



Tapestry

August 2016

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Spiritual Arts

Thank you, Sound Techs!

By Debbie Hardegree

If you don't usually notice the work of the volunteers Myrna Adams West and the Spiritual Arts Cluster are recognizing in July, that is a good thing! Our crew of sound technicians work hard to make sure that the speaker microphones are set correctly, that the sound levels for any instruments are balanced, and that Reverend Alison's wireless microphone is transmitting. They set the controls on the soundboard and monitor the service to correct any problems quickly and unobtrusively. It is often challenging to juggle all of the auditory elements involved in a given service, and those with listening difficulties especially need to be able to hear what is being said, or sung, or played, without strain. Most of the sound technicians are not professional sound engineers. Instead they are willing volunteers who have received training. Our sound crew does a great job of enhancing the worship experience for all of us, and this month we recognize and thank them.

Dan Everett is the senior member of the sound crew, having begun serving when this building first opened 24 years ago! A long-time member of UUFA, Dan has trained other sounds techs, including **Ray Freeman-Lynde**, who has been working the soundboard for at least 10 years. Ray says that it is fun to be involved in the service in this way, and he particularly enjoys working with our musicians.

Julie Sapp has been helping with sound at UUFA for around 6 years. She thinks she was initially trained by Herb Larrick, and has also attended trainings with Brent Litch. As an educational audiologist, Julie has experience with remote mic and classroom amplification systems, but the sound mixing board was new to her. Julie may be the first female sound technician at UUFA. She notes that "When the system is not working, it is a huge strain to hear what is going on, even for folks with normal hearing. Straining to hear detracts from the experience. I cannot process the content of the service deeply if I am straining to make out the words. The acoustics of the room make it difficult in some areas (can we say "choir loft") even when the system is working, and that is unfortunate.



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Sunday Worship

This month's theme is **Interdependence**.

August 7 – *Who Answers Letters to the Sacred?* An old fashioned letter remains a powerful form of communication. Letters have changed history and herstory; changed our interpretation of events. They can be a mode of helping to define what we need most in our internal life, our most sacred desires. A letter written by a dying mother to her bishop centers our exploration of this dated, but potent communication. Rev. Duncan E. Teague with Lay Minister Vivian Sellers

August 14 – *Like a River Flowing* Like the stream flows into the river and the river flows into the sea, we will mingle the waters gathered from our summer adventures, near and far, and share how we felt the interdependent web of all existence. With Lay Ministers Myrna Adams West, Ange Kahn, Michelle Leebens-Mack, Vivian Sellers, Karen Solheim, Aleta Turner & Herb West.

August 21 – *Teaching as a Spiritual Practice* Why do people choose to become teachers? On this Sunday when we dedicate our Religious Education teachers for this

U-lead is August's Cause of the Month

During our worship services we collect an offering for UUFA's Social Action 'Cause of the Month'.

This month we share the offering with **U-lead**. For more on this program and UUFA's *Share the Plate* initiative, click [here](http://www.uuathensga.org/justice/social-action-committee/cause-of-the-month/).

(<http://www.uuathensga.org/justice/social-action-committee/cause-of-the-month/>)

next program year, several members and friends will share the reasons they chose to teach classes here at UUFA, for children, youth, and adults. Lay Ministers Vivian Sellers & Aleta Turner, with RE Director Morgan Watson



August 28 – *My Child is in the Water* With continued terrorist attacks in countries around the world and the very real fear of terrorism occurring in our own country, how are we to respond to the calls of help from refugees seeking resettlement? How do we balance fear and hope in a time of such uncertainty? Rev. Charlotte Arsenault with Dr. David Jarrett

Worship begins with everyone in the sanctuary for the first 20 minutes or so. Typically we share a welcome, light our congregational chalice, sing a hymn, and experience a storytelling or brief conversation.

