

March 2026

Newsletter

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May your troubles be less,
And your blessings be more,
And nothing but happiness,
Come through your door.

**It's time to make
your pledge for
2026-2027!!**

From Your Minister, March 2026

Our monthly theme for March is “Paying Attention.” I can’t think of a better theme to amplify our focus on spiritual practice. The world is particularly challenging right now. I can’t think of a better time to focus on spiritual practice. The irony is, sometimes it’s hard for me to look away from all the madness around us. I frequently find myself falling hard into rabbit holes; and hyper fixating on terrible things (like reports about the rich and powerful recently released). It isn’t healthy to stay in those places. Especially if doing so just puts us into an uncontrollable emotional tailspin.

So, it isn’t important to merely pay attention. We must be intentional about what we pay attention to. And, dearly departed unofficial UU poet laureate Mary Oliver is such a perfect guide to (re)point us toward the things most deserving of our attention. Beautiful things which, along with spiritual practice itself, might just get us through the nastiest storms we encounter. Thanks for our friends at Soul Matters for this suggestion.

In her poem [Gratitude](#), Mary Oliver asks herself and then answers eight questions of attention:

What did you notice?

What did you hear?

When did you admire?

What astonished you?

What would you like to see again?

What was most tender?

What was most wonderful?

What did you think was happening?

It’s a poem that focuses one’s attention on the details of an experience, fostering a feeling of the sacredness of even the most ordinary of experiences. So, for this month’s exercise, let’s follow Oliver’s lead and **create our own version of her poem!**

First, spend some time with the poem, noticing its pattern and what moves you most.

In addition to the link above, you can also listen to an arresting video of it [here](#).

Then use Oliver’s questions to write a similar gratitude poem of your own by giving your own answers to her eight questions. [Here’s an example to inspire you.](#)

But here’s the catch: You’ve got to decide how to gather the details for your poem. When reading Oliver’s poem, you get the feeling she wrote it at the end of a long day outdoors. But it could just as easily have been written at the end of a week, a year, or even a life. So you pick what calls to you. Maybe you take a 2-hour hike and then sit down and write it. Whatever you do, be intentional. Notice everything (or as much as possible).

To expand your engagement with your poem, think about sharing it with a close friend or your life partner, asking them what strikes them about your words.

Along the way, may you be reminded that our attention is a way, maybe the best way, that we say thanks for the many gifts laced through the ordinary moments of our lives.

In good faith and good trouble,

Rev. Nic Filzen

Paying Attention: The Courage of Bearing Witness

This month, our community is exploring the theme of **paying attention**. On the surface, it sounds simple. It can even seem like a passive act. But when we look closer, true attention is a rigorous spiritual practice. It is an act of **witnessing**, of holding space, and of daring to step beyond the familiar boundaries of our own lives.

Moving Beyond the Silo

It is easy and often quite comfortable to stay within our own silos. We surround ourselves with voices that echo our own and perspectives that mirror our experiences. Venturing out from what is known can bring up anxieties we aren't always ready or willing to confront. Yet, when we remain tucked away in the "familiar," we miss the vibrant and complex tapestry of the world around us.

The Power of Being Open

Paying attention requires a radical **openness**. It asks us to:

- **Hold Space:** Creating room for others to exist exactly as they are.
- **Advocate:** Moving from listening to action when we see injustice.
- **Be Open to Different Worldviews:** Recognizing that our perspective is just one thread in a much larger story.

Leaning Into the Uncomfortable

The most transformative kind of attention happens when we **bear witness even when it is uncomfortable**. This month, I invite you to lean into the stories that are not your own. Listen to the narratives that challenge your assumptions or make you feel a bit unsettled.

When we pay attention to those outside our usual circles, we realize there is no "other." There is only us, interconnected and bound together. By witnessing the struggles and joys of neighbors near and far, we find the strength to advocate for a world that honors everyone's humanity.

