

March 2025

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## Faith in a Fortune Cookie?

As you may know, I recently did a service entitled "Faith in a Fortune Cookie." The service description said, "Can a life lesson be gleaned from a fortune cookie? Can a sermon be written from one? On the spot? Rev Dave will try. Why do this? What's the point?"

Just before the sermon, the Worship Associate read a fortune from a cookie picked randomly from a bowl. I then did a sermon based on that fortune.

Returning to the service description: Why do this? What's the point?

One of the most common criticisms I hear about Unitarian Universalists, rightly or wrongly, fairly or unfairly; is that they never do anything, never take any action unless that action is planned out ad nauseum, until there are no uncertainties, until every contingency is accounted for and thus no possible way the action could fail; and, the criticism continues, that this act of endless planning usually results in paralysis and inaction.

Again, I believe this is a somewhat unfair criticism as I see many UUs (and many UUMAN members) spontaneously acting in public square. Yet, this criticism is not entirely untrue either. We've all likely experienced analysis paralysis; or we've backed away from an initiative that we didn't feel we could "win."

The "Faith in a Fortune Cookie" sermon wasn't a stunt; the point of the sermon wasn't about the content of the sermon itself or what I came up with.

The point was to show risk-taking; that we can experience uncertainty, vulnerability and fear with the possible threat of failure – and that we can survive whatever happens and move forward whatever happens. (Btw...I'm not against planning. Planning is acting responsibly; yet planning that seems to always lead to paralysis should be understood for what it is – inaction.)

The Executive Branch of our government is currently pushing the envelope in ways that are unconstitutional and illegal; and contrary to every value that we hold dear. It seems as if their opposition has yet to come up with a plan to push back against this.

Well, the time has come for us to improve a little; to take some risks; to try things that haven't been done, to push where we haven't pushed, pull where we haven't pulled.

Could we fail? Absolutely....but I believe a difference is made even in failure; and that building upon where we've failed, others may ultimately succeed.

Nurture our spirit. Strive for Justice. Transform the world.

Dave

## North Fulton Community Charities News March 2025

Did you know that NFCC's food pantry services over 200 families a day? Each order uses between 5-10 grocery bags. That means we go through thousands of grocery bags each week. We try to reuse bags that are donated, but often NFCC must purchase bags at a big expense.

**WE NEED YOUR GROCERY BAGS!** Especially if you have the large type bags used for pick-up and delivery at various stores. If you donate bags, **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE**, flatten them first. It takes lots of volunteer time to straighten out bags so they can be used. I flatten mine when I watch TV. It is quick and easy to do. I flatten them and then put them inside another bag or box.

You can drop off your bags at the NFCC drive-up donation door.

Most needed items this month:

- Toilet paper
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit

- Rosie Popp

## Chili Cookoff Rides Again

On February 9, UUMAN celebrated one of its favorite social events—the Chili Cookoff. Dozens of UUMANS sampled hearty chilis and cornbread, along with delicious sides and desserts. No one went away hungry.

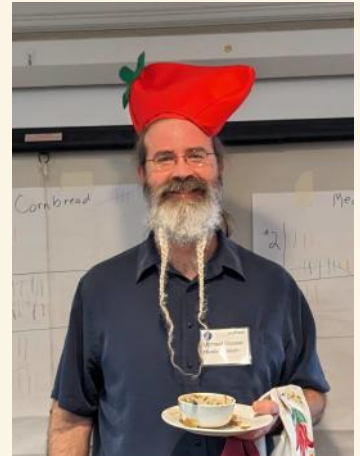
There were 12 chilis submitted, as well as 5 cornbreads. When the votes were in, the winners were:

- Chili with meat: Michael Huelsewiesche

- Veggie Chili: Francy Deskin
- Cornbread: Tie, Margriet van de Steeg and Andrea Santos

The Chili Cookoff is not really about the competition, but about the fellowship and fun. As always, the event was capably championed by Jane Soule, with assists from Marc Soule and Donna Guile. Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped with setup and cleanup, and to all our cooks. As you can see from these photos, a good time was had by all!