Children and teachers are recessed from the sanctuary by congregational singing. Children and teachers go to their classrooms or to a special children's worship in the Fellowship Hall. Parents are welcome to accompany their children if they wish. Remaining adults hear a sermon, special music, sing, meditate or pray, and share brief joys and sorrows within the community on most Sundays. Some Sundays all ages remain in the sanctuary for the entire service.

For more on UUFA's worship services, visit the Spiritual Arts page at www.uuathensga.org.

Sundays in Religious Education

August 7 -- *Last day of "Earth Wisdom."*

August 14 -- *All-Ages Water Communion* worship service; Sundaes Sunday follows the service (See Family Tree for more information on Sundaes Sunday.)

August 21 -- The 2016-17 program year begins for Children and Youth Religious Education. Children will begin in the sanctuary and participate in our ***Teacher Dedication Ceremony*** before singing out to the first day of RE grade level Classes.

August 28 -- Grade Level RE Classes; Our Whole Lives, grades 4-6 begins with a Parent Orientation at 2 pm.

Children's Charity Each Sunday during RE Class, we pass an offering can to give children the opportunity to donate to our children's charity—Food 2 Kids, a program of the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia which assists children who are at risk of hunger by sending them home from school with easy-to-prepare bags of food.

Spiritual Arts

Goddess Group & Writing as Spiritual Practice

The Goddess Group's summer/fall activities begin on August 21 with a discussion of *The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd. Copies of the book are on reserve at the Athens-Clarke Library (Ask for Aleta.) and are available on Nook, Kindle and Amazon. The book is a novelization of the lives of the real-life Grimke sisters of Charleston, SC. The sisters were early 19th Century abolitionists and women's equality advocates. All women of the Fellowship and community are invited to join the Goddess Group for discussion of this thought-provoking novel. The discussion will be facilitated by Leigh Harvey.

Other summer/fall activities include the following:

—Mary Jean Hartel will facilitate a Henna Workshop on September 18. Let Myrna know if you will be attending so that Mary Jean will know how much henna to prepare.

—June Warfield will direct a ritual feast entitled "Recipes from Our Spiritual Mother" on October 18. Watch for details.

—Barbara McLaughlin will lead a workshop/presentation on aromatherapy on November 20 with opportunity for members to make their own intuitive blends.

—The annual Tea with the Goddess is scheduled for December 18 at Myrna's home. Reservations are required.

Unless otherwise noted, all activities are held in the Fellowship Hall from 1:30-3:30 pm on third Sundays.

We will continue the study of the *Rise Up & Call Her Name* curriculum from Women & Religion on third Sundays, January through July of 2017. Stay tuned for more information.

To learn more about the Goddess Group, visit our web page at www.uuathensga.org or contact Myrna Adams West, the Lay Minister for Spiritual Arts, at spiritualarts@uuathensga.org.

Writing as Spiritual Practice will meet **August 7 at 9 am** in the sofa room behind the sanctuary. Below are some suggested prompts for writing on the June theme of "Connections." Everyone is welcome. To find out more about this Stepping Stone, go to www.uuathensga.org, or contact Myrna Adams West, the Lay Minister for Spiritual Arts at spiritualarts@uuathensga.org.

Assignment for August 7 at 9 am: Choose one or more

of the following or make up your own assignment:

1. How is "interdependence" different from "interconnected"? Give examples of each.
2. The Seventh of the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism calls on us to "covenant to affirm and promote: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." If you were called upon to defend this principle, what would you say?
3. With whom or with what are you totally interdependent? Why? Is this a good thing or not? Why?
4. What does true interdependence require? Why? Email Myrna for a copy of a paragraph from May Sarton's *Journal of a Solitude* for some inspiration.
5. Further explain what you think Václav Havel means by "our egoistical anthropocentrism" in the adapted excerpt from "The World in Our Hands," printed as #134 in *Lifting Our Voices: Readings in the Living Tradition*. (Email Myrna for a copy.) From what do you think this "egoistical anthropocentrism" arose? Why did it arise? Havel gives some general guidelines for restoring the interdependent order of things, but what do you think are some specific things we could do to restore it? See also Janisse Ray's poem "The Resuscitation." (Email Myrna for a copy.)
6. Why is it easier for some to acknowledge the interdependence of humans with the natural world than the interdependence of humans with other humans whose culture, lifestyle, skin color, religion, politics, etc. differ from their own? Explain.
7. Describe a time when you felt utterly at odds with someone with whom you had always shared interdependence. How did it feel? Why did the breach occur? How did you restore it, if you did?
8. The United States of America was born out of a war for independence from England. Americans ever since then have taken great pride in their independent spirit. How might we reconcile this independent spirit with the need, some might say "necessity," for interdependence?