Important Dates for Your Calendar

Please mark these upcoming events and changes to our regular schedule:

- **OWL (Our Whole Lives):** This transformative course is coming to a close. Our end-of-course celebration and final workshop will be held on **April 26 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM**.
- **Crossing Paths:** We are taking a pause in March due to spring conferences at the Mountain Retreat and Learning Center. We will resume our sessions on **April 5**.
- **The Mountain Retreat:** Speaking of the mountain, if you have not yet registered your youth for the Spring Conferences, please do so as soon as possible!
 - **Tweens:** Weekend of March 6–8
 - **Teens:** Weekend of March 27–29

Faith Formation Calendar for March

Our young people have an engaging month ahead as they dive deep into our theme. Please take note of the schedule:

- **March 1:** All young people will remain in the service for an intergenerational and playful sermon.
- **March 8:** Children ages 10 and under will explore "Paying Attention" with Ms. Trish, Ms. D, and assistants. Youth ages 11 and up will join Mx. Vic to explore the intersectionality of the LGBTQ+ community and Racial Justice.
- **March 15 & 22:** Our young people will be in the service for half of the time.

- **March 29:** Youth ages 11 and up will engage in the Taizé service with the rest of the congregation. Children ages 10 and under will stay in the back to complete their exploration of our monthly theme.

A Special Note on Volunteering: We will especially need extra hands on **March 8 and March 29**. Many of our youth and staff will be away in Highlands, NC, for our Spring Conference during those times, so your help is vital!

Community Care: We Need You!

Part of paying attention to our community is noticing where we are growing. We have seen rapid and consistent growth among our young people lately. It is a wonderful "problem" to have, but the only way we can continue to offer safe and engaging classes is with help from our congregation.

We need you! Yes, you. You may see me wandering about lately inquiring if you have thought about assisting our AMAZING faith formation staff during our services. If you are ready to lean in, here is how you can help:

1. **Documentation:** Complete the background check and information form at <https://tinyurl.com/53vebzv>
1. **Training:** Take a very short but important mandated reporter class. <https://tinyurl.com/mr3ywfd7>
2. **Orientation:** Look over a brief slideshow to get up to speed.
3. **Action:** Sign up for a Sunday!

Summer Camp 2026: Mark Your Calendars!

Get ready! Summer Camp registration is opening this month. Keep an eye on **Realm** for the registration links. Both weeks will be steeped in our UU values and have returned to our **full-day format (8:00 AM – 5:00 PM)**.

Details:

- **Ages:** 5–12
- **Cost:** \$125.00 per week
- **Contact:** Reach out to Ms. D at ffm@uuaugusta.org for more details or to inquire about volunteer opportunities.

The Themes:

1. **Magic Summer: The Magic of Service, Silence, and Sunshine**
 - **Dates:** June 1 – June 5, 2026
2. **Feeding Our Spirit: Exploring Our UU Values Through Fun in the Kitchen**
 - **Dates:** July 6 – July 10, 2026

March Letter from the Board:

Dear Beloved Community,

As we move into the spring season, the Board of Trustees would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the congregation for your thoughtful participation in our recent midyear meeting and ongoing conversations about the future of our faith community.

*Together, we engaged in meaningful reflection about who we are, who we are becoming, and how we are called to serve both one another and the wider world. Your insights and shared hopes helped shape the direction of this work and informed the development of *The Powerful Question* that is now guiding our collective discernment. We are deeply appreciative of the care, honesty, and vision reflected in the responses you offered.*

We are also grateful for the Reverend's enthusiastic and hands-on leadership throughout this process. His clarity of vision and deep engagement have helped focus our shared energy and move this work forward with intention and momentum. The Board looks forward to continuing to support this pastorally led visioning work as it unfolds.

*As we review and reflect on the responses to *The Powerful Question*, we are encouraged by the depth of commitment and imagination present within this congregation. These reflections will continue to inform future conversations and help guide us toward an empowered, faithful future: rooted in our shared values and responsive to the needs of our community and beyond.*

Thank you for walking this path with openness and care. We look forward to what we will build together in the months ahead.

In faith and gratitude,

Dominique Grushinski, Co-President

The Board of Trustees

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! 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 UVAugusta.org or use the QR Code.



