

# SUMMER Newsletter



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“Cause a little bit  
of summer is what  
the whole year  
is all about.”

— JOHN MAYER



## From your minister, Summer 2026

Heading into the long hot summer, our monthly theme (which underscores and envelopes everything we do) in June, is *flourishing together*. I'll say this as plainly as I can - flourishing is impossible without the together part. The only way for us to reach our full potential as individuals is in community. And when every individual is flourishing, then so does the community. This is the heart of interdependence. As Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer, one of my favorite people, says, "All flourishing is mutual."

In recognition of this truth, we reflected on the following question at our recent worship arts meeting while planning for the month: "What circle of care and support helped you discover your unique brand of flourishing? i.e. what circle helped you know yourself in a way you couldn't have on your own?" Each person in attendance (which was a lot because the group has really grown recently!) shared some beautiful answers. Some of which I'll amplify during worship on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

Also on June 7<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate and perform the time-honored UU ritual of the flower ceremony. A perfect symbol of flourishing together. *Please bring a flower to add to our altar...* symbolizing the flourishing garden which emerges from the presence of each of us. Then, we'll further illustrate how well we are indeed flourishing together right now as a faith community when Ed McCranie takes a photo of us all following the service! I'm looking forward to the good problem of figuring out how to fit everybody in! I really hope you can make a point of being there and be a part of this historical snapshot in time!

An ecosystem requires deep, connected roots to flourish. In many ways, we feed each other in the more visible bits 'above ground.' Yet, we also provide nourishment and enrichment for each other in deeper, less seen ways. **And** even though flourishing requires together, we also need to be somewhat intentional about strengthening ourselves so that we might add more fully... more whole-y... more holy... together. And therefore, we have a responsibility to strengthen and deepen our own roots.

Which requires spiritual practice.

I've been suggesting spiritual practices to go along with each theme all year. I'm not going to suggest anything specific this time. Just urge you to use whatever spiritual practices have been effective for you in the past. Be intentional about it. Maybe even disciplined. Maybe even do it every day. Form a taproot for yourself... make it extra hard for life to uproot you. Knowing that your own internal, "within' work,' doesn't just benefit you.

Then watch *us* grow. Feel *us* flourish!

May it continue to be so.

In good faith and good trouble,

Rev. Nic

Unitarian Universalist Church of Augusta

# EXPLORING GOD

*a sermon-in-dialogue series*

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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!

# Flourishing Together: A Summer Message of Gratitude

As we turn our attention toward the warmth of summer and wrap up another wonderful church year, I want to take a moment to lift up the incredible people who have made our children and youth faith formation programs possible this year: **YOU!** Generosity is one of our core UU values. Living out our mission of creating heaven here on Earth isn't just an abstract idea—it is led by, **sustained by, and breathed into life** by our hard-working staff and volunteers. These folks have taken up this worthy work and truly run with it.

Please join me in showering appreciation on the hands and hearts that shaped our year:

## **Our Lifespan Sexuality Pioneers (Our Whole Lives/OWL)**

To the folks who trained, completed homework, took time out of their days to lesson plan, communicated with co-facilitators and parents, and beautifully executed a robust lifespan sexuality program for the **FIRST time in many years** here at UU of Augusta:

- *Thank you, Annie Cook, Janeya Filzen, and Vic Pierce!*

## **Our 2025 Summer Camp & Hands-On Heroes**

To those who took time out of their leisurely summer days to spend all day laughing, learning, building with Legos, fixing swings, and showing the kids how to repair the back porch railing:

- *Thank you, Larry Komp, Matt Maurer, Zaiire Hunter, and Azariah Seay!*
- *And a huge thank you to the many folks who have stepped up to join our camp volunteers for this 2026 season: Susan Loughrey, Diane Johnson, Brandy Hicar, Jan Parsons, Chris Maurer, and rejoining us, Matt Maurer and Larry Komp!*

## **Our Fabulous Kids Night In Champion**

*We also want to look back and send a mountain of gratitude to our incredible 2025 Kids Night In Coordinator. Thank you for creating such a vibrant space full of fun crafts, active games, and great movies for our kids to enjoy:*