Board of Trustees

Thoughts on Interdependence

Each month, a member of the board writes a column for Tapestry, which we try to connect to our monthly theme and other UUFA happenings. For this month's theme of "interdependence," I spent a good bit of time online, looking up examples and quotes to draw on multiple sources of wisdom to address this challenging topic.

The dictionary defines as "the quality or condition of being mutually reliant on each other." Interestingly, most examples from online sources immediately reference economic interdependence in a global economy, or talk about organizational structures. Reading these examples makes me think of how interdependent our many activities within the Fellowship can be, and how much the board – and all of us – need to consider that decisions we make in one area can have totally unanticipated consequences elsewhere because of unrecognized dependencies.

Further examples of interdependence extended to the natural world around us. Numerous species have co-developed for mutual benefit in surprising and fascinating ways. On a larger scale, we recognize complex ecological structures. Our seventh principle reflects this broader view of interdependence in its phrasing, which affirms "respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." Often we translate that to a responsibility toward the environment and the recognition that we, too, are a part of the natural world.

Beyond the physical world, humans are social animals, and even the most introverted of us need connections with others and a sense of belonging. According to the psychologist Erik Erikson, "Life doesn't make any sense without interdependence. We need each other, and the

sooner we learn that, the better for us all." There is research showing that our social connections – or the lack of them – affect us profoundly in terms of health and quality of life.

At UUFA, we recognize and affirm our connections in multiple ways, often through shared rituals or celebrations. August marks the end of summer and the beginning of the academic year for students and teachers, a transition that affects even those not directly affiliated with schools. Travelers return from summer vacations, local traffic increases, and despite the current heat, we sense an upcoming change of season. We reconnect with our water ceremony, linking where we have been to where we are now, acknowledging that we all contribute to the collective pool. The water ceremony symbolizes all that connects us on a deeper level – our hopes, aspirations, and visions for a better world.

As we explore the facets of "interdependence" together this month, I look forward to learning from others' perceptions, and cherish my connection to a community that challenges and supports my own growth and understanding. —*Linda Gilbert*

Second Lookers

Are you a Second Looker, retired from your job but not from life? Second Lookers are UUFA members and friends who meet monthly on the second Tuesday, for conversation and fellowship. Stay tuned for details of the next meeting in September!

At its July meeting, the Ministry

Council . . . Approved a Fundraising Request to publish an adult coloring book that features 24 of Barbara Leissner's OOS cover drawings. The proceeds will benefit the building program.

Discussed the proposed Black Lives Matter Banner and shared ideas and concerns for Karen to take back to the Social Action Committee and Exploring Racial Justice Team.

Agreed to share a summary of the Ministry Council notes of monthly meetings with both the Board and the Tapestry and to request that a copy of the Board's draft minutes of monthly meetings be shared with the Ministry Council.

Approved a plan, pending Board approval, to post a welcoming sign and make available brochures for Pokémon Go players who stop at the UUFA sign at the entrance to the parking lot, which has been designated a Poke Stop.

Received an update on the Athens-Clarke County Safety Training plans for the Leadership Council meeting on August 20.

Received an update on the new UUFA website plans.