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 5th @ 6:30pm - 50501-Digital Privacy & Safety Meeting (Everyone welcome)

March 9th @ 5:30pm - Community Sing, Lead by Bill Webster

March 9th @ 5:30pm - Finance Committee Meeting

March 10th @ 11:30am - Women's Lunch Group at Rae's Coastal Cafe

March 12th @ 6:30pm - Pagan Pot Luck

March 13th @ 6:30pm - Healing Circle

March 15th @ 12:15pm - Parents Group Pot Luck

March 16th @ 5:30pm - Building and Grounds Meeting

March 18th @ 6:30pm - Cozy Craft Night

March 19th @ 6:30pm - Monthly Board Meeting

March 22nd @ 12:30 (After Worship Service) - Townhall on Potential Endowment Charge Revisions

March 26th @ 11:45am - ROMEO Men's Luncheon at Boll Weevil Cafe & Sweetery

Mark
YOUR
Calendar

If you missed the chance to reflect with us about the past and future of UUCA during worship on 2.22.26, please consider answering the same questions by [following this link](#). The UUCA Board of Trustees will take your reflective responses into account as they articulate a potential new Mission and Ends statement (Vision) for the future of our good faith community.



If you wish to maintain your pledge from last year: do nothing. We will roll it over into the next FY.

If you have never pledged, and/or have questions about the process, purpose, or plethora of impacts it has, please see a Stewardship member or the Reverend himself. We would all be glad to speak with you!

If you wish to change your pledge from last year: either increasing (fingers crossed) or decreasing, speak with a member of Stewardship and we will make sure it is updated.

If you wish to be directly canvassed via telephone or text by a member of Stewardship, there are some little cards available at the greeter's desk you can fill out specifying how you would like to be contacted. Or speak with one of us directly and we can set a time and means to have that conversation.

Money can be an uncomfortable topic, yet one that must be discussed nonetheless. One of us from Stewardship will approach you over the next month (even if you've already submitted your pledge card) to see how your new or increased generosity can have a real impact on what we might achieve together. At the very least, we'll get to know each other better.

If you haven't already filled out a pledge card and turned it in to a Stewardship member, you can click the link and fill out the online pledge card in Realm. If you have any questions or need help, please reach out to one of us. We're all happy to help you. <https://onrealm.org/UnitarianUniver28875/AddPledge/2026-2027pledge>

If you do fill out the form online, please make sure you choose the 2026-2027 Pledge fund. If you decide to make online payments or automatic payments, please make sure you choose the same fund. If you prefer to do automatic bill pay payments through your financial institute or send in checks, that's perfectly fine as well. We appreciate it very much!!



Love at the Cent-er:



2026 Pledge Drive

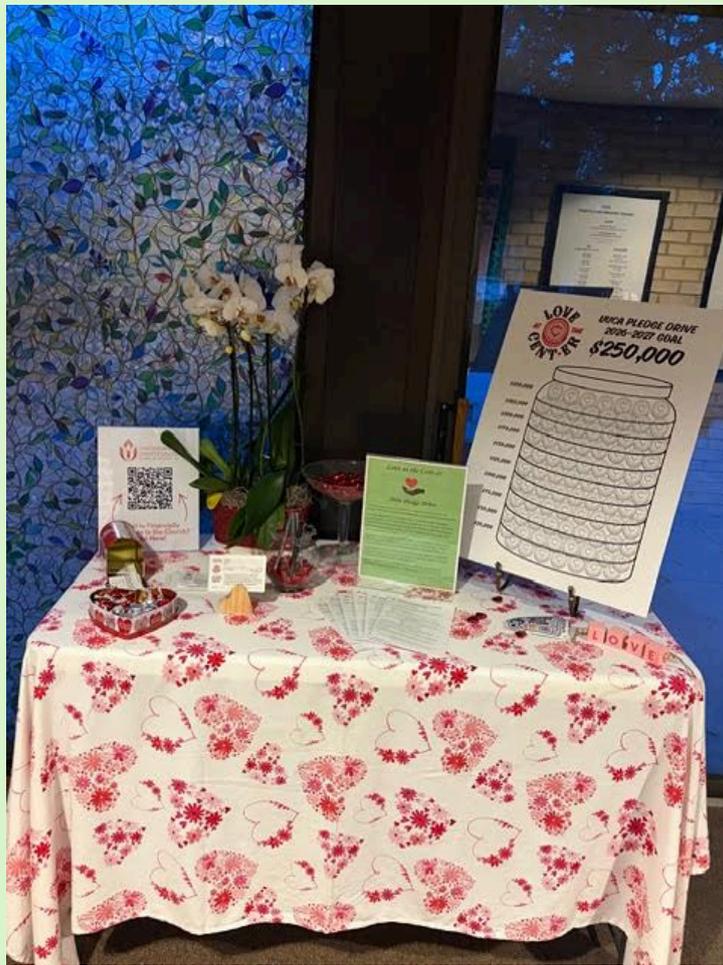
At the heart of Unitarian Universalism is a simple and powerful truth: love belongs at the center of our faith, our community, and our shared work in the world.

