developed with information for present members, but its main goal is to attract young families and young adults, without whom UUMAN cannot grow and remain meaningful.

It is crucial for the relevance of the new website that committees and other represented groups do not allow the content to become stale. The Communications Committee today updates the site with content that they receive from the congregation. But content providing is everyone's responsibility.

As I get ready to leave the board and take back other responsibilities within the congregation, I would like to thank everyone who has supported me and encouraged me in the Special Projects Trustee role.

The UUMAN board members I interacted with are an amazing caring and supportive group of people who extend grace and knowledge at every encounter. I very much enjoyed this experience and working with them.

Being a volunteer with demanding responsibilities is time consuming, but the results of the work which benefits an entire community is extremely rewarding.

Thank you for your trust and grace.

In service, Carla Rizzati

ELDERS CORNER

From time to time, we will be highlighting words from a UUMAN elder. This month's words are from Dan-Ben David.



You may be looking at me and wondering what's wrong with that guy (shaking, trembling, weak raspy-sounding voice). 15 years ago I was formally diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. In comparison with many similarly diagnosed, I am doing quite well.

There is a reason for this. I was fortunate to have a mother with great wisdom. Fleeing the Nazis in 1939, barely 13 years old, she left Vienna on a ship, an illegal transport, bound for Palestine. She endured great suffering in a voyage that took a year and a half to finally reach Palestine. She was a remarkable soul. The cup was always half-full, or a quarter-full, or not full at all... but never empty. At least, that is the attitude she conveyed to me as I was brought into this world 15 years later. I think her already positive attitude was further galvanized from her experiences being part of a kibbutz (a communal group, usually Jewish refugees in Palestine or then, Israel, with a no-nonsense attitude toward survival and prosperity, as possible).

Her wisdom was displayed in her own attitudes and achievements... academically and professionally. It was a difficult task for me to live up to her expectations. I feel as though I did, mostly.

When I learned of my diagnosis of Parkinson's I didn't react at first. It was livable. I held a positive attitude. Many people consider it a death sentence. I chose to wait and see. I continued with work, my swim team, and my life. As time progressed, so did my symptoms. It was 10 years ago that I was forced to go out on disability and retire. At that time the medical advice I got was not to exercise vigorously. It was only after 2017 that a neurologist who was a movement disorder specialist told me that exercise was good. I enrolled in a rigorous exercise boxing class designed for people with Parkinson's.

The cup is half full. The love of my life sits beside me holding my trembling hand (partly due to cortisol secretion anticipat-

ing I am going to get up and extemporaneously speak in front of my beloved congregation).

I am going to say "I am a lucky man!" I stand before you as an inspiration to dealing with adversity. Fortunately, 6 years ago I had deep brain stimulation surgery. The doctors implanted electrodes deep into my globus pallidus internus hard-wired into a computerized pulse generator in my chest.

I am lucky this worked! I took it and ran. Actually, I rode... a bicycle. With a little help from my friends, I rode earnestly. I rode so much that I actually slowed the progression of the disease. At times, I wouldn't be surprised if I even reversed it. In the past 2 years, research has been published that shows that very vigorous exercise actually causes removal of the mis-folded protein alpha-synuclein in the brain. This prevents neuronal death... very critical for the survival of dopaminergic neurons whose demise is the cause of Parkinson's disease.

It's been 6 years since I started riding a bicycle seriously. To date I have logged 10,880 miles, climbed the equivalent of 15 Mount Everests, ridden across the state of Georgia, and set numerous age group records on local segments (in the 65-69 age group).

This is clearly against the odds. It's what happens when you have a role model who succeeded against the odds, like my mom... and my dad. I draw on their best sides and run with it (or ride as the case may be). I have also to thank one of several mentors... our own Dr. Dwana Bush. She taught me what I already knew but did so in a structured manner. Try once... place a stick in the mud, try again. Measure. Try again... and so forth. She called it assessment and intervention and based it in a framework of functional well-being and health.

Lessons learned...

Pay attention to the good sides of your role models, especially how they deal with adversity

Embrace self-perpetuating inspiration

Always have a loving attitude

Never give up

Be methodical about measuring accomplishment so you get feedback about your status

The Presidential Reflection

Well, here we are, friends, it's June. I love June—it's my birthday! It's Father's Day! It's officially summer! And this year, it means it's my last month of being President of the Board here at UUMAN! I have learned so much more about our great community this year—and I want to take a moment to reflect on what serving on the Board has meant for me. My intention was to continue to support the great work of our congregation, to work collaboratively to identify areas for improvement, to listen to congregants when they have suggestions for us, and to help us take another step into living our values.

