

May 2026

Newsletter



SPRING

The dragonfly skips across the pond as if to remind us that spring is not just a season, but a transition. A shimmering bridge between what was and what is yet to be.

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Pledge Update:

As of May 1, 2026 we are at \$221,064.88. We're getting closer and closer to our goal. If you haven't pledged, please let us know so we can help.

From your minister, May 2026

“Be Curious. Not judgmental.” - Walt Whitman, by way of Ted Lasso.

In May, we are ‘*awakening curiosity.*’ Of course, there’s an element of this which comes a little more naturally to many of us UUs – we are a curious bunch. About science. Theology. Philosophy. The Universe. Many of us thirst for knowledge, truth, and meaning. It’s a great thing! Even with that natural inclination, we often think we know more than others. Or, rather, we think others are wrong. I’ve even heard some of us refer to each other as stupid from time to time – including about others’ religious beliefs. This is never okay. This is doubly not okay when one of our core UU values is pluralism.

Similarly, we can all also practice interpersonal curiosity more. I know I gotta work on this myself. I’m still trying to fully embody the parting advice I received from my first minister mentor, Rev. Jack Donovan. Jack offered me some wisdom as I left Florida for Santa Barbara to begin my student ministry. He said, when you get into a conflict just keep asking, “would you say more about that?” He added, a little bit of extra understanding will go a long way toward taking the heat out of a situation. This is great advice! And yet, when the relational going gets tough, we (I) so often immediately begin to create walls. We judge the other. We forget our humility.

Curiosity is a natural antidote to forgotten humility. You may have heard the phrase, ‘beginner’s mind.’ A beginner’s mind is always curious because it assumes you know nothing, or at least very little. Because, honestly, we do. (The Universe is just so darn huge and complex, y’all!) Sure, there are various areas about life in which each of us are relative experts. Yet, even in those areas, the folks who are actually the best at or most knowledgeable about a thing are probably so because they are consistently approaching that subject with a beginner’s mind. An openness to learning more. And more. And more.

In our church covenant, we have promised “to... seek truth and understanding, exploring with curiosity, reason, and wonder.” This was intentionally left open ended to be both about our continual search for truth and meaning in the bigger sense AND to guide us when we occasionally... inevitably even... experience conflict. Throughout the next month, I urge you to engage with both meanings. I invite you to awaken curiosity. With openness. And, hopefully, with humility.

Our friends at Soul Matters offer some further guidance for how you might do so.

Curiosity isn’t just about viewing others as interesting. It’s also about being able to view them as well-intended. Without even noticing it, our human default seems to be judgement. It’s just how our brains are tilted. When interpreting other people’s behavior, we easily grab hold of negative assessments. Curiosity can help us short-circuit this pattern.

This insight about curiosity is exactly what the writer Jen Picicci discovered later in life. And it transformed the way she engages other people and the world.

So for this exercise, you are invited to follow Picicci’s example.

Start by reading her essay, [How Curiosity Can Help Us Be Kinder and Less Judgmental](#). In it, she gives a number of examples of how she trained her brain to view people through the lens of curiosity rather than judgement. These examples will help you understand what it might look like for you to do the same.

Which leads to step two: **Spend a week looking for opportunities to be kindly curious about people’s behaviors rather than judgmental about them. Perhaps keep a tally of how many times you ask some variation of the question: “would you please say more about that?”**

Picicci ends her essay by saying that this practice set her free. **Consider speaking with a friend about whether this set you free, too, as well as what other gifts it gave you.**

May this month of May (re)awaken you to the curiosity at the heart of healthy relationship and progressive transformation. May that practice lead us toward Beloved Community.

In good faith and good trouble,

Rev. Nic

Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta

EXPLORING GOD

a sermon-in-dialogue series

Curated by Rev. Nic Filzen and Cantor Dan Geigerman

Over the next several months, join us as we discuss that which is most ultimate and intimate in the universe with various folks from UUCA and the CSRA.