Clarified the following dates related to Rev. Alison's sabbatical and vacation plans: on vacation in July and sabbatical in August; will continue sabbatical in March, April, and May of 2017; will be on her usual study leave in June 2017 and on vacation in July 2017.

Thank you, Sound Techs!

Continued from Page 1.

Hopefully that will be improved with changes to the sanctuary during the upcoming building expansion/improvement.”

Brent Litch has been a sound engineer and self-described “electronic genius” for 40 years. He found a spiritual home at UUFA five years ago, and he designed and installed our current sound system. Brent says he noticed the need for a better sound system when he was new to UUFA in 2011 and called Reverent Alison to offer his help. He describes the sound system as a “magnifying glass between the performer and the audience” and says that ideally it should be transparent. Brent has trained our UUFA sound technicians for the last five years.

Ted Mayer has been on the sound crew for around 4 years. He has worked with Brent to learn how to operate the sound system, and he often comes in early to set up the sound board when our bands are playing. Ted has a love of music and wants to help us sound as good as possible!

Austin Childers is one of our newest sound crew members, having been trained around three months ago. He and his wife Kayla have been attending UUFA since 2013. Austin has had experience mixing sound for video in his marketing and communications job, but live mixing was new to him. He thinks “access to the message and music is important for effectively sharing their peace and meaning.”

Audey Lee is also a newer member of the sound crew. She has been attending UUFA since November 2015, and she has already worked sound twice in the past two months. Audey has experience operating a sound board for a few plays. To anyone considering bring trained as a sound technician, she says “If you're attending services anyway, might as well push some buttons.”

All of our sound technicians encourage anyone with an interest in helping with the Sunday services to consider being trained to work the sound system.

Debbie Hardegree worked with her Volunteer Recognition Teammates and with Myrna Adams West to arrange

**Choir(s) and Drum Circle rehearse
Wednesdays in the sanctuary.**

Calling all Mentors!

This year, the UUFA youth will have the opportunity to participate in the **Coming of Age** program, and they'll each need a mentor to discuss some of life's big questions, helping youth arrive at answers towards their own personal credo statements. Interested in deep topics of conversations with youth toward helping them articulate their own personal theology?

Want to nudge youth toward embracing their own leadership potential? Interested in fun and fellowship with other Mentors, Youth Leaders, Parents, and Youth at special events and field trips? Yearning to deepen your own appreciation of life's mysteries? [Contact DRE Morgan](mailto:dre@uuathensga.org) to get involved (dre@uuathensga.org).

Smart Lunch / Smart Kid

A big THANK YOU to all who participated through gifts of time, talent, and treasure throughout the summer in general and on July 31 in particular in the peanut butter and jelly sandwich making and lunch assembly.

Throughout this summer, we provided 550 peanut butter and jelly sandwich lunches for the Smart Lunch Smart Kid program, which provides summer lunches to students who traditionally receive free and reduced-lunches during the school year.

This initiative is sponsored by the Social Action Committee, a part of the UUFA Justice Cluster.

ATTN: UUFA Leaders

Leadership Council Meeting Saturday, August 20 from 9 until noon. The theme for this biannual meeting will be safety.

- Beth Burgess, Athens Clarke County Emergency Management Administrator will present ways that we as a congregation can think about safety in general.
- Lt. Larry Ford, Athens Clarke County Sr. Fire Prevention Officer, will look at fire safety and will walk us through use of fire extinguishers.

Lt. Christopher Nichols, Athens-Clarke County Police Department, will talk to us about active weapon threats, and how best to react in such situations.

Our goal is to learn to better lead in our fellowship! Please RSVP to Michelle Leebens-Mack, Lay Minister for Connections at connections@uuathensga.org.

Justice

Social Action Committee Events & Opportunities

Be the Change You Want to See in the World!

You are invited to become a member of the UUFA Social Action Committee (SAC)! How? Attend our next meeting on August 7, beginning at noon in the office.