## The Winners!



- Mike Chambers

## Breeze - “It’s A Breeze”

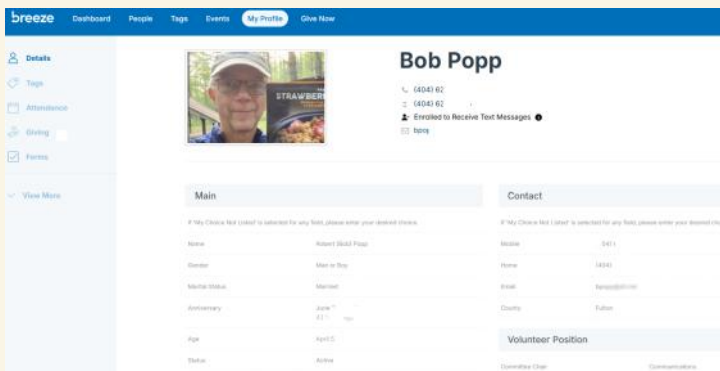
In 2023 UUMAN moved to a new Church Management software program and database. The name of the software is “Breeze”. The purpose of Breeze is to help the church better support its members and friends.

First time visitors are encouraged to fill out a Visitor Form which is linked to Breeze. The form is the first step in building a relationship with UUMAN.

When you complete the form it gives you an opportunity to sign up for regular announcements which we call “UUMAN Announcements” or ask that someone from our Membership team contact you.

Once you join UUMAN and become a member you can login to Breeze. You can use Breeze to look up other members, email members, pay your pledge, update your profile and many other things.

Below is my profile in Breeze which I can edit including my photo.



The Communications team at UUMAN is going to start offering regular “training” sessions during the 2nd hour where you can drop by and ask questions about Breeze. You can also get help and support from our Office Administrator, Beth Harris at

[office@uuman.org](mailto:office@uuman.org)

It’s truly a breeze!

- Bob Popp

The Breeze application is pretty self explanatory however it does take a little getting used to in order to feel comfortable with it. Here is a link to a good overview that will help you get started or answer questions you may have:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/17JYbS5USKWIBwQ17IYkTguWyV8ILJFtm/view?usp=sharing>

# FUEL UUMAN

A Strong and Vibrant UUMAN Relies on All of Us—  
Our Time, Talents, Resources, and Hearts.



Welcome to the **FUEL UUMAN Campaign for the 2025-2026 church year.**

At UUMAN, we believe that every member's unique contribution strengthens our community. Our commitment to justice, love, and spiritual growth requires all of us to come together—to offer our time, talents, and financial support. The **FUEL UUMAN** campaign is designed to inspire action, and together we can continue building a thriving, vibrant, and growing congregation.

Your financial support, time, and talent are all crucial contributions that shape the future of UUMAN. We invite you to reflect on how you can contribute and take part in this exciting journey.

## How You Can Help Fuel UUMAN

### 1. Financial Pledge: Invest in Our Future

Your financial support is fundamental to sustaining and expanding the programs that make UUMAN a powerful force for good in our community. With your pledge, we are able to:

- **Provide Worship Services:** Ensure that our services remain inspiring, inclusive, and transformative for all who attend.
- **Fund Educational Programs:** Support children's and adult religious education that deepens our understanding of Unitarian Universalism.
- **Expand Social Justice Initiatives:** Continue our work on pressing community issues, from racial justice to environmental sustainability.
- **Maintain and Improve a Welcoming Space:** Ensure that our community is welcoming, accessible, and equipped to support our growing congregation.

### 2. Time: Dedicate Your Presence

UUMAN is only as strong as the energy and commitment of its members. Your time is an invaluable contribution that allows us to thrive. Whether it is in:

- **Greeting visitors**
- **Hospitality**
- **Care Circle**
- **And more ...**

Your time makes a significant impact. Your presence is the heartbeat of our community, and we encourage you to engage in ways that bring you joy and purpose. Please visit the Time and Talent form within the pledge initiative and see how you can get involved.

### 3. Talent: Share Your Gifts

Each of us has unique talents that can enhance the life of our congregation. Whether you are gifted in:

- **Being part of the Chalice Choir**
- **Helping at the nursery**
- **Heading one of our committees**
- **And more ...**

Your talents help shape UUMAN's identity. Share your expertise with us and be part of the collaborative spirit that drives our shared mission.

