

September 2025

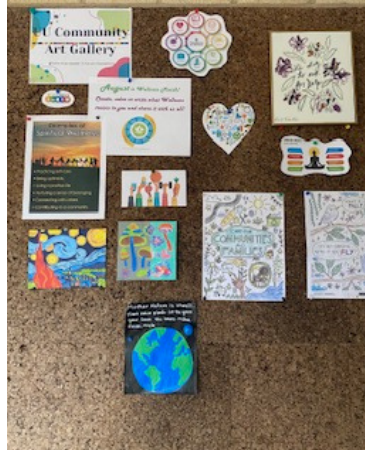
Newsletter



Community Art Board

Thank you to everyone that put things up on our August board. Great job!!

September we're celebrating our Harvest Blessings, so let's flood the board with some great art, poetry, quotes, whatever you want to share!



Volunteering Builds Character!!



We love and appreciate all of our wonderful volunteers. Come see us and find out how you can volunteer your time and energy around our church.

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From Your Minister

Hi Dear Ones,

This coming Sunday will mark the pseudo-official beginning of the new church year at UUCA. As has been the case for the last several years, we return to monthly themes which serve to bring us all together under one overarching idea each month through June. This gives us an evolving container in which I believe we can be more creative. And, it serves to remind us: we are all in ONE community, even if it is a Community of Communities. I do urge each of you to try to play with the monthly topics within each of your groups – large or small.

As we begin again, again, in Love, I want to redirect your attention to our [UU Values](#), and our [church Mission and Covenant](#). Our monthly themes are the containers that bring us together each month. Yet, even those must be grounded by and steeped in something greater; which, for us, are values-based promises and purpose. I also invite you to explore and reflect upon the history, meaning, and theology of “Beloved Community.” In addition to making it more clear how significant our Mission really is, this will be important grounding for some visioning work the board will lead us through this year. (Hint: Beloved Community isn’t *merely* a local group of people who happen to like each other and hang out on Sunday mornings.)

In alignment with our church Covenant, I urge you to continue supporting each other in spiritual development and forming your good faith alongside each other. Hopefully this intentional work can provide us all grounding as the world and this country continue to unravel in terrifying ways. Like last year, I will continue to offer spiritual practice options connected to our monthly theme through my newsletter piece each month. The theme for September is *Building Belonging*. As such, here is something to consider trying:

We’ve all belonged to at least one community in our life that stands out, that offered us a rare and especially impactful gift we will never forget. Whether that be your church community, book club, circle of college friends, military squad, high school bandmates, or little league baseball team.

Yet, our appreciation for that community often stays at the general level. We rarely take the time to tease out the detailed gifts it gave us. Or to put it another way, we rarely allow ourselves to embrace the full gift that circle of belonging gave us.

Embracing the full gift is what this exercise is all about. Below are a handful of sentences for you to complete. Each sentence is designed to bring a dimension of your relationship with your community (whatever it may be) into sharper focus... and into your heart more deeply.

After finishing each sentence, take some time to reflect on any new insight or gift you gained from it. When you are all done, look back on all of the sentences and identify the one that stands out for you and why.

Continue to the next page for the sentences to complete (or click [here](#) to print)

1. Before I found this community/group, I was...
2. Before I found this community/group, I saw myself as...
3. It was _____ (luck, effort, time, grace, etc.) that led me to this community/group.
4. While everyone in the community/group mattered deeply, the two people who especially made the community/group what it was were _____ and _____.
5. If I had not had this community/group in my life, I would have...
6. This community/group changed me from a person who _____ into a person who _____.
7. When I think back on my memories of belonging to this group, the _____ moment that stands out is...
8. The thing that made this community/group unique was...
9. At the time, I don't think I fully understood how this group was...
10. If I could go back and change one thing about my time with this community/group, it would be...
11. The way we handled conflict also made this group unique. For example, there was the time when...
12. If this community/group was a weather pattern, it would be a _____.
13. If it was possible for me to gather the community/group together again and say thank you, I would say...

I'm confident this year will provide us with moments of great joy and moments of great sorrow. We will grow and develop in expected and unexpected ways. I also have tremendous faith that, together, we will move through it all. And if the going gets tough - like, *real tough* - know that I've got your back.

We may not be all that Beloved Community is or can be.

And, we can certainly model it for the world.

Within ourselves, *among* each other, and *beyond* this faith community altogether.

In Good Faith and Good Trouble,

Rev. Nic

Faith Formation News

A New Year of Youth Programs is Here!

We are so excited to kick off a new church year of Faith Formation and Youth Group activities! We have a fantastic semester planned, and we're thrilled to introduce our new Youth Advisor, Mx. Vic Pierce and our new Programs and Events Childcare Coordinator, Mrs. Trania Hamilton. You can learn more about them on our website at uuaugusta.org or say hello on Sunday mornings.