This year's pledge drive, "Love at the Cent-er," invites us to reflect on what it means to keep love at the core of who we are and what we do together. Love shows up here in many forms: in worship and music, in learning and spiritual growth, in justice work, in care for one another, and in the simple act of showing up, week after week, as our whole selves.

A pledge is more than a financial commitment. It is a statement of values. It is a way of saying this community matters, and I am part of sustaining it. When we place love at the cent-er, generosity becomes a natural expression of that care.

In the coming weeks, you'll hear more about how pledges support the life of our congregation and help ensure that this remains a welcoming, vibrant, and values-driven spiritual home for today and for the future.

Thank you for all the ways you help keep love at the cent-er of our beloved community.

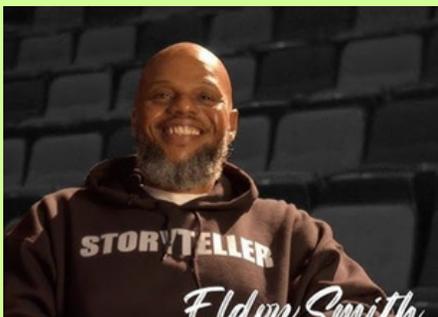


Please stop by the Pledge table and fill out a Pledge Card or a Contact Card so we can reach out to you.

March Worship Calendar - Paying Attention



March 1st - Rev. Nic & Chris Maurer
Playing Attention
The game of active listening.



March 8th - Eldon Smith & Barbara Bowen
Signs & Synchronicities
Augusta native Eldon Smith is one of the leaders at the famous Moth in Atlanta and is a storyteller extraordinaire. He recently launched a similar monthly storytelling series at Le Chat Noir called Tales and Ales. He will share a story with us throughout the service that describes how he paid attention to the spirit whispering to him again and again: tell stories. You're not gonna want to miss this one.



March 15th - Rev. Holly Brown & Isaac
How Do We Show Up?
What we pay attention to matters and how we show up as a result makes a difference. Let us consider the framework presented by Dr. Tiffany Jana about the ways we can show up as allies, accomplices, and co-conspirators in pursuit of liberation. Another regional pulpit swap also allows us to pay attention to our connection to the wider UUniverse. While Rev. Nic is preaching at the UU Fellowship of Clemson, Rev. Holly Brown will join us here.



March 22nd - Pagans & Rev. Nic
Paying Attention
As we move through the spring equinox, we invest some Currency of Presence. Just like spring time, growth is inevitable. Stay after for a townhall about potential updates to the endowment charter - another important investment.



March 29th - Josef Patchen & Rev. Nic
A Taize for Passover/Palm Sunday

Group and Committee Events

Parents' Group

Next Meeting:

March 15th at 12:15pm in classroom 1-2

Childcare will be provided for ages 10 and under

Contact: Desria Seay ffm@uuugusta.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:

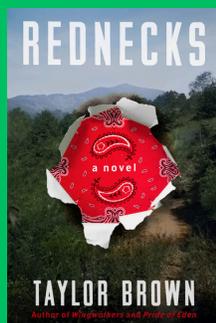
Contact: Chris Garcia garceus@yahoo.com

Wednesday online gathering:

Contact: Catherine Prysiazny

catherine8758@att.net

ZOOM link: [Click Here](#)



UUCA Book Group

Next Discussions - March **28th** at **1pm**

Fourth Saturdays at 1pm
Room 1-2

Contact: Jan Parsons - janbparsons@gmail.com

Group and Committee Events

Good Trouble Team

Next meetings: **March 22nd**

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

[ZOOM Link](#)

