

July 2026

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For All of Us

The Lorax spoke for the trees. The Lorax of course is a metaphor for you and me. There are so many without voices in these times. But our voices can be heard in many ways. Together we can raise our broken Hallelujahs for all that live, and for all that are to come.



The democracy we have practiced does not serve us now. Voting and walking away leaves a void quite often filled by those seeking personal gain. The first victims are the weak and the powerless, but lust for power and control is never quenched. In this moment no one is safe from "the rough beast... slouching "toward Bethlehem to be born". The president of Finland Alex Stubb made clear the political reality "if you are not around the table you are going to be eaten on the table."

The work does not end at the polls. Electing others may slow the corruption but it doesn't mean course correction. The momentum of what is in place will continue the current trajectory. Only bold policy changes and changes of our own behavior can halt the decay. The turning, critical for survival, will take time and vigilance and engagement beyond the polls.

What is in place is entrenched and has grown deeper over time. Individually our experience and our capacity is limited, as is our perspective, but together we see a bigger picture, bigger than any elected leader alone would know, and together we are strong. But in this difficult time, this time of despair and instability and great change there are opportunities.

With connection, creativity and love for life and each other we can find a better way forward. We can begin by educating ourselves, building our communities, doing what we can where we are with diet, family, yard and neighborhood.

Democracy can become a community affair, a celebration, and a way of life, reflecting values that serve all on this planet. We must never walk away from our families or communities, but we must widen the circle.

Some may ask is now the time. We have been trained to go along. We have the house, the car, the job, but our souls are yearning for fulfillment, and the news makes clear this is our time. Our values, our church is under assault now. White nationalism, a faith without morality is being promoted at the highest levels of government. The question is are we ready to live our faith, to take the heat, to be as bold as we were before the fear, before the responsibility, before society tamed us, before we were placated with so many things.

What we do with these days will determine life for our children and the children beyond our shores. The things we love and the things we love to do can still give us direction. It is important to remember that we are the leaders, that answers come from within, from deep listening and from community. This is our one beautiful life. Your children will know whether you were a warrior for truth and justice and democracy and humanity, and for the natural world. Find your challenge, your brothers and sisters, and your allies, and do the work. Everyone must play a part in the coming election. Find a candidate. Help build the win. This midterm election can buy the time needed to turn this thing around. Do what is close and make it work for all of us.

—Gus Hadorn

Nights of Wonder

It's hard to imagine a world without plants. If you grow them for the sake of beauty, thank you. I just today saw a Black Cohosh in full bloom at Gold Branch, and to



paraphrase a well-known source, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of them. But there is a place beyond beauty where we can render a service far beyond what Home Depot has for sale. Plants are not for us alone. They are part of the ecosystem that serves all of life.

These days I'm growing more native plants. If you love birds and butterflies as I do, it's important to remember that they must eat too. Their continued existence depends on food and shelter just as we do. But here in the urban world that we have created their pickin's are slim. The bird feeders we offer instead may please us more than them. Baby birds, fledglings they are called, like our own children require softer food. 96% of our terrestrial birds feed their young caterpillars. The majestic oak provides the greatest source and the largest selection, 500 species in fact. But we like our exotics which unfortunately don't measure up. The Ginko, despite its beauty can only provide 5 species of caterpillars. Butterflies and pollinators need native sources as do many of our very essential insects. Without these sources they perish. In fact North America has lost nearly 3 billion or 1 in 4 birds since 1970. For humans the sleight of hand that has occurred has given us variety but at a cost. The rose has lost its scent, and the nandina delivers cyanide. And so the story goes.

Some of these critters are specialists like the once abundant Monarch. But it's not only the Monarchs that are in trouble now. We use poisons with abandon. This year I have seen only a handful of Firefly. That my friends is a crime the breath of this land that we are all complicit with. With a little effort we can cultivate bats known to eat as many as 1000 mosquitoes per hour. A child that never knows a magical summers' night filled with the spectacle of Fireflies is a child growing up in a world with less wonder. Those that sell products with the lie that it only kills mosquitoes are not friends of the world. And keep in mind always your loved ones, pets and children that are closest to the ground. Grass has a place in my yard but I'm slowly filling it with more interesting and useful plants.

Our homes and our yards can become sanctuaries that keep us sane and serve the world.

Keep lights off at night, stash the poisons, grow more natives & less grass, meet your neighbors, play outside.

Gus Hadorn & Earth Ministry

National Pride Walk



UUMAN celebrated its second annual Roswell Pride Walk and inaugural Pridefest in June, extending gratitude to Roswell Empowered for initiating this event. Like other Atlanta UU congregations, we have a long history of supporting Atlanta Pride, and we are pleased to see it expand into our local community.

—Michelle Liebergesell

Help Create Welcoming Services!

Join the Worship Team

Are you comfortable in front of a crowd? Or willing to give it a go? Lend us your unique talent as a Worship Associate!

What Does Being Worship Associate Entail?

- Co-leading Sunday Services to a very friendly and forgiving crowd!
- One monthly meeting (45 minutes) to review the upcoming calendar and take turns depending on availability.
- The week of service, the WA works with Reverend Dave & Alex Pietsch to prepare the Order of Service script. This involves simply editing a shared document in our Google Drive.
- The WA then uses the script to prepare the Printed Order of Worship, also in Google docs.
- If you've got basic computer skills you can do this. Detailed, step-by-step instructions are also available.
- For any under-18 congregants with an interest, we can find ways for them to participate, too.

We are always looking for new faces and voices in the pulpit to represent our growing community. Please consider sharing yours!

Contact: Valorie Baylis, Worship Chair

Worship-Chair@uuman.org

Back to School Backpack Drive

It's hard to believe but it is almost time for kids to head back to school. For many in our community, having the necessary school supplies to ensure a successful school experience is difficult. The Social Justice Committee is coordinating with the North Fulton Community Charities Back-to-School Backpack Drive.

How can you help?

1. See the display in the foyer at UUMAN. Take a post it note (or notes) from the display board in the foyer and sign your name on the board to indicate which items you can provide.
2. Items can be placed in the box in the foyer no later than July 20.
3. If you choose cash, please bring cash to UUMAN in an envelope and give it to a member of the social justice committee. Cash will be used to purchase items still needed to fill backpacks or donated to NFCC.

An [Amazon wish list](#) is also available.

Thank you for your generous support of the children in our community. For questions, please see Joan Rossi or any member of the Social Justice Committee.

Board News

Martin Poteralski is concluding his tenure as Past President. Under his leadership, we have continued to grow and thrive as a congregation, expanding programs and making an impact in our community. Martin's steady presence helped us navigate a challenging personnel transition with our bookkeeper/administrator, making sure we balanced accountability with compassion. We are in a stronger position because of him! Thank you, Martin!

Seth Pratt is concluding his two-year term as Treasurer. Seth has done a remarkable job of tightening up our bookkeeping, financial controls, and laying a solid budgeting and accounting foundation for the congregation. His attention to detail, while keeping the big picture in mind, has given us a clear view of our finances and where/when we need to make adjustments. We've also learned he is in the running as the world's most interesting man: sailing, dancing, massage... maybe even a secret agent? Thank you Seth!

—David Kroeber

Home Away from Home

Have you ever visited a UU congregation in another town, perhaps while you were on vacation? It's a great way to meet the locals, make friends, and take note of how other congregations do worship.

During my trip to the northeast last week, I visited the Portsmouth, NH congregation on Pride Sunday. Like UUMAN, they had a warm welcoming committee at the front door and used large-font nametags. Their service was similar to UUMAN's with the exception of Joys and Concerns, a silent procession of folks placing lit candles in bowls of sand, which became quite full.

During service several members were invited to speak about their experiences as LGBTQ+ members. The first presenter spoke with great praise about a minister in the 1980's, Reverend Bob Karnan, who was one of the early outspoken advocates of gay rights and support for AIDS victims.

I was surprised to hear the name, because Bob Karnan had been my minister at the Northwest UU congregation in Sandy Springs in the late 1970's when I was a newly transplanted teenager in the Bible Belt. Bob Karnan's sermons and delivery often resonated deeply with me, usually bringing tears to my eyes. The first time was no big deal and my mother handed me a tissue, but during the second service my tears welled up again, and my parents thought there might be something seriously troubling me! He had been talking about the difficulty of making big life decisions, a topic highly relevant to me as a young Stranger in a Strange Land.

When my mother died in 1988 Bob Karnan was no longer in Atlanta, but my father located him and he graciously flew to Texas to deliver her graveside service. That was the last I saw of him. He died unexpectedly in 1995.

During the Portsmouth service, the second set of speakers was a married male couple, one of whom said, "Bob Karnan always made me cry." Wow, such a joy to hear that!

Coffee Hour was truly celebratory as I met everyone and shared stories.

I hope you will plan some time for a UU service on your next trip. Then tell us about it!

—Laura Keck, UUMAN Board Secretary

UUMAN Door Locks

Due to most of UUMAN's door now having code locks, a new code system is being put into place. This will allow better tracking of who accesses church spaces and when. A few things to note:

The code used for PREMIO will be changed on July 1st. It has been discovered that many more people than just the teachers and students with PREMIO have been using that code, so this is being done to secure the space for those folks when they return in August.

Any committee chair of a committee that meets or needs to access church spaces can contact Beth in the office to have a specific code created on the doors needed. This code can then be used by any member of the committee.

The current MCY code will be changed as of the date of the workshop for the coming year which will enable all the involved parties to learn the code at the workshop.

When rentals or other usage of church spaces is scheduled, a code will be created for that usage and will be removed once the usage is completed.

In future, codes will likely be updated on an annual basis.

One other note - we are aware that there are keys to the doors in the foyer that are held and used by various folks. As we are looking into having those doors rekeyed, an up-to-date list will be developed noting who receives those keys once that process is complete. Anyone who currently uses that way to enter and doesn't receive a new key, may request a lock code be created if access is needed.

Anyone who has keys for any of the non-foyer doors is asked to return those keys to the office. They don't work anymore anyway. Let us handle recycling them for you!

—Operations and Safety Committees

TAke NoTe!! Opportunity Awaits

Do you need some stress relief? Want to lessen anxiety, stimulate memory, improve posture and breathing, and relieve muscle tension? Want to boost feelings of joy, self-confidence, and mood, while fostering trust, cooperation, creativity, and teamwork skills? Want to express emotion and even relieve pain by releasing neurochemicals such as β -endorphin (a natural painkiller responsible for the “high” after intense exercise)? Want to experience a surge of positive neurochemicals like dopamine and serotonin?

To get all this and more, all you have to do is join the choir!

Group singing has all sorts of positive impact on both our physical and mental selves.* And in addition, it's also great fun, will expand your circle of supportive friends, grow your musicianship, and—bonus—serve UUMAN.

So, come on! Any adult is welcome to sing in the UUMAN Chalice Choir. This year's rehearsals start on Wednesday, July 22 at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary. No audition, no fee, no experience necessary, and no risk. Give us a try!

The UUMAN Choir resumes regular rehearsals on Wednesday, July 22 at 7:00 in the sanctuary. All are welcome! For more information, email Alex @ musicdirector@uuman.org

In Harmony,

Alex

Four Years Post-Roe

By Rachel Osborne

Last month marked four years since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned by the Supreme Court in a 5-4 ruling. Here are some stats that help illustrate the past four years of a post-Roe United States:

Women living in states that banned abortion are nearly twice as likely to die during or soon after pregnancy and childbirth. (Gender Equity Policy Institute)

Infant mortality was 5.6% higher in states with abortion bans than they would have been otherwise. (Gemmill et al., 2025)

Anti-abortion laws caused a decrease in access to birth control. (Kavanaugh and Friedrich-Karnik, 2024)

On a more local level, people living in the South sometimes have to travel up to 700 miles to access abortion care (Axios, 2024). You may recognize the names Amber Nicole Thurman and Candi Miller, two Black, Georgian women who died as a direct result of Georgia's restrictive 6-week abortion ban.

People all across the country rightfully recognized the negative impacts the downfall of *Roe* would have, particularly in conservative-controlled states like Georgia, and rallied to give their time and money to organizations such as Planned Parenthood and their local reproductive justice orgs. Immediately following the overturning of *Roe*, abortion funds (typically smaller orgs tied into their communities that are able to provide direct funding and logistical support to callers) across the country saw an immediate rise in so-called "rage giving". However, this was accompanied by a 39% increase in requests for support to access abortion care, and a corresponding drop off as donor's interest – and rage – declined (National Network of Abortion Funds).

Today, reproductive justice organizations across the country are struggling to meet community needs. Access Reproductive Care Southeast (ARC-SE), headquartered in Atlanta, serves six states in the Southeast, including Georgia. In 2025, ARC-SE supported more than 5,400 callers across the region.

While its core work is providing funding and logistical support for abortion access, ARC-SE also offers broader reproductive support, including cash grants, diaper bank supplies, pregnancy loss support, and free emergency contraception and safer sex supplies through its Plan B Community Outpost program. This comprehensive approach makes ARC-SE a vital resource for people at every stage of reproductive life.

UUMAN's Social Justice group has been hard at work for the past year to have UUMAN become a Plan B Community Outpost location to provide free emergency contraception and other resources to our community. Unfortunately, due to the sharp drop in donor giving and institutional grants and funding (aka cancellation of "DEI" grants) that is impacting reproductive justice organizations across the country, ARC-SE recently announced that they would have to restructure their organization in order to still fulfill their core mission and duty to support abortion seekers. This restructuring includes some staff layoffs and pausing of community programs, including pausing of programs like the Plan B Community Outpost program.

While UUMAN's immediate ability to participate as a community partner with ARC-SE is on hold, the need for reproductive justice has not gone away. If anything, it has grown more urgent. ARC-SE and organizations like it can only continue this work with sustained community support. I encourage you to read more about the important work they are doing at their website www.arc-southeast.org and giving them a follow on social media. If you are able, please consider making a donation to ARC-SE or another local org, and look for ways to stay involved through volunteering, advocacy, education, and mutual aid.

Summer Solstice

On June 20, UUMAN members and guests, both human and canine, celebrated the longest day of the year, the Summer Solstice, at Azaela Park in Roswell. It was a wonderful gathering, with music, poetry, lots of food, fun, and fellowship. Several members also took a nature walk in search of natural treasures that felt meaningful and shared their hope, blessings, and gratitude. We hope everyone can join us next year!

—Cathy Bruce for the Earth Ministry



Northwest UU Knabe Concert

We are extending this invitation to your congregation to enjoy this time with us celebrating our Knabe Grand piano and musicians from Northwest and the Atlanta area.



THE NORTHWEST UU
KNABE
Concert Grand
CONCERT

**SATURDAY,
AUGUST 8
AT 5:30 PM**

**CELEBRATE THE SOUND
OF THE KNABE CONCERT GRAND**
Experience the rich sound of Northwest UU Congregation's magnificent 9-foot Knabe Concert Grand Piano in an evening of music ranging from classical and jazz to blues, folk, and musical theater.

FREE ADMISSION
Donations gratefully accepted

**NORTHWEST
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
CONGREGATION**
1025 Mount Vernon Highway
Sandy Springs, GA

The concert will begin promptly at 5:30 pm, proceed uninterrupted without intermission and will be followed by light refreshments.

FEATURING NORTHWEST MUSICIANS
Jim Pearce • Sally Mitchell • Edward Lawrence
Charles Williams • Bruce Neidermeyer • Traci Montgomery

GUEST PIANISTS
Philip Adair • Eli Manos • Portia Shuler Hawkins • Misha Stefanuk

COLLABORATIVE ARTISTS
Charles Carmichael (clarinet) • Eric Fontaine (saxophone)
Emrah Kotan (percussion) • Mike Beshara (bass)
Aleyah Rene • Kisa Walker • George Prothro

MASTER OF CEREMONIES
Dr. Philip Rogers, baritone



All are welcome.
JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF BEAUTIFUL MUSIC AND COMMUNITY.
ADMISSION IS FREE. DONATIONS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED.

If you have questions about this event please contact our musical director:

Dr Philip Rogers

music@nwuuc.org

Outreach committee

July: A Month of Sundays

Date	Topic	Service Leader
7/5	To Fix America, We Must Love America There's much in America's history to be ashamed of, and as Unitarian Universalists we're wary of flag-waving that tries to sanitize our past. But as the philosopher Richard Rorty has argued, national pride is to countries what self-respect is to individuals: a necessary condition for self-improvement. Join us this fourth of July weekend—our 250th!—as Kevin makes a liberal case for patriotism.	Kevin McCulloch
7/12	Witchy Resistance: Putting the 'Coven' Back in Covenant Community" The word 'witch' has a long and controversial history, and even now the idea of witchcraft often engenders discomfort and suspicion in modern Americans. But who really are witches, and what if witchiness is inherent to the UU tradition?	Meredith McCaskey
7/19	TBA	Miguel Flores
7/26	UUs & Neurodivergence	Joel Kottman



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

Date	Celebration
7/1	Reed W. is celebrating a birthday!
7/3	Elizabeth R. is celebrating a birthday!
	Sean M. is celebrating a birthday!
7/7	Kyson P. is celebrating a birthday!
7/10	Lawton E. is celebrating a birthday!
7/12	Dillon C. is celebrating a birthday!
7/13	Conner B. is celebrating a birthday!
7/14	Valorie B. is celebrating a birthday!
7/19	Koda B. is celebrating a birthday!
7/20	Mala N. is celebrating a birthday!
	Ela N. is celebrating a birthday!
7/22	Sansa C. is celebrating a birthday!
7/23	Joe L. is celebrating a birthday!
7/28	Margaret P. is celebrating a birthday!
7/30	Benny B. 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 proceeding the issue date. Please email your news articles and artwork to newsletter@uuman.org