I couldn't be more grateful to our Past Prez Jennifer Ratcliffe, for whom I have incredible respect. She is a treasure trove of UU, UUA, and UUMAN knowledge that helps provide grounding context for so many of our conversations. And I can't wait to call Mike Chambers my boss ☐ – he is thoughtful, open-minded, to the point, and so passionate about UUMAN. I continue to be amazed by our tremendous Treasurer, Jennifer Phillippi, who has worked countless hours (when? I don't know) to understand our budgets, our finance systems, and has worked to simplify the reporting so that people like me can understand not just the numbers, but why the numbers are what they are. We've had the gift of two Secretaries this year—Elizabeth Norris continued in her role until a number of personal issues led her to step away from the position, and Robin Day graciously agreed to step in as our interim. I've marveled at her grace during this transition! And I can't say enough about Carla Rizzati—she has worked tirelessly to move us to a member platform, Breeze, that has much nimbler functionality than our previous database. And her focus this year was to form a great team to work with a vendor to update our website—have you seen it? The site is live as of May 31st—check it out: <https://uuman.org/>. Great job, Carla and team!

I have several items that I'm particularly proud of from my tenure this year. The first is that the Board created a Board covenant that we worked to hold ourselves to this year. While the congregation worked hard to develop a UUMAN-wide covenant several years ago, we felt it was important to create a covenant specific to this Board so we could help bring each other back to in times of difficult discussions. Here it is:

With love, we promise:

To communicate in a transparent and caring way with each other.

To listen intentionally and respectfully, with an open mind.

To conduct our work with integrity, responsibility, and faithfulness.

To respond to disagreement with humility, honesty, and empathy.

We set our Board goals early on in the church year, and we worked hard in each of these areas. As was shared during the May Congregational Meeting, here's a snapshot of what we addressed:

Increase and retain membership

Developed a marketing and branding campaign

Updated the website

Developed community connections

Leadership Development

Created a Safety Committee and plan

Created and/or updated critical policies

Identified and trained leaders

Financial Health

Sought to diversify our sources of revenue

Increased transparency of the budget

Identified additional fundraising opportunities

One of the tasks of the Board Vice President is to work on personnel-related issues—contracts and the like. As we were preparing the budget for the 2022-23 church year, I requested that we try to include benefits for our staff. I know that Mike has worked tirelessly with our Personnel committee—Margriet van de Steeg and Merry Beth Stephens—as well as staff at the UUA office to ensure we followed the rules, offered benefits, and filed all the appropriate paperwork at the right times. It is a lot of work, and I couldn't be prouder that we can live into our values with the very people that have chosen to serve UUMAN in a staff capacity.

Around mid-December, I began thinking to myself: will I be the first president in UUMAN's history to not have to deal with some major crisis? Well, then December 27th happened—our fire sprinkler system malfunctioned, flooded our sanctuary and part of the choir room, and we all know what happened over the next few months. Susan Wilson and Kelly Callen led the recovery efforts, with a lot of people supporting them in various ways. Our congregation is incredibly adaptable and resilient, and while I enjoyed experiencing Fellowship Hall as our place of worship, I was incredibly thankful to return to service back in our Sanctuary in April.

For the past couple of months, I have been working through a number of family issues that have required I take a step back from both my job and my role as Board President. I have immense gratitude for my fellow Board members who have stepped up, taken action as needed, nudged me gently when I need to weigh in, and supported me with grace, meals, tears, and laughter.

Did I see successes? Absolutely. Did I fall short of my presidential goals? Splendidly. But I have never felt more connected to or passionate about UUMAN in the nearly 12 years since my family became members here. I look forward to serving you as Past Prez in the coming church year and want to thank you all for what you do for and bring to this community, which we lovingly call UUMAN.

With a full heart-

Miriam Patanian

Religious Exploration News

By Lexie Tangney, Director of Religious Education

What came with May...



The Rites of Passage was a beautiful service for all ages. We are children and youth in many different stages of their spiritual journey. We kicked off with the children and sibling ceremony with Etienne and William Greyenbuhl.

And lastly, a group of Young Adults welcomed Bridging youth, Troy Van Der Beek, into adulthood.

MCY closed out RE with an EPIC end of the year party. There was food, chalk art, games, and a bouncy house! There was also an RE appreci-

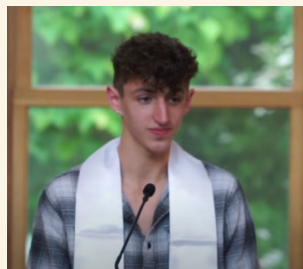
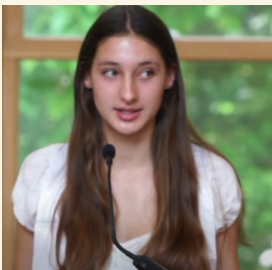
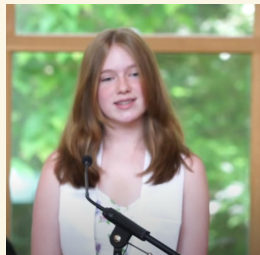


ation to say thank you to our volunteers, also on that table was a sign up to be part of the team next year. We are in need of SIX instructors to fill up every grade from pre-K all the way to High school. Follow this link to learn more <https://uuman.breezechms.com/form/d62b20>



Then we congratulated the OWL students on the hard work and dedication it took to complete their course. 4th and 5th grade OWL instructor, Miriam Patanian, presented gifts to Calle Alexander and Josie Burkhardt. 7-9th grade OWL instructor, Stephen Shanahan, presented gifts to Presely Callen, Jacob Patanian, Gillian Poteralski, and Rowan Friedman.

We enjoyed the credos from the Coming of Age youth, Emmerson Poteralski, Sasha Geyenbuhl, and Jacob Patanian.



Religious Exploration News

By Lexie Tangney, Director of Religious Education

June to be...

As we welcome the warmer weather, we also welcome Children and Youth Summer Programming! This offering will be hosted by volunteers during 1st hour (from 10-11AM) starting on June 4th to August 8th.

Your DRE will be going on vacation in Mid June, that will turn into maternity leave. She will be returning in Mid September. She will miss you all! But is excited to return with a new mini Uumanite.

Date	Activity
6-4-23	Friendship bracelets
6-11-23	Hindu Gods
6-18-23	Juneteenth crafts
6-25-23	Car Wash
7-2-23	NO Programming
7-9-23	Board Games
7-16-23	TBD- Something with Earth Ministry
7-23-23	backpacks for NFCC
7-30-23	Service project - Turning old t-shirts into
8-6-23	TBD- Something cool

UUMAN Playscape Dedication



"It's the things we play with and the people who help us play that make a great difference in our lives." (Mr. Rogers)

This the way Randy Blausch opened the Dedication of the Playscape Area on May 29 during the Spring Revival.

With more than 20 people in attendance and with our Youth leading the Blessing of the Directions, we consecrated the ground upon which the Playscape will be built by using the sacred water from many years of our UUMAN water communion. The Playscape will be inside the white fence in front of Discovery Hall and the intention is that this place be filled with the laughter of young ones. What a truly sacred sound!

Little Kids, Big Ideas is spearheading the effort with youth involvement as a priority. The project has attracted a great team with Lexie Brown as Project Manager and Kelly Callen as interim project manager while Lexie is on



leave for Koda's coming. Josie and John Burkhardt are acting as our Youth Advocates with Canedy Knowles as our Premo consultant. Donna Melcher has joined on as the Project Success Advocate and other volunteers include Dwana Bush, Dillon Callen, Ellen Mullholland, Kyson Phillippi and Susan Wilson. We still have some roles to fill so just contact Lexie or Kelly to find out about them.

We have established our success criteria and will be creating a Project Scope Definition to keep us on track. Meanwhile, we are inviting EVERYONE and especially the Youth to our field trips to see other Play areas and see what we like about them.

As you may know, for many reasons, UUMAN has been without a play area for a long time and we are ready to help change that but we need you! If the project team reaches out to you, please help us help our children play and make a great difference in their lives. Many thanks in advance.

~ Donna Melcher

UUMAN's Board of Trustees uses [Covid Act Now](#) to monitor current Covid risk levels. We are thrilled to see that the counties in which the majority of us live are in the Low Risk category. Masks are optional for indoor activities, and indoor congregational singing can occur at this time. We are happy to say that UUMAN's community is highly vaccinated and boosted—thank you for doing your part to keep our risk as low as possible!



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@uuman.org.

Date	Celebration
6/6	Miriam P. is celebrating a birthday.
6/10	Jane S. is celebrating a birthday.
6/10	Burk and Merilee H. are celebrating their anniversary of 34 years.
6/11	Jane and Marc S. are celebrating their anniversary of 46 years.
6/11	Laurie and Mark W. are celebrating their anniversary of 35 years.
6/18	Jim S. is celebrating a birthday.
6/22	Étienne G. is celebrating a birthday.
6/23	Judy J. is celebrating their anniversary of 39 years.
6/24	Burk H. is celebrating a birthday.
6/24	Carolyn and Marc L. are celebrating their anniversary of 33 years.
6/25	Luka H. is celebrating a birthday.
6/27	Rosie and Robert P. are celebrating their anniversary of 40 years.

June 2023: A Month of Sundays

Date	Topic	Service Leaders
6/4	<p>Connecting to Our Community</p> <p>When we examine the ways we are connected to others, we will most often find that it is where we work, where we serve, and where we share that we feel connected. This service will be about building that connection more deeply. P.S. It will not be a pitch for volunteers.</p>	Shelley Nagrani
6/11	<p>Soundtracking a Life</p> <p>Our memories are integrated with sensations of the experience: sights, smells, tastes, touch... and sounds. How the music I am listening to creates a distinct time capsule for what is going on in my life at the moment.</p>	David Kroeber
6/18	<p>The Gift of a Flawed Father</p> <p>No, Father doesn't always know best, but his influence on his daughter's life can shape her self esteem, self-image, confidence and her ability to engage with men, as friends, colleagues and/or partners. Fathers also teach us important life skills, like exactly how much ketchup goes on scrambled eggs, and how to make the perfect root beer float. Join us as we examine the perfect role of the perfectly flawed father.</p>	Merry Beth Stephens
6/25	<p>A New Song for "My People"</p> <p>What does it mean to identify as a Southern white person in today's world? Especially if your family history goes way back, racism is not just prevalent, it is part of the song we have sung for centuries. Explore the spiritual and emotional journey of making reparations for slavery in an old Southern family and what it takes for us all to 'sing a New song of the South'.</p>	Donna Melcher & John Pruitt

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