### Why Your Contribution Matters

A strong and vibrant UUMAN depends on all of us. Our collective support—through time, talent, and resources—makes it possible to:

## FUEL UUMAN (continued)

- **Build Stronger Connections:** Strengthen the bonds within our congregation and with the broader community.
- **Create Lasting Impact:** Support justice and outreach initiatives that improve lives beyond our walls.
- **Cultivate a Sustainable Future:** Ensure UUMAN's programs and services continue to inspire and grow for generations to come.

### Financial Goals

For years, our Harvest Moon fundraiser has played an important role in covering our overall expenses. As we continue to grow, we envision using these funds not only to sustain our operations but also to actively live our mission by supporting initiatives in our broader community working towards social, economic and environmental justice.

We are growing and this growth is an exciting and positive sign of our thriving community. Welcoming more members means more voices, more connections, and more opportunities to make a difference together. However, with growth also comes increased financial responsibility. In addition, our operational, mortgage interest and insurance costs have increased. To meet our needs and fulfill our ambitious vision, we aim to raise \$300,000 through pledges—a 20% increase from last year. Your support is vital in helping UUMAN continue to flourish and extend our impact beyond our walls.

### How to Make Your Financial Pledge

Making a pledge is simple!

1. **Complete the Pledge Form** (form will be available online on March 9th).
2. **Choose your preferred method of giving:**
  - One-time donation
  - Recurring monthly donations
  - Or customize payment options
3. **Submit Your Pledge online** at [uuman.org](http://uuman.org) or mail it to the UUMAN office
4. **Stay Involved** – Once you've pledged, stay engaged with UUMAN's ongoing activities. Your participation helps shape the future (see Talent and Time form available with pledge).

Always, remember, your pledge is confidential!

Thank you for helping us fuel the future of UUMAN!

More information coming in the next weeks.

### Stewardship Team

Margriet van de Steeg and Carla Rizzati

[stewardship@uuman.org](mailto:stewardship@uuman.org)

## Sweep the Hooch

Sweep the Hooch is the Chattahoochee Riverkeepers annual river cleanup. If you are interested in joining a group from UUMAN please register at <https://chattahoochee.wufoo.com/forms/s1cmw22j0s8zcsr/>

Sweep the Hooch will be held this year on Saturday, March 22. If you want more information go to <https://chattahoochee.org/sweep-the-hooch/>

The group that is going has signed up for the Metro Atlanta Walkers and Waders - Jones Ferry Rd @ Jimmy Carter location.

Put "UUMAN" down as the Team Name.

If you have questions let me know.

- Bob Popp

## Other UU Events

### Music at the Mountain

**HARNESS THE POWER OF MUSIC**

Friction Farm - Kiya Heartwood - Matt Watroba

**April 13-18, 2025**  
The Mountain,  
Highlands NC

**MUSIC**  
at The Mountain

guitar community singing  
ukulele concerts  
songwriting drum circle

**Improve Your Health & Well Being**

**Build and Strengthen Community**

**Create Change in Your World**

<https://www.themountainrlc.org/event/music-week>



## UUWomenspirit Events

**The Beginning is the End – The End is the Beginning. May 14-18** at The Mountain Learning and Retreat Center in Highlands, NC. Join us as we explore the cycles of our lives, from Maiden to Mother to Crone or from Teacher to Warrior to Queen. Each phase offers a new awareness both of ourselves and of our sacred relationships with those around us.



Find out more here: [www.uuwomenspirit.org](http://www.uuwomenspirit.org).

## Reflections and Discussion on Neo-Racism

**Neo-Racism**

A Convocation of the UU Multiracial Unity Action Council

**Reflections on and discussion of Neo-Racism**

a book by the late Rev. Dr. Finley C. Campbell, the founder of UUMUAC

(available on Amazon for \$15)

**Saturday, March 29, 2025, 11 a.m.-12:30 pm Central time**  
(Starts at Noon Eastern, 10:00 am Mountain, 9:00 am Pacific)

**TO REGISTER** send an email to [UUMUAC@gmail.com](mailto:UUMUAC@gmail.com);  
Zoom codes will be sent the day before the Convocation

Part 1. Reflections from the editors — Dr Richard Burkhart & Dr. Judith Barisonzi  
--Discussion--

Part 2. Reflections from two who knew the author a long time  
Allan Lindrup, current UUMUAC Chair, who knew the author for over 30 years and who participated in many of the author's *Nature of Racism* classes.  
Dr. Roberta Lammers Campbell, the author's widow, who knew the author first as a fellow anti-racism fighter, and then as his wife for 40 years  
--Discussion--

## MCY March Times

Lexie T. Brown  
Director of Religious Education

### Mystery Friends Has Begun!

Our beloved Mystery Friends tradition is back! Over the next few weeks, participants of all ages will exchange letters, building connections and friendships across generations. Each Sunday, letters will be secretly delivered to "inboxes" in Fellowship Hall, leading up to the big **Reveal Party & Potluck on March 23 at 1 PM.**

### UU Presence at Atlanta Pride:

#### Planning Update

Planning for UU participation in Atlanta Pride is well underway! Our UU Cluster Pride Committee has been meeting regularly to coordinate a strong, unified presence at the festival and parade. Here's where things stand:

- We are organizing a collective UU presence in the parade and considering a nonprofit booth at the festival.
- A dedicated fund has been established to cover permit costs, and all metro Atlanta UU congregations are invited to contribute. Donations can be made through Breeze.
- The next planning meeting is on **Monday, March 24, at 7:00 PM.** Each congregation is encouraged to have at least one representative attend.

Our goal is to create an inclusive and visible UU presence at Atlanta Pride. If you or your congregation would like to get involved, please reach out. More details will be shared as we finalize logistics!

### Religious Exploration Update: Welcoming New Families & Summer Programming

Our Children and Youth Religious Exploration (RE) program continues to grow, and we are excited to welcome new families! As a reminder, our grade-based class structure ensures the best experience for all children, and we ask that participants attend their assigned grade level or a younger class if needed.

## Creating a Safe & Joyful Space in RE

As we continue to grow our Religious Exploration (RE) program, we are excited to share our Behavior Expectations and Covenant, designed to create a safe, respectful, and welcoming space for all children and youth.

### Behavior Expectations (Rules for Safety & Respect)

**Be Kind & Respectful** – Use kind words, include others, and listen to adults.

**Stay Safe** – Keep hands and objects to yourself, walk inside, and use spaces properly.

**Use Inside Voices** – Speak at a respectful volume indoors.

**No Running Indoors** – Walk inside to keep everyone safe.

**Follow Adult Guidance** – Listen to RE teachers, volunteers, and staff.

**Stay in Supervised Areas** – Anyone under 13 must be with a parent, guardian, or MCY volunteer.


**Care for Our Space** – Use materials responsibly and help keep our church clean.

**Honor Our Sacred Space** – No weapons, real or imaginary, are allowed.

### UUMAN MCY Covenant (How We Treat Each Other)

- We welcome and respect everyone.
- We listen, share, and speak with kindness.
- We take care of ourselves, each other, and our space.
- We take responsibility for our actions and make amends when needed.
- We work together to create a safe and joyful community.

We believe in **positive reinforcement**—celebrating kindness, participation, and respect with **words of affirmation and small prizes from the Treasure Pot!** We encourage families to review these expectations together before Sunday so children arrive prepared to be part of our nurturing and engaging RE community.

Thank you for helping us make UUMAN a wonderful space for all! 

## MCY March Times

Lexie T. Brown  
Director of Religious Education

### Summer RE Needs You! Sign Up to Lead a Fun Activity

This summer, our Religious Education teachers are taking a well-deserved break, and we need your help to keep the fun going for our UUMAN youth!

Each Sunday from **May 25 – July 27 (10-11 AM)**, we're inviting volunteers to lead an engaging activity. Whether you love arts & crafts, music, games, nature, or science experiments, you can bring your creativity and enthusiasm to make Sundays special.


**Two volunteers (who do not live in the same household)** are needed each week. You can team up with a friend or sign up solo, and we'll help find a co-leader if needed!


Ready to join the fun? [[Sign up here!](#)]


Thank you for helping create a vibrant summer for our UUMAN youth!

### Exciting Updates: MCY Program Guide and Volunteer Opportunities!

We are excited to share two updated documents to help you engage with UUMAN's vibrant Multigenerational Children & Youth (MCY) programs!

 **MCY Program Guide** – Learn about the various programs we offer for children and youth, from nursery care to Coming of Age and beyond. -[Link Here](#)-

 **MCY Volunteer Opportunities** – Discover ways to get involved! There's always an opportunity to engage, and the highlighted roles indicate where we have the greatest need. Whether you want to help in Kids Community, lead a special event, or support RE classes, we'd love to have you on board! -[Link Here](#)-

 **Save the Date:** Our **MCY Volunteer Retreat** for the 2025-2026 year will be on **August 9!** This is a great opportunity for new and returning volunteers to connect, prepare for the upcoming year, and learn about exciting updates. A **sign-up sheet** will be available in the coming weeks—stay tuned!

If you're interested in volunteering, have questions, or want to learn more, reach out to me, **Lexie T. Brown, DRE**. I'd love to help you find the best way to get involved!



## March: A Month of Sundays



## Life Celebrations

We want to commemorate the happy occasions in the lives of our UUMAN members and other friends of UUMAN. We are looking for Naming Ceremonies, Graduations, Marriages, Anniversaries, Retirements, and Birthdays. Please submit the information about your special day, in the month prior to the event, to [office@uuman.org](mailto:office@uuman.org)

| Date | Service Description   | Service Leader |
|------|---|----------------|
| 3/2  | <p><b>Where Would We Be?</b></p> <p>Unitarian Universalism and Unitarian Universalists have changed my life – and both have inspired me to serve them as a minister of this living tradition. How have they changed your life? Where would we be without them?</p>  | Rev. Dave Dunn |
| 3/9  | <p><b>Life Partner to Care Partner to Care Giver</b></p> <p>It is inevitable that the people we love will someday need to be cared for. How deep is our well? What internal and external resources can we muster to face this challenge with peace, dignity and love? This service was purchased at this year's Harvest Moon Auction by Paula Watson.</p> | Rev. Dave Dunn |
| 3/16 | <p><b>Youth Group Service</b></p> <p>Come join us at UUMAN's Youth Group presents their annual Sunday service. We probably don't need to tell you but... come prepared for some surprises.</p>  | Youth Group    |
| 3/23 | <p><b>There is no Neutral</b></p> <p>There is a time to plant and a time to uproot; a time to mourn and a time to dance. There are times to compromise and there are times to resist – yet we are always moving; there is no neutral. In what direction are we headed?</p>  | Rev. Dave Dunn |
| 3/30 | <p><b>Without Absolutes</b></p> <p>Good and Evil. Right and Wrong. Based upon their actual lived experience, our LGBTQ+ friends are helping us to see sexuality in non-binary terms. What else might we see in non-binary terms?</p>  | Rev. Dave Dunn |

| Date | Celebration   |
|------|---|
| 3/6  | Tanya R. is celebrating a birthday.                                 |
| 3/9  | Rozanne G. is celebrating a birthday.                               |
| 3/15 | Judy D. is celebrating a birthday.                                  |
| 3/17 | Amanda B. is celebrating a birthday.                                |
| 3/20 | Marc L. is celebrating a birthday.                                  |
| 3/23 | Todd W. is celebrating a birthday.                                  |
| 3/25 | Margaret and Jacob P. are celebrating their anniversary of 8 years. |
| 3/26 | Diantha H. is celebrating a birthday.                               |
|      | Dirk B. is celebrating a birthday.                                  |
|      | Lori A. is celebrating a birthday.                                  |
| 3/28 | Bev J. is celebrating a birthday.                                   |
|      | Vivian W. is celebrating a birthday.                                |
| 3/29 | Danielle B. is celebrating a birthday.                              |
| 3/31 | Janet L. is celebrating a birthday.                                 |

**ABOUT THE UUMANTimes:** The UUMANTimes is the newsletter of Unitarian Universalist Metro Atlanta North (UUMAN). We go live with each issue by the first Sunday of the month; deadline for submissions is typically on the 22nd of the month preceding the issue date. Please email your news articles and artwork to [newsletter@uuman.org](mailto:newsletter@uuman.org)