Want to know what transpires between SAC meetings? Join the SAC listserv at

http://lists.uuathensga.org/listinfo.cgi/social_action-uuathensga.org

This listserv will let you know what transpires not only within SAC but also in the local Athens area in terms of social action. Everyone is encouraged to sign up!

SAVE the DATES: Sunday, August 21, from 3-6 p.m.

Annual Spirited Spelling Spectacular, a fundraiser for the Athens-Clarke Literacy Council, Georgian Room, Holiday Inn, Athens Cheer on the UUFA team: Betsy Bean, Roger Bailey, and Ray Freeman-Lynde Watch for further information about how to help sponsor a (much-needed?) "mulligan" for this team.

Saturday, November 5, from 4-7 p.m. Justice Fest at UUFA Sponsored by the Athens Economic Justice Coalition

Get Your Shirt On! Click [here](#) to order your Standing on the Side of Love t-shirt.

Brown Bag and a Movie: August 14 noon, UUFA Fellowship Hall Did you know that the differences between the races is just an illusion? Wonder why this is true? Ever wonder why white people in America have so much more wealth than Blacks and other minority people? You will be surprised because it's not what you think. Learn the answers as we watch the highlights from *The House We Live In*, part of the acclaimed PBS series: *Race the Power of An Illusion*.

CAUSE OF THE MONTH: The Cause of the Month Share the Plate for August is U-Lead. On Sunday, August 7, a representative of this organization, will speak about it during worship at 10:30 a.m.

CANtributions to the Athens Emergency Food Bank "We're #3; we're #3? After six months of competition among the twenty-five area faith communities CANtributing to the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank, UUFA is

in THIRD place with our total CANtributions of 1464, only 712 items out of second place!

CAN you CANtribute at least five cans a month? The wicker basket as you enter the sanctuary is willing and able to receive your CANtributions of either nonperishable food items or monetary donations. Tuna, saltines, pork and beans, and green peas are always needed.



Not a fan of grocery store shopping but still want to CANtribute? Donate any amount of money (designated as Food Bank), and savvy SAC shoppers will convert your cash or check to cans.

CAN YoUUr Birthday! How can you CAN YoUUr Birthday? Whenever you celebrate your birthday, bring enough nonperishable food items to match every year you are celebrating. For example, turning 60? Bring 60 cans! Turning 16? Bring 16 cans. All CANtributions will be donated to the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank.

Join in the SAC Congregational Read: *Waking Up White* You are invited to participate in a summer congregational read suggested by members of the Social Action Committee: *Waking Up White* by Debby Irving. Join the UFFA Book Talk group on Sunday, September 11, at 12:30 in discussion of this book or attend another discussion on Wednesday, September 14, beginning at 7:15 p.m. Want to reserve a copy of this book? Click [here](#), or contact Karen Solheim (justice@uuathensga.org or 706-202-7515. Suggested donation \$5-\$20.

For questions about any SAC initiative, please contact chair David Jarrett (daviduufa@gmail.com or 706-338-2798)

To submit items to The Tapestry,

please email

infoshare@uuathensga.org.

Almost time to register!

Want to get more involved in UUFA, get to know some folks better, and explore varied topics of interest concerning your spiritual existence? Sign up for a 2016-2017 Small Group Ministry group!

SGM provides an excellent opportunity for UUFA members and friends to make new and deeper connections, build community within our congregation, develop our spiritual selves and beliefs, and take action in our broader community.

If you've already participated in an SGM, then invite someone else to become involved, and be sure to sign up yourself!

We also are in need of group facilitators for the coming year; if you think this way of service to UUFA would be something you'd be interested in, please email Vivian Sellers (vpsellers@gmail.com)

Registration for the program year is open from August 28 until September 11. If you would like to participate in a group, please complete the online registration form by September 11. Groups meet September through May. Paper registration forms are available upon request. For more detailed information about the Small Group Ministry program and a link to the online form when registration opens on August 28, visit UUFA's website--<http://uuathensga.org/education/small-group-ministries>.