A Glimpse into Our Programs

Our Sunday morning programs for middle and high school youth start back up on **Sunday, September 7th.**

- Our "Crossing Paths" interfaith curriculum explores different faith traditions through discussions, creative activities, guest speakers, and field trips.
- The "Justice Curriculum" provides a framework for exploring social justice issues and taking action to make the world a more equitable place.

Elementary and Preschool Programs

Our elementary and preschool ages will explore the same themes and topics that the sermons and adult classes will be expounded upon, doing so alongside their caregivers, the most important facilitators of their faith!

The elementary kids (grades 3-5) will also have the opportunity to go to the mountain for their youth conference.

A New Sign-In Process

After much thought, Rev. Nic, the board, and I have decided to simplify our sign-in process. We also don't want to interrupt your spiritual moment by having you leave to sign in your children. With that in mind, we've decided on the following:

- Everyone 16 and under (or who has graduated from the Coming of Age program) will be signed in at the FF Computer by me, another FF employee, or our Membership Coordinator each Sunday.
- The church will then assume responsibility for the care of your child once they are in the FF classroom—either at the beginning of the service or when they are "picked up" from the sanctuary.
- This responsibility carries up until their caregiver picks them up from the classroom at 12:30 pm on a typical Sunday morning or 5-10 minutes after the service, FF Adult Class, or Parents Group has ended.
- Children in the nursery or Preschool/Early Elementary rooms must be signed into Realm on the computer and signed into the classroom at the beginning of each service, since they begin in their classroom.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to send me an email.

Phones in the Classroom

Beginning August 24th, phones will not be allowed in the classrooms during class time for any reason. We've found that the children are much more engaged, attentive, and social without mobile devices of any kind. We appreciate your support in backing Mx. Vic's request for a phone-free youth space!

Kids Night In is Back!

Mark your calendars! Fun activities planned by our new programs and events child care coordinator, Mrs. Trania Hamilton.

For the rest of the year, Kids Night In will be held on the 2nd and 4th Friday nights of the month.

Parents Group

The Parents Group will also be starting back up on September 21st! If you're a parent interested in signing up to bring food, you can use this link :[Parents Group 2025-2026 Potluck Sign Up](#) See Abigail Drescher, Natalia Bowdoin, or Tim Hunter for more information at the program fair.

Save the Date!

- **September 14th:** Visit our youth group table at the **Program Fair**.
- **September 21st:** Our first **Youth Group Meeting** of the year.
- **October 17th - 19th:** Elementary Youth Conference (for grades 3-5). The deadline to know if your youth is attending is **September 29th**, and the deadline to pay is **October 2nd**. It is \$100 per youth and \$25 per advisor. You can find more information here:
• <https://www.themountainrlc.org/youth-conferences/>
- **October 31st - November 2nd:** Junior High Youth Conference (for grades 6-8). The cost is \$100 per youth and \$25 per advisor.
- **November 14th - 16th:** Senior High Youth Conference (for grades 9-12). The cost is \$100 per youth and \$25 per advisor.

More in-depth emails with details about these programs and events will be coming soon!



A Message From Your Board of Trustees

This year, our congregation is entering a time of deep listening and visioning together. Inspired by *Nested Bowls: The Promise and Practice of Good Governance* written by Laura Park, the Board will be holding listening sessions with members, friends, and community partners throughout the year.

Just as the bowls in the book fit within one another—each holding and shaping the other—we believe our mission, our values, and our actions should align and flow together. These conversations will help us discern whether our current Mission Statement truly reflects not only who we are today, but also who we are called to become as the future unfolds.

We invite you to bring your voice, your vision, and your hopes for our shared future. Together, we will listen deeply, dream boldly, and shape a path forward that reflects the heart of our community.



SUMMER CAMP FUN!

Upcoming Events

September 6th – OWL Orientation, 2:00pm

Mandatory for parents and students who are enrolled in OWL.

September 6th - Crossing Paths, 4:30pm-6:30pm

Mandatory for parents and students who are enrolled in OWL.

September 7th – New Church Year Potluck Party - 2:00pm

At the Filzen house. [3655 Bermuda Circle East, Augusta, GA 30909](#)

- There are 5 parking spots in the rear of the house (including on the grass) if each vehicle nose is pointed toward our chain link fence. Please reserve those spots for folks with accessibility needs. This will allow the easiest possible ingress/egress to our house via a ramp in the garage going through our laundry room door. Otherwise, please park on the street or carpool from the church (it's only 3 minutes away).
- We have the event starting at 2 PM to allow folks time to go home and prepare/fetch any food items they plan to bring (and so you don't need to bring it to church with you that morning). That said, feel free to come over immediately after church if you'd like, especially if your drive to/from UUCA is long. We won't turn you away
- This is definitely a kid friendly event with yard/board/video games available.
- We plan to use our backyard to expand our available space for everyone, but in the event of inclement weather, we'll just be a little more cozy inside.
- Bring whatever main dish/side dish/dessert you feel called to share. We will provide all drinks.