Join us as we ask big questions.

Join us in curiosity about the Mystery of Being.

STARTING IN MAY,
WATCH THE NEWSLETTER, REALM, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR MORE INFO!

Faith Formation News

May 2026: A Month of Milestones & Magic

As we approach the end of our program year, our spirits are full! From celebrating our youth to preparing for summer camp adventures, May is a bridge between the deep work of the spring and the joyful connection of summer.

Adult Faith Development: UU & UUCA 101

Sunday, May 3 | 12:30 PM | Sanctuary

Have you been visiting us and wondering, "*What exactly is Unitarian Universalism?*" or "*How do I get plugged in here?*" We've heard your questions! With Rev. Nic's blessing, the **Faith Formation and Membership teams** are combining forces to provide a basic overview of our broad faith and our specific congregation. Join us immediately following the service for this helpful introduction.

Bridging Ceremony: Honoring Zaire Hunter

Sunday, May 10 | After Service | Richard Dillenbeck Bridge

Join us for a very special milestone as we celebrate **Zaire Hunter**.

What is a Bridging Ceremony? In UU tradition, a Bridging Ceremony honors the transition of a youth from the RE program into young adulthood. It is a sacred "crossing over" that recognizes their growth and welcomes them into a new relationship with our congregation.

We will gather at our newly dedicated bridge to offer our blessings and love.

Youth Justice & Exploration

- **Phinzy Swamp Hike (May 22):** Our youth (ages 11–17) will celebrate their learning on **Climate Justice** with a 2-hour evening hike! Led by master conservationists Tim Nelken and Larry Komp, we will formally present the funds from our successful Phinzy Fundraiser to the crew.
 - **Cost:** \$10 (Scholarships available—ping your youth advisor!).
- **Justice Project Recap:** As the school year ends, our youth are finishing their Justice Project with a recap of the various injustice topics explored throughout the year.
- **D&D and Beyond:** Our event was a massive hit! We are now in **desperate need of more DMs**. If you'd like to lead a game, please contact **Mx. Vic Pierce** at youthadvisor@uuaugusta.org.
- **OWL Update:** We recently celebrated a beautiful OWL graduation. We are so proud of our youth and our dedicated volunteers. **OWL will return in January** for 10th and 11th graders (Registration opens in October).

Register for Summer Camp!

Summer is just around the corner, and we have two incredible weeks planned. Don't miss out!

[Session 1: Feeding Our Spirit \(June 8-12\)](#)

A hands-on, 5-day journey where children explore UU values through the joy of cooking! We will dive into stories and videos, then work together to create a community lunch and a shared afternoon snack.

[Session 2: The Three Magic S's \(July 6–10\)](#)

In a fast world, we're slowing down to celebrate the magic of connection through:

- **Service:** Joyous, collective work to cure isolation.
- **Silence:** Mindfulness activities and a guest yoga instructor on Tuesday!
- **Sunshine:** Silly games and nature exploration in the Great Outdoors.

👉 Click on the title to register on Realm

Congratulations to our middle schoolers and their OWL teachers on their first OWL session!! It was a success. They have all graduated and will be attending the high school session in a couple years.



May Letter from the Board:

What's Good, People!!

Graduation!! We are in the season where we will be celebrating some of our loved ones taking the next steps in their lives. Some will be graduating into the workforce, providing valuable services to our community. Others, like my daughter, will finish out their high school years and be getting ready for college. In a sense, our congregation is also preparing for graduation. As the Board focuses on bringing clarity and focus to our mission, we are ready to graduate into being the best version of our church. As we strive to provide greater understanding of our values and goals, we will then, like our aforementioned graduates, will be able to better serve our community in the CSRA.

Speaking of serving, we would like to thank everyone that came out to our first(?) Annual Family and Friends Day. Thank you to everyone who attended and invited people to come out. A special thanks to those who served everyone food and helped with the setup and cleanup. Those fish fryers certainly served up nicely fried, piping hot, perfectly seasoned fish. Whoever made the grits served....period. And the desserts ate and left no crumbs. It was a rousing success and can't wait to do it again next year.

Please check our calendar for upcoming events and services. Also, an early Happy Mother's Day to all the wonderful moms out there. We would not be here without you. Can I use "literally" here? Be on the lookout for more information on our Annual meeting, which is coming up soon.

Love, Peace, and.....SOOOOUULLLLL!!!!(If you get this reference, your knees probably hurt).

Tim Hunter, Co-President, Board of Trustees

Gifts of Honor

A Gift of Honor was made from Ted Newton in celebration of Bill and Ted's 12 Year Anniversary.

A Gift of Honor was made from Matt and Chris Maurer in Honor of Brandy Hicar. (Thanks yall, I'm truly touched)

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.



The Endowment Fund Committee would like to thank Tim Nelken for his kind donation to the church Endowment Fund.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 2nd @ 10am-2:00pm - Bloom Together Spring Market sponsored by your Stewardship Committee

May 3rd @ 12:30pm - Adult Faith Formation: UU & UUCA 101

May 8th @ 6:30 - Healing Circle

May 8th @ 7:30 - League of Women's Voters watch Party, SUFFS, The Musical

May 12th @ 11:30am - Women's Lunch Group at McNeely's Place in N Augusta

May 13th @ 6:30 - 8:30pm - Cozy Craft Night

May 14th @ 11:45 - ROMEO Lunch Group at Mai Thai Cuisine in Evans

May 16th @ 8am - 2:00pm - UUCA Trunk/Rummage Sale (see Melissa Cox or Brandy for details)

May 17th @ 12:30 - Parents Group Pot Luck

May 21st @ 6:30 - Monthly Board Meeting

May 22nd @ 6pm - 8pm- Youth (11-17) Night Hike at Phinizy Swamp

May 25th @ 5:30pm - Community Sing with Bill Webster

May 30th @ 7:30pm - Jazz Series Concert with The Josef Patchen Trio

Mark
YOUR
Calendar



PBS GREAT PERFORMANCES PREMIERE



SUFFS

THE MUSICAL

TACO BAR & WATCH PARTY

MAY 8, 2026

FREE ADMISSION

Donations Accepted To
Help Cover Food Costs

7:30PM: TACOS & GAMES

9PM: WATCH PARTY

Unitarian Universalist
Church of Augusta



UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF AUGUSTA, GA

TRUNK & RUMMAGE *Sale*

SATURDAY MAY 16TH • FROM 8AM TO 2PM

Trunk Sale Parking Spots • \$15

Outside Ramp Spot w/ Table • \$20

Extra Tables for Rent* • \$8

*while supplies last

Rent a space and bring your new and lightly used household items you want to sell! Only want to Donate Items to be sold on behalf of the Church? Stop by on Friday May 15th anytime between 11am-2pm or 4-7pm to drop them off and we'll take care of the rest!


OUT & PROUD
Augusta
Bake Sale



3501 Walton Way Ext • Augusta, GA 30909

May Worship Calendar - Awakening Curiosity



May 3rd - A Hero's journey Through
Beltane, with Isaac Ball



May 10th - Exploring 'God', with Rev Nic

What is most ultimate and intimate in the universe? What about your life?



May 17th - Framing and Reframing Narratives,
with Reverend Pippin Whitaker (Pulpit Swap)

May 17 is International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia. Unitarian Universalist theology proclaims that all genders are whole, holy, and good. How shall we respond to public narratives that attempt to reframe human gender identities and expressions as the subject of moral judgment or social evil?



May 24th - Allah: God in Islam, with Azza El
Remessy

We kickoff our Exploring God sermon series. Over several months Rev. Nic and Cantor Dan Geigerman will reflect on what or who God is in dialogue with various UUCA and CSRA community members with various worldviews - metaphysical or not. Rev. Nic begins by speaking with Azza El Remessy a local Muslim friend and interfaith partner about Allah - God in Islam.



May 31st - Taize: Exploring New Music, with
Josef Patchen

Group and Committee Events

Parents' Group

Next Meeting:

May 17th

Pot Luck Luncheon

Contact: Desria Seay ffm@uuaugusta.org



Recovery International



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

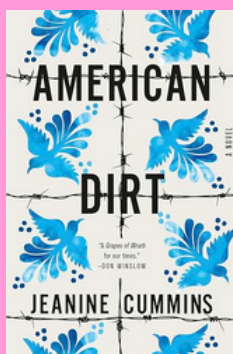
Pre-register: [Here](#)

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



UUCA Book Group

Next Discussions - **May 23rd at 1pm**

Fourth Saturdays at 1pm
Room 1-2

Contact: Jan Parsons - janbparsons@gmail.com

Group and Committee Events

Good Trouble Team

Next meetings: **May 31st**

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

[ZOOM Link](#)

Passcode: 324295



Board Meeting

Next meetings: Thursday, **May 21st**

Monthly Board Meeting will be held the in the
Common Room

Contact: Co-presidents, Tim Hunter or Linh Thi Do
board.president@uuaugusta.org

UU Humanist Freethought Group

Next Meetings: **May 9th**

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: **May 12th @ 11:30**

Location: McNeely's Place In N. Augusta

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.



Earth Traditions Collective, E.T.C. (formerly known as Pagan Potluck Group)

Next gathering: May 14th

Earth Traditions Collective (E.T.C.) is an inclusive UUCA community group dedicated to fostering understanding, respect, and appreciation for nature-focused traditions.

E.T.C welcomes individuals of all ages, gender identities, and backgrounds who wish to explore seasonal observances, cultural folklore, and personal reflection in a supportive environment.

Our activities include educational discussions, potlucks, outdoor gatherings, and community stewardship projects designed to promote our connection to the natural world.

Through shared learning and service, E.T.C. strives to build a diverse, respectful community rooted in curiosity, mindfulness, and care for the earth.

R.O.M.E.O. Lunch Group (Retired Old Men Eating Out)

Next Gathering: May 14th

Location: Mai Thai Cuisine in Evans

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: May 13th

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: May 12th

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: May 8th

Location: UUCA, Classrooms 1-2

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

Healing Circle

Next Gathering: May 8th 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

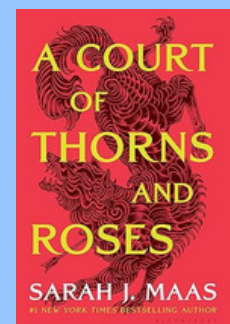


This Month's Book

BANNED Books Club

Next Gathering: May 29th

Location: UUCA, Sanctuary



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!



Ms. D is looking for a few good volunteers. She needs help with our youths on the first Sunday after service, during Adult Faith Formation and the third Sunday after service, during the Parents Group Meeting. If you want to help out and get to know our amazing kids, please see below.

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

In Loving Memory



Roy Winston Reynolds
7/1/44-4/22/26

<https://www.mrgrayfh.com/obituaries/roy-reynolds>

THE Richard Dillenbeck BRIDGE



THANK YOU!



Thank you to all the people who came out and got dirty with us. It was a very successful work day here.

Thank you to Brandon and Erin for fixing the tiles at the kitchen entry. It looks great!!



Thank you to Lori and Greta for painting and updating our bathrooms. They look wonderful. I'm personally grateful!!

Thank you to ALL
our amazing
volunteers that take
the time to keep our
church running as
well as it does. We
couldn't do it
without each and
every one of you!!

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>	<i>3501 Walton Way Extension Augusta, GA 30909</i>
<i>Office Hours: Monday-Friday -9:30-2:30</i>	<i>Rev. Nic's Office Hours: Wednesday: 4pm-6pm</i>