- *Thank you, Trania Hamilton!*

## **Our Sunday Morning Faithful**

To the **MANY, MANY, MANY** volunteers who have stood side-by-side with the Faith Formation Team as we explored UU core values each Sunday morning and more:

- *Thank you, Nicole Deloach, Natalia Cooper, Valerie Webster, Anne Robinson, Betty Bourg, Dande Coder, Tony Civitarese, Whitney Civitarese, Matt Maurer, Chris Maurer, Paula Goldman, Janeya Filzen, Brandon Zeitner, Tim Hunter, LaDrackus Seay, Chris Drescher, Megan Cunningham, David Bush, Wanda Bush, David Cooper, Jamie Miller, and Susan Loughrey!*

## **Our Community Builders**

To our Parents Group Chairs, who have cultivated a sacred space for deep, meaningful sharing (and delicious eats and treats, too!):

- *Thank you, Melissa Cox and Brandy Hicar!*

## **The Backbone of Faith Formation**

And last, but certainly never least, to the true backbone of our Children and Youth FF Ministry, our Nursery Care Lead and our Youth Advisor:

- *Thank you, Trish Hobbs and Vic Pierce!*

I also want to send a massive shout-out to the countless people whose names could fill this entire newsletter—those of you who consistently donate books, supplies, food, snacks, and financial support for our programs and staff.

You show us day in and day out that we **FLOURISH** when we **WORK TOGETHER**. This is love in action. This is Unitarian Universalism at its best, and I am so deeply blessed to continue building this beloved community with all of you.

## **Summer Announcements & Reminders**

Don't let the summer pass you by without plugging into these fantastic opportunities! Space is limited, so act fast:

- **Feeding the Spirit Camp (Begins June 8th):** We still have a couple of limited spots left!
- **Magical Summer Camp (Week of July 6th):** More spots are available—secure your child's place today!
- **UU D&D Club (Begins June 14th):** The dice are rolling! This is a **FREE** 3-to-4-month campaign thanks to our generous sponsor, **Cardboard Castle**, and our volunteer dungeon masters. **ONLY 4 SPOTS LEFT!**
- **Coming Soon:** Keep your eyes peeled for a special *Parent "Back to Church" Newsletter* later this summer, which will highlight all of our upcoming classes, programs, retreats, and more.

Again, thank you for choosing to flourish with us. I am so looking forward to continuing to thrive together!

With deep gratitude,

**Desria Seay**

**Director of Lifespan Faith Formation**

**If ANYONE would like to make a contribution to next week's cooking camp, please follow this link and sign up. Specific foods for the each camp day or a monetary donation would be most helpful. Thank you so much for supporting our little ones adventurous week of cooking camp.**

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054CA4A623A7FAC25-64406119-feeding#/  
/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C054CA4A623A7FAC25-64406119-feeding#/)

## *June Letter from the Board:*

### **Greetings, Good People!**

Welcome to the unofficial start of summer! While this season offers a great opportunity to rest, relax, and enjoy extra time with family (something our teachers certainly appreciate), there is still meaningful work ahead for our church community.

Please **save the date for June 14th** for our **Annual Meeting**. As always, important church business will take place, and your presence is essential to help us reach a quorum and ensure everything is handled properly.

Our **BIPOC Ministry** will have a presence at the **Augusta Juneteenth Celebration**. Juneteenth is a time for reflection, education, and celebration everyone is welcome to come out and be part of this meaningful community event. But just to be clear, black sh\*t will be happening there.

We will also celebrate **Pride in Augusta on June 27th** with a booth, and we are currently seeking volunteers to help staff it. Your time and support would be greatly appreciated.

And don't forget to celebrate the many wonderful fathers in our church on **Father's Day, June 21st!**

As I close out my final newsletter as Co-President, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to **Dominique Grushinski** for her service and partnership. I'd also like to welcome and thank **Linh Thi Do** for stepping in early to take on the role of Co-President. Our church is in great hands.

Thank you all for allowing me to serve in this role. I am deeply passionate about the things I love—and I truly love this church. It has been an honor to serve each of you.

*Mamba out,*  
**Tim Hunter**  
Co-President

## *Gifts of Honor*

*A Gift of Honor was made from Ted Newton in memory of his brother, Steve.*

*A Gift of Honor was made from Alice Reese to Natalia & Dan on their marriage.*

*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 [VUAugusta.org](http://VUAugusta.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

*June 6th @ 10am - UUCA Garden Club (1<sup>st</sup> meeting)*

*June 7th @ 11am - Annual Flower Communion Service (Bring a flower)  
12:00 pm We will take a churchwide photo immediately following the service. Please try to be here.*

*June 8th @ 5:30pm - Community Sing with Bill Webster*

*June 8th-12<sup>th</sup> - Feeding Our Spirit: A UU Values Cooking Camp*

*June 9th @ 11:30am - Women's Lunch Group (Chop House-Augusta Mall)*

*June 10th @ 6:30pm - Cozy Craft Night*

*June 11th @ 6:30pm - ETC (Earth Traditions Collective)*

*June 12th @ 6:30pm - Healing Circle*

*June 13<sup>th</sup> @ 10am-1pm - Youth Group to Diane Pond to pick Blueberries to sell at the Annual Meeting*

*June 14th @ 12:30pm - Annual Congregational Meeting*

*June 14th-21st - Virtual General Assembly (there will be watch parties throughout. More details to come)*

*June 18<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30pm - Monthly Board Meeting*

*June 19th - Augusta Juneteenth Festival*

*June 21st - Parent's Group Potluck*

*June 21st - Summer Solstice & Father's Day*

*June 25<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00pm - Banned Book Club*

*June 27th - Augusta Pride Festival - Come help us staff our table!*

*June 28<sup>th</sup> @ 4:00pm - Death Cafe in the Common Room*

*July 6th-10th - Magical Summer-The 3 S's-Service, Silence, and Sunshine*

*July 25<sup>th</sup> - Back To School Party at Mistletoe State Park (Details to follow)*

*August 2<sup>nd</sup> @11am - Backpack Blessing Service*



**PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR  
1ST UUCA GARDEN  
CLUB MEETING!!**

Saturday, June 6 @ 10:00 at  
Janeya Filzen's home

3655 Bermuda  
Circle East  
Augusta





# *Flower Communion*

Sunday June 7

Celebrate unity in diversity with our traditional Flower Communion. Each unique bloom symbolizes the individuality we bring to our community and the strength we share together.

Please bring a flower that represents you to include in this beautiful and uplifting service.

Stay a few minutes after service for a  
Community Wide Picture






## **Come on out to Diane Pond for a Blueberry Picking Good Time**

**Where: 1232 Brown Road  
Hephzibah, GA**

**Pack a picnic lunch for a  
community picnic and some  
water activity fun**



**Come out and join the fun with  
your youth group and pick  
blueberries to sell at the  
Annual Meeting  
on June 14.**



# June Worship Calendar - Flourishing Together



## June 7th - Communities Which Made (and Make) us More Whole

What groups of people helped us transform in to a more whole version of ourselves? And how? Is the idea of a self-sustaining adult a myth?



## June 14<sup>th</sup> - Flourishing through Co-Creation

Local artist-extraordinaire A.C. Daniel joins us to talk about how co-creating art might lead to relational flourishing... then actually co-create some art during the service.



## June 21st- General Assembly

(Everyone is invited to join us in the sanctuary to 'attend' the livestreamed GA service)



## June 28th - Forming Beloved Community: What's over the next hill?

# July Worship Calendar -



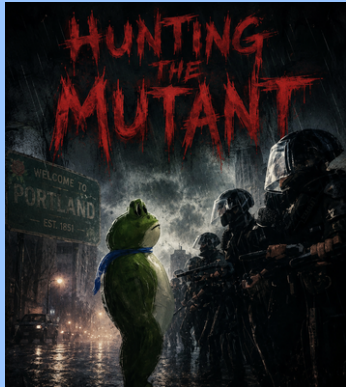
July 5th - Dark Art of Propaganda: Mein Kampf for Dummies - Chris Garcia

Please note, this service will explore how Mein Kampf is being used as a playbook for the current fascist movement in the US through a VERY critical lens



July 13<sup>th</sup> - Spiritual Materialism: The Cult of Innocence - Chris Garcia

Spiritual materialism results from using spiritual practice as a self improvement vanity project, rather than the hard work of opening the heart.



July 19th- Dark Art of Propaganda: "Hunting the Mutant" - Chris Garcia



July 26th - Exploring "God" in Buddhism - Natalia Bowdoin

Continuing the exploring God series, Rev. Nic will be in conversation with Natalia Bowdoin about where and how God shows up in Buddhism.

# August Worship Calendar -



**August 2nd - Backpack Blessing - Desria**  
Celebrating the beginning of a new school year as we do each year - blessing the backpacks of our young scholars!



**August 9th - id est quod id est- Chris Garcia**  
Stoicism as a way for life



**August 16th - Question box! - Rev. Nic**  
Come prepared with questions for Rev. Nic... about anything!



**August 23rd - Taize - exploring god in music**



**August 30th - Exploring God with an Atheist- Humanist - Cantor Dan**

Cantor Dan from the Congregation Children of Israel will lead an interview about the ultimate and intimate with Desria Seay, an agnostic humanist with a whole lotta heart from within our congregation.

# Group and Committee Events

## Parents' Group

Next Meeting:

**June 21st**

**Pot Luck Luncheon**

Contact: Desria Seay [ffm@uuaugusta.org](mailto: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

**Every Monday at the church:** 7:00pm

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



# Group and Committee Events

## Good Trouble Team

Next meetings: **June 28th**

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

[ZOOM Link](#)

Passcode: 324295



## Board Meeting

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

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

Contact: Co-presidents, Tim Hunter or Linh Thi Do  
[board.president@uuugusta.org](mailto:board.president@uuugusta.org)

## UU Humanist Freethought Group

Next Meetings: **June 14th**

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

[Zoom link](#)

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



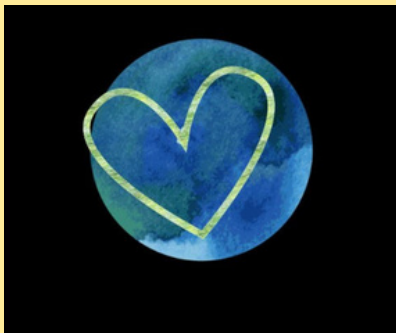
# Group and Committee Events

## UUCA Women's Luncheon Group

Next Gathering: Tues., June 9 @ 11:30  
Location: The Chop House at Augusta Mall  
Please RSVP by to Pat Lynch-Hayes,  
706-733-8303, [plynchhayes@gmail.com](mailto:plynchhayes@gmail.com)



Girlfriends always welcome



## Earth Traditions Collective, E.T.C.

(formerly known as Pagan Potluck Group)

**Next Gathering: June 11th**

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.

Potlucks are 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 (Retired Old Men Eating Out)

Next Gathering: June 25th  
Location: Mai Thai Cuisine in Evans



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

# Group and Committee Events

## Cozy Craft Night

**Next Gathering: June 10th**

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

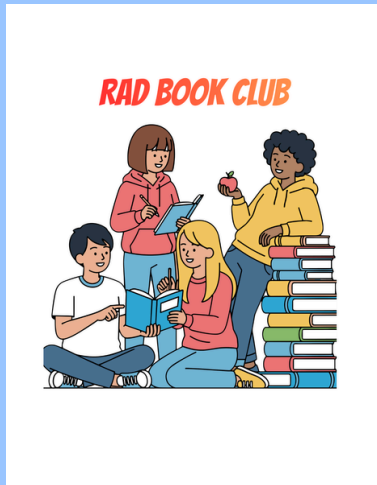
**Next Meeting: June 9th**

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

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

# Group and Committee Events



## RAD Book Club (Youth Group)

Next Gathering: TBA

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: June 12th 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 or Bill Webster



## BANNED Books Club

Next Gathering: June 26th

Location: UUCA, Sanctuary

## This Month's Book



# 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/53vebnv>
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!

# 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><i>UU Augusta Office Email</i></u> <u><i>Minister's Email</i></u>	<b>706-733-7939</b>
<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>