September 14th – Program Fair - 12:00pm

Explore all the programs we offer at UUCA - both to discern where your needs can be met; and, how you can help meet others' needs.

Our UUCA Contemporary Ensemble and Choir welcomes new musicians. It's a good chance to enjoy singing, harmonizing, and making music with other UUs to help bring meaning and beauty to all our lives. We hope you'll join us at 9:30am Sunday mornings and help us add to the worship experience.

Theme Oriented Faith Formation Classes – There will be theme-oriented faith formation “classes” after Worship on the first Sunday of each month (October - May). The ‘classes’ (which generally will be closer to deep discussions) will be divided into developmentally age appropriate groups. Correspondingly, every first Sunday will be a relatively short intergenerational service highly focused on how the monthly theme relates to the history, present, and future of Unitarian Universalism and UUCA. The classes will be from 12:15-1:15pm following a short fellowship time. We hope folks will be willing to bring healthier snacks to share and sustain our embodied spirit through a longer morning on these days.

Gifts of Honor

In Honor of:
Reverend Nic Filzen



In Memory of:
Joyce Peters

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 or use the QR Code.

From Barbara Neumann:

We wish to thank those of you who joined us in celebrating Herb Neumann's life. It was very heart-warming to see so many familiar faces at the service. Our family greatly appreciated your presence at our celebration.

With thanks and good vibes.

September Worship Calendar - Building Belonging



September 7th - “” - Rev. Nic

Our new 'church year' begins as it does every year - with the water ceremony. Please bring water from your home or some other part of your life to share as we create our 'holy water' together. The Filzen family will host a potluck at 1 PM after the service. All are invited. If you typically attend via Zoom, we hope you'll come in person this time and join us for the potluck. Let us build belonging this day and every day.



September 14th - “” - Raven Littlejohn-Kerstens

Raven Littlejohn-Kerstens, a local behavioral health specialist, will discuss the importance of using folks' chosen names and pronouns. Especially for the kids among us. This topic is extra important following the recent supreme court decision limiting gender affirming healthcare for youth in half of the United States.



September 21st - “” - Dominique & Chris Grushinski

Making Meaning through Mabont



September 28th - “” - Rev. Nic

Using a new planning resource called Lotsa Helping Hands, we'll reflect on how we can create thriving network of care at UUCA. If you're interested in being part of a large volunteer team to help directly meet the needs of other congregants, the pastoral care and membership teams invite you to the second half of their retreat at Rev. Nic's house on October 4th from 12-2 PM.

Group and Committee Events

Parents' Group

Next Meeting:
September **21st** at **12:15pm** in **classroom 1-2**

Childcare will be provided for ages 10 and under

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

Wednesday online gathering:
Contact: Catherine Prysiazny catherine8758@att.net

ZOOM link: [Click Here](#)



UUCA Book Group

Next Discussions - **September 27 at 1pm**

Fourth Saturdays at 1pm
Room 1-2

Contact: Jan Parsons - janbparsons@gmail.com

Group and Committee Events

Good Trouble Team

Next meetings: **September 28th**

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

ZOOM Link
Passcode: 324295



Board Meeting

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



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: **September 14th**

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: Tuesday, September 9 @ 11:40
Location: 202 Penn Street, Edgefield, SC

We're having a bit of an adventure in September. A road trip over to Edgefield to eat at the Old Edgefield Grill. If you'd like to carpool, meet up at the Park and Ride off I-20 Exit 5 by 11:15. If you'd prefer to drive on your own, we'll meet at the Edgefield Grill at 11:40.

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: September 11th



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: TBA

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



CSRA Adult ADHD Peer Support Group

Next Meetings: TBA

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



Building & Grounds Team

**Next Meeting: September 9th
@5:30**

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



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**.

A Message from Brandy, Your Church Administrator

As I celebrate the completion of my first newsletter. I want to share with you all a few of the wonderful things I have seen and experienced in my first month.

First, I'd like to say, "Thank you!", to Reverend Nic and the Board. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to become a part of this community/family. Not only do I love my job, but my family is loving being here as well. So, you gained a new Administrator and a whole new family. .

My heart has been warmed by so many things.. I've seen so much kindness and willingness to help others and make our world better. I've seen children bravely stand up in church and share their past experiences, not leaving a dry eye in the sanctuary. I've experienced so much support in taking over this role. And finally, on a more personal note, my family has experienced here, something we've never experienced before. We really found something that we didn't know we were looking for or needed. Thank you all for welcoming us!





*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>	<i>706-733-7939</i>
<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>