Passcode: 324295



Board Meeting

Next meetings: Thursday, **March 19th**

Monthly Board Meeting will be held the in the
Common Room

Contact: Co-presidents, Tim Hunter or Dominique
Grushinski

board.president@uuaugusta.org

UU Humanist Freethought Group

Next Meetings: **March 8th**

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

[Zoom link](#)

Contact: Frank Carl frankcarl2040@gmail.com



Group and Committee Events

UUCA Women's Luncheon Group

Next Gathering: **March 10th @ 11:30**

Location: Rae's Coastal Cafe

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

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

Girlfriends always welcome.



Pagan PotLUUck

Next Gatherings: **March 12th**

A 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

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

Next Gathering: **March 26th**

Location: Boll Weevil Cafe & Sweetery

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



Group and Committee Events

Cozy Craft Night

Next Gathering: March 18th

Location: UU Church Common Area

Knit, crochet, needlework, painting, coloring, drawing, wire work - all crafters are welcome! We will have light refreshments, but feel free to bring a snack to share as well.



Adult ADHD Peer Support Group

Next Meeting: March 10, 2026

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 SECOND Tuesday at 6pm in Room 1-2 for discussion.

Contact: Dave Mackey dave@davemackey.net

Yoga by Align Wellness Studios

Tuesdays @ 10:00AM

Saturdays @ 10:00AM

Classes are donation based with the suggested donation of \$10.

Contact: Dominique Grushinski at alignwellnessstudios@gmail.com for questions or to reserve a space



Group and Committee Events

RAD BOOK CLUB



RAD Book Club (Youth Group)

Next Gathering: March 26, 2026
Location: UUCA, Common Room

Come Join the Read And Discuss youth Book Club and talk about this month's book.

Healing Circle

Next Gathering: March 13 at 6:30pm
Second Friday of every month

Come join us for an evening of sharing space and laying the weight of the world down for a while. Whether you are struggling with things in your personal life, or the macro scale of the world, this is a safe space to come share what's on your heart and mind, without any judgment. We share in a calming and centering grounding practice, followed by everyone getting a chance to share (if they choose), and close with a practice of releasing and finding peace in the moments we can.

Hope to see you there!

Contact: Beth Ann Chesnut Fillingim, Bill Webster, or Caitlin Tarleton

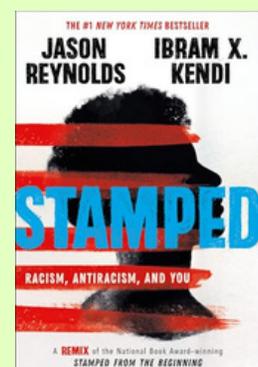


This Month's Book



BANNED Books Club

Next Gathering: March 26, 2026
Location: UUCA, Classroom 1-2



VOLUNTEERS WELCOME!!! WE NEED YOU!!! We had a great outpouring of volunteers in 2025. **THANK YOU!!!**

In order for great events and more to happen around here, we need you to volunteer!! We have so many different ways for you to help out. Please consider donating your time in your field of expertise or just something you've always wanted to help with. We welcome all to take part in keeping our church at its best.

We appreciate ALL our volunteers so much. Thank you!

Another great opportunity to volunteer is in our Tech Deck. Our Tech Deck team makes sure those that can't be here for service can still feel connected to our community. Please contact Matt Moser to volunteer. He is happy to teach anyone how to do the job and we'd all appreciate you volunteering.





GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Joys and Sorrows** can be sent ahead to the **Pastoral Care Team**: pastoralcare@uuaugusta.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.uuaugusta.org/committeesandteams>
- **Josef Patchen** is offering Piano Lessons: Any age, Any level, Any style. For information, write: 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@uuaugusta.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@uuaugusta.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><i>UU Augusta Office Email</i></u> <u><i>Minister's Email</i></u>	706-733-7939
<u><i>UU Augusta Website</i></u>	3501 Walton Way Extension Augusta, GA 30909
<i>Office Hours:</i> <i>Monday-Friday -9:30-2:30</i>	<i>Rev. Nic's Office Hours:</i> <i>Wednesday: 4pm-6pm</i>