Our Whole Lives Program



The UUA's comprehensive human sexuality program for Grades 4-6 begins with a Parent Orientation Session **Sunday, August 28**. Tentative class schedule is: **Sept 4, 18; Oct 2, 16; Nov 6, 20; Dec 4, 18**. The program for Grades K-1 will begin with Parent Orientation in January and run through May. Each program consists of eight one-hour classes.

Whoop ME? Yes YOU! Do you want to help deliver accurate, honest, and age-appropriate information about human sexuality in the context of UU values to children in grades K-6? Then be a trained OWL Facilitator. Let Morgan know if you're interested. UUFA pays your way! **Owl facilitator training is in Charlotte, NC August 19-21.**

You missed your chance!

To save some money on adult registration fees for the **UUFA Congregational Retreat at The Mountain**, but we're hoping you'll still register to go to this FABULOUS weekend with friends from this community. **It's not too late! You can still be a part of the fun!**

The retreat offers time for rest and relaxation, surrounded by the beauty of the area surrounding Little Scaly Mountain. It starts Friday, September 30th and lasts through Sunday lunch on October 2. The choir will hold its retreat on Saturday morning, and those folks not involved in that will be offered the chance to attend a workshop led by Reverend Alison Eskildsen. That afternoon, several options will be offered to those attending, including: a couple of hikes (one easy, one harder), a poetry reading/discussion, an Exploring Racial Justice workshop, a Tai Chi class, a writing workshop, and a coloring workshop. Yoga will be offered on Saturday morning before breakfast, a beer brewing workshop on Saturday night, a ukulele get-together and a sky talk on Friday night. There's something for everyone, and all-ages programming will be available.

The retreat also offers time for spiritual growth and experiences, through the workshops and through the vespers services both nights and Sunday morning services. The Mountain is a spiritual place; just sitting on Meditation Rock might help you find answers you've been seeking. Please register by the end of August! You can register online at The Mountain website (<http://themountainrlc.org/event/2016-uufa-athens-ga-congregational-retreat/>), call the registrar's office at The Mountain (828-526-5838), or pick up a paper registration form in the UUFA office. Remember that children under 8 are free.

UUFA Member Retires from UGA

UUFA's **James Porter** to retire after more than 40 years at UGA. To celebrate his distinguished career the Odum School of Ecology hosts two days of special lectures, on Fri., Sep. 25 & Sat., Sep. 26.

Mark your calendars and visit their website for more details

[\(http://www.ecology.uga.edu/events.php?Retirement_Celebration_and_Lecture_Series_in_Honor_of_James_W._Porter-647/\)](http://www.ecology.uga.edu/events.php?Retirement_Celebration_and_Lecture_Series_in_Honor_of_James_W._Porter-647/).

Expanding Our Vision (EOV) Building Project Notes

Thanks to everyone who attended the building project discussions after service on the three July Sundays and who came to the Town Hall on July 27. Your comments and questions during these sessions and the thoughtful replies to the mailing about the project we sent out have been very helpful as the Building Team moves forward.

The Congregational Presentation by the architects will take place after the service on Sunday, August 28, 12:30 PM, where a nearly final project plan will be unveiled and discussed. We hope that everyone will be able to attend.

We are focused on a floor plan for renovated and expanded spaces that essentially touches everything in

the building and adds over 3,000 square feet of new construction. Plus substantially expanded parking.

We are also discussing possible reconfigurations of the Sanctuary that would permit expanded seating and much greater flexibility.

Our goal is to create new spaces and make existing spaces more functional to support our incredibly active community and provide room for the further evolution of UUFA.

Come on the 28th and hear all about what we have been doing. We want to encourage everyone to participate in this exciting project.

—Bob McArthur, chair, EOV Steering Committee

Attention Chalice Lighters!

Effective now, information on how to make your contribution to Chalice Lighters has changed.

Contributions to the current call to help the UU Congregation of Gwinnett (UUCG) fund the hiring of their new professional choir director can be made in either of two ways: **Online contributions** may be made via the UUCG website at this link: <http://www.uucg.org/index.php/about-us/stewardship/finances/181-on-line-donations> (or visit www.uucg.org, select "Upcoming Events" and then select "Donate").

Checks should be made directly payable to UUCG with "Chalice Lighters" in the memo line. Please mail your check to UUCG, 12 Bethesda Church Road, Lawrenceville, GA 30044. The deadline is August 15, 2016.

If you are a Chalice Lighter, you should have received email notification of this new call and of this method of contributing. If there is a problem, please let Myrna Adams West, the Chalice Lighter Representative for UUFA, know.

Please email her at myrnaaw@bellsouth.net or contact the Southern Region Administrator, Jessica Curren



jcurren@uua.org or [877-216-2986](tel:877-216-2986).

Because of the consolidation of Mid-South, Florida, Southeast and Southwest Districts into the Southern Region, the Regional Chalice Lighter plan is under construction, so the old ways of contributing no longer apply.

If you would like to know more about Chalice Lighters, you will find a brochure with description and online pledge form on the Mid-South District website at <http://www.uuasouthernregion.org/clmsd.html> or you may contact Myrna at the above email address.

Exploring Racial Justice Updates

Read about :

Summer Congregational Read *Waking Up White*

Straw Poll Results

Connection with Welcoming Congregation Work

Your Role in Exploring Racial Justice

Thank you to those who participated in the straw poll conducted by the Social Action Committee's Exploring Racial Justice Task Force and those who participated in the related workshop at the May 21 Leadership Council meeting.

Here is what we learned:

There is tremendous support in our congregation for working toward racial justice and for exploring the themes in the congregational summer read *Waking Up White*.

In the straw poll, 43 of 93 respondents supported hanging a Black Lives Matter banner in front of the building, 23 people were undecided, and 9 were opposed to such an action. We found that members are generally interested in more conversation about hanging a banner. We also received feedback at the Leadership Council meeting that people want to know that the hanging of a banner would not be the end of our racial justice work, that it would be a part of a larger overall plan.

Drawing on the Fellowship's success a decade ago working through the desire and concerns about becoming a Welcoming Congregation, the Task Force believes that there is a way to move forward to en-

gage with racial justice in relation to UU principles, honor various voices in our congregation, and explore the implications of the Black Lives Matter movement for UUism and the world around us.

The Task Force believes an important role exists for you to play wherever you are around expressing your personal and/or congregational support of racial justice work in general and the Black Lives Matter movement in particular. If you are firmly against hanging a BLM banner, we welcome your expressing your perspective one on one or in future gatherings. Those of us on the Task Force have a bias toward supporting the movement, and/but we each have a lot to learn from hearing diverse perspectives. If you are undecided, we invite you to bring your uncertainty into the conversation at Task Force-sponsored and other events in the coming months. If you are fully supportive of the movement, we encourage you to consider expressing your support with a bumper sticker or with a button and to keep your heart open to those who might not agree and to share what you learn in that process.

In short, we feel called to respond as members of a spiritual community to work harder for racial justice. Our church is at a time in its history of expanding its vision, and this feels like an important time to be thinking together about who we want to be in challenging systemic injustice.

Please stay tuned for more announcements of future programming. There will be a number of opportunities to talk in small groups. If you prefer one-on-one conversation, the following members of the Task Force (David Jarrett, Heather Jensen, Hilda Kirtz, and Karen Solheim) would welcome the chance to talk with you.

Campaign Discussion Group

Look for this group each Sunday until the November election after the service in the Ocean Room or the Rainbow Room.

Paul Gurian, a political science professor at UGA who specializes in presidential campaigns, will facilitate.

Care Notes

Michelle Sharkey Vaught, a former UUFA member, is not well. Her health has deteriorated due to multiple auