

December 2025

# Newsletter



***BIG THANKS** to all the friends that were a part of this years Friendsgiving. It took many hands to make it so perfect, from planning, decorating, setting up, cooking, attending, and cleaning up. We thank you all!!*



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***It's almost time for the Cookie Swap on Christmas Eve. Bring some cookies, eat some cookies, and take some home with you!! Come be a part of a sweet evening!!***

## **From your Minister, December 2025**

As we enter December, we do so without one of our stalwart elders. I join you and many folks in the CSRA grieving the death of Andy Reese; and yet, there is far more to celebrate about his life. (Which we'll do officially on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM.) Even as his lungs failed him, Andy remained optimistic until the end. The last time we spoke was the morning of election Tuesday. We shared significant hope about the possibilities of the day, hope which was affirmed by the eventual results.

Like many in this congregation, Andy was a humanist. An orientation which must have faith in the ultimate potential for human goodness. It's hard to maintain that faith sometimes when we seemingly, constantly witness terrible behavior by humans. Against each other. Against this planet. Some might say against God (whatever that means to you). And yet, without overlooking senseless tragedy along the way, we humans always seem to do just a little bit better over time. Inspired by Unitarian abolitionist minister Rev. Theodore Parker, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was convinced that the arc of the moral universe bends toward justice. I believe that to be true, too. But that's not a magical, supernatural process. MLK spent his life... he gave his life... to the cause. And we were better for it. Andy believed the same thing. In ways, he did the same. Over time things get better, but it is ultimately humans who must do the requisite work. Sure, we may have to revisit some stuff from time to time, but the totality of the arc bends toward justice.

It's very hard to observe this when life gets hard. It's very hard to observe this amid a clear downward spiral in the human story. When humanity is in a moment of regressive retrograde. Feelings of anger, fear, hopelessness are valid in this context. Yet, we're still here. We're alive. Like a tree breaking through a sidewalk, against the weight and might of concrete, life finds a way. It must find a way. The same must be said of us. But, not just to stay alive. We will die someday. And, when we have the immense privilege of being a small part of the human story, we have an obligation to make it meaning-full - purpose-full.

For us, we've chosen to make creating Beloved Community and Justice our shared purpose. A purpose in which Andy invested a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money. He didn't see the ultimate results of that investment. Yet he invested nonetheless. Like many of our ancestors... like us... he planted the seed not knowing if it would sprout into a tree. He very well may have planted the seed that one day will burst through the concrete slab of injustice and hate. Or at the very least, a blade of grass poking through a crack. If enough of us plant that grass seed, too, that sidewalk doesn't stand a chance.

Not knowing the end result of his efforts, Andy nonetheless chose hope. By choosing us, he chose hope. By choosing to love Alice, he chose hope. As we enter December and then the new year – may we do the same. In honor and respect to all our ancestors who got us through before – a list which now includes Andy Reese – may we choose hope.

In good faith and good trouble,

*Rev. Nic*

## Faith Formation News: December - A Season of Hope

As we step into December, the Faith Formation department is embracing the theme of **Hope!** We have many exciting projects and opportunities for growth, connection, and fellowship this holiday season.

### Annual Holiday Pageant: Lights, Camera, Hope!

Get ready for our annual holiday pageant, which will once again take the form of a **short film!** This is a fantastic chance for our creative **tweens and teens (ages 11-17)** to participate both **in front of and behind the camera.**

- **First Movie Meeting:** Details regarding the first production meeting will be announced soon via email through our **Realm group** for parents and registered youth. Keep an eye on your inbox!

### Youth Con: Join Our Jr. High on the Mountain!

Our Senior High Youth (ages 14-18) had a wonderful time on their recent trip, and now it's the **Jr. High Students' (6th-8th Grade)** turn to join us for a retreat at **The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center** in Highlands, NC.

- **Dates:** December 12th – 14th
- **Registration Deadline:** You **must be registered by December 2nd.**
- **Scholarships:** Financial assistance is available!
- **Questions:** Please reach out to Ms. D with any inquiries.

### OWL Program Pause

Our Our Whole Lives (OWL) program has been going wonderfully! We will take a scheduled pause for the holidays after **December 7th** and will resume sessions on **January 10th.**

### Youth Group Updates & Social Events

The youth had a blast at Skateland for November's social outing! Please vote during our December Youth Group (YG) meeting to decide where we should go in January, as we **will not** have a separate social get-together in December.

## RAD (Readers for Activism and Diversity) Presents: Banned Book Viewing Party

The **RAD** high school group is hosting a thought-provoking event, inviting all **high schoolers** in the church and the CSRA community:

- **What:** A Banned Book Viewing Party featuring the book and film, ***The Fault in Our Stars***.
- **When:** December 20th, 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- **Schedule:** The first 30 minutes will be dedicated to a book discussion, followed immediately by a movie viewing.
- **Come Prepared:** The initial discussion will focus on the themes and context of this powerful story.
- **Cost:** \$5.00 per person (can be paid online or at the door).
- **Food:** Warm soups, hot cocoa, teas, and desserts will be served!

## Kids Night In (KNI) Update

Our popular Kids Night In program will be paused after our **December 12th event**.

- **Inquiries:** Please direct any questions or details regarding KNI to Trania Hamilton, our KNI Coordinator, at [trania@uuugusta.org](mailto:trania@uuugusta.org).

## Thank You & Volunteer Opportunities

We extend a heartfelt thank you to our wonderful new volunteers! We could always use more helping hands for our many youth and children events.

- **Volunteer Inquiries:** If you are interested in sharing your time and talents, please reach out to Desria at [desria@uuugusta.org](mailto:desria@uuugusta.org).

## Crossing Paths: Interfaith Exploration

We are deeply grateful to the **Lighthouse Christian Fellowship Baptist Church** for hosting our **Crossing Paths** interfaith youth group this month. Our youth have had a valuable experience exploring Christian rituals, history, and traditions. Next month, our journey continues as we delve into **Catholicism**.

**Wishing you and yours a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from the Faith Formation Team!**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**December 6<sup>th</sup>** - 4:00pm - 8:00pm *Celebration of Life for Andy Reese*

**December 8<sup>th</sup>** - 9:00am - 4:00pm *Lifeline Screening Event (Look for flyers on the bulletin board for more details)*

**December 8<sup>th</sup>** - 5:30pm - 6:30pm *Community Sing, led by Bill Webster (everyone welcome)*

**December 8<sup>th</sup>** - 6:30pm - 7:30pm *Building & Grounds Team Meeting*

**December 10<sup>th</sup>** - 6:30pm *Blue Christmas Worship with Bread & Soup to follow*

**December 12<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup>** *Youth Intermediate Fall Conference*

**December 13<sup>th</sup>** - 12pm - 6pm *Warm Wishes Winter Market*

**December 16<sup>th</sup>** - 7pm - 8pm *Christmas Sing a long at the Charter Senior Living Augusta Gardens*

**December 18<sup>th</sup>** - 6:30pm - 8:00pm *Board Meeting*

**December 19<sup>th</sup>** - 5pm - 10pm *Out & Proud Holiday Party*

**December 20<sup>th</sup>** - 6pm - 9pm *RAD Watch Party-The Fault in Our Stars*

**December 21<sup>st</sup>** - 12:15-2:00 PM *Parents Group Potluck Lunch*

**December 24<sup>th</sup>** - 5:30 PM *Christmas Eve Service*

**December 24<sup>th</sup>** - *After Christmas Eve Service Cookie Swap*

**December 25<sup>th</sup>** - *Merry Christmas!!!*

**December 28<sup>th</sup>** - *Youth Pageant...A Season of Hope*

## Gifts of Honor



Looking for a way to celebrate a friend or loved one's birth, birthday, marriage, anniversary, graduation, or recent achievement?

Consider making a Gift of Honor in their name to the church!

This program is organized by the Finance Committee.



A check or cash-in-an-envelope should be clearly marked – Gift of Honor – and be sure to tell us who or what you are honoring.

All Gifts of Honor will support the General Fund.

Make an online donation on the church's website at [UUAugusta.org](http://UUAugusta.org) or use the QR Code.

## *A Message From Your Board of Trustees*

Greetings!

We are entering the season of thanksgiving, gift-giving, and family. The Board would like to offer our heartfelt gratitude to the great Andy Reese for the many seasons of giving to our congregation.

Andy not only gave his time and energy—he gave his heart to our church. He lived the values he espoused and served our community and its causes tirelessly. Andy was a true giant in our church, and he will be deeply missed. We extend our sincerest condolences to Alice and the rest of the family during this time.

Community Gatherings

There are many opportunities for us to come together as a community this holiday season.

The Board encourages you to explore the offerings happening at church:

Services and Events for All Ages – Whether in joy or sorrow, we welcome you to join us for gatherings that meet your needs.

Celebrating Community – Togetherness is the foundation of all we do, and we are grateful for each of you who make our church family strong.

Looking Ahead

Our Mid-Year Meeting will be held in January. Leading up to this, Board members will be attending caucuses within the church to ask questions and listen to your needs as a community. Your voice is vital in shaping the path forward.

May this holiday season bring warmth, peace, and joy to you and your loved ones.

Respectfully, The Board of Trustees

## December Worship Calendar - Choosing Hope



December 7<sup>th</sup> - Reverend Nic

Winter Sowing: Hope Isn't Just for Ourselves



December 14<sup>th</sup> - Cantor Daniel Geigerman  
(from Congregation Children of Israel)

The Hopeful Songs of Hannuka



December 21<sup>st</sup> - Dominique & Chris  
Grushinski

From Light to Dark and back again, the Hope  
of Winter Solstice

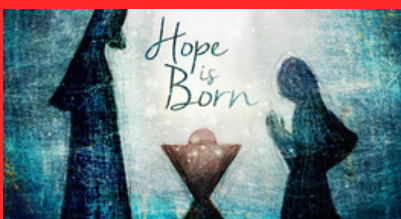


December 28<sup>th</sup> - UUCA Kids and Youth  
Youth Pageant...A Season of Hope

## SPECIAL SERVICES THIS MONTH



December 10<sup>th</sup> - Reverend Nic  
Blue Christmas



Christmas Eve - Reverend Nic  
Hope is Born

Your Stewardship Team is at it again, we're planning another fun event. Please join us in supporting local businesses and local creators this season. Our Warm Wishes Winter Market will be an exciting shopping experience with plenty to choose from. There will also be visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Hot Cocoa, Cider, & Coffee, a Bake Sale, Smore's Kits, and much more.



Click on the link for the vendor application  
<https://tinyurl.com/48y4w69n>



# Group and Committee Events

## Parents' Group

Next Meeting:

**December 21st at 12:15pm in classroom 1-2**

Childcare will be provided for ages 10 and under

Contact: Desria Seay [fjm@uuuugusta.org](mailto:fjm@uuuugusta.org)



## Recovery International



Mental Health Support Group (**online**)  
Virtual **Wednesday weekly** meeting at **6:30pm**  
Open to newcomers

Pre-register: [Here](#)

You will receive a confirmation email containing information  
about joining the meeting.

Contact: Maryka Bhattacharyya [630-605-6913](tel:630-605-6913)

## UU Meditation

**Monday at the church** gathering:

Contact: Chris Garcia [garceus@yahoo.com](mailto:garceus@yahoo.com)

**Wednesday online** gathering:

Contact: Catherine Prysiazny  
[catherine8758@att.net](mailto:catherine8758@att.net)

ZOOM link: [Click Here](#)



## UUCA Book Group

Next Discussions - **January 24th at 1pm**

**Fourth Saturdays at 1pm**  
**Room 1-2**

Contact: Jan Parsons - [janbparsons@gmail.com](mailto:janbparsons@gmail.com)

# Group and Committee Events

## Good Trouble Team

Next meetings: **December 28th**

The Good Trouble Team meets on the  
**4th Sunday at 12:05pm**

[ZOOM Link](#)

Passcode: 324295



## Board Meeting

Next meetings: Thursday, **December 18th**

Monthly Board Meeting will be held the in the  
**Common Room**

Contact: Co-presidents, Tim Hunter or Dominique  
Grushinski

[board.president@uuuugusta.org](mailto:board.president@uuuugusta.org)



Next Meetings: **December 14th**

Usually meeting the  
**second Sunday at 5pm in the Common Room**

[Zoom link](#)

Contact: Frank Carl [frankcarl2040@gmail.com](mailto:frankcarl2040@gmail.com)

## Cozy Craft Night

**Next Gathering:** TBA

**Location:** UU Church Common Area

**Connect, create, and craft!**

Due to the busyness of the holiday season, Cozy Craft Night will not be meeting in December. See you in the new year on January 21!



# Group and Committee Events

## UUCA Women's Luncheon Group

Next Gathering: **December 9th @ 11:30**

Location: Edgar's Grill

Christmas Lunch!!

Please send your reservation by the Sunday prior to Pat Lynch-Hayes: 706-733-8303, [plynchhayes@gmail.com](mailto:plynchhayes@gmail.com)

Usually meets the **second Tuesday at 11:30am** at area restaurants

Girlfriends always welcome.



## Pagan PotLUUCK

Next Gatherings: **December 11th**

casual circle for pagans and witches of all ages, genders, and practices. We can explore topics that relate to our shared beliefs, rituals, and needs. Or simply connect and enjoy good company with one another.

Gathers the **second Thursday at 6:30pm in the Common Room**

Contact: Janeya Filzen: [janeyajoy@gmail.com](mailto:janeyajoy@gmail.com)

## R.O.M.E.O. Lunch Group

Next Gathering: December 18

Location: Formosa's II Chinese Restaurant  
3830 Washington Road (West Town Market Square)

Menu: [formosas2.com](http://formosas2.com)

Retired Old Men Eating Out Lunch Group meets at **11:45am** at area restaurants

Confirm & RSVP by Tuesday's on Realm to Frank Dennison:  
Text **706-267-9298** or  
[frankdennison@outlook.com](mailto:frankdennison@outlook.com).



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# Group and Committee Events



## CSRA Adult ADHD Peer Support Group

Next Meetings: **December 9th**

A monthly gathering for adults with ADHD to discuss and learn about topics relevant to those with Adult ADHD (treatment, relationships, life hacks, resources) as well as connect with others who share similar life challenges.

Meets the **2ND Tuesday at 6pm in Room 1-2**

Contact: Dave Mackey [dave@davemackey.net](mailto:dave@davemackey.net)



## Building & Grounds Team

Next Meeting: December 8th  
@6:30pm in the Common Room

Are you interested in helping maintain our beautiful campus and building?  
Volunteer with us for clean-ups and planning.

Contact: Brandy for more info. [churchadmin@uuaugusta.org](mailto:churchadmin@uuaugusta.org)

## **\*\*SOMETHING FUN\*\***

***We're inviting everyone to pick a rock from the Labyrinth Garden, take it home, paint it, and then bring it back to the garden. The kids have already done a great job getting us all started. We would love to see some more color out there!***

# GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Joys and Sorrows** can be sent ahead to the **Pastoral Care Team**: [pastoralcare@uuuugusta.org](mailto:pastoralcare@uuuugusta.org)
- Our **UUCA Choir** welcomes new voices. We hope you'll join us at **9:30am Sunday** mornings and help us add to the worship experience.
- All ages **Faith Formation Classes** are held after Worship on the **first Sunday** of each month. The classes will be from **12:15-1:15pm** following a short fellowship time.
- The **Committee on Shared Ministry (CoSM)** is concerned with the spiritual health of the entire ministry of the congregation, as a reflection of mission fulfillment. For more information about COSM and all UUCA teams and committees, please visit: <https://www.uuugusta.org/committeesandteams>
- **Josef Patchen** is offering Piano Lessons: Any age, Any level, Any style. For information, write: [jcpatchen61@gmail.com](mailto:jcpatchen61@gmail.com) or text: 706-399-5852
- Contact the **Church Administrator** for group meeting and event scheduling and for addition to the **UUCA Public Calendar**. [churchadmin@uuuugusta.org](mailto:churchadmin@uuuugusta.org)
- The **first Sunday** of each month is **Youth Greeter Week**. This is an opportunity for our young members to play a special role in our congregation. Inquire with **Faith Formation Manager**: Desria Seay (Ms. D) - [ffm@uuuugusta.org](mailto:ffm@uuuugusta.org)
- The **Midday (AA) Group** meets **Monday - Saturday at Noon** in the **Common Room**.



May we create beloved community  
In good faith and good trouble

<u>UU Augusta Office Email</u> <u>Minister's Email</u>	706-733-7939
<u>UU Augusta Website</u>	3501 Walton Way Extension Augusta, GA 30909
Office Hours: Monday-Friday -9:30-2:30	Rev. Nic's Office Hours: Wednesday: 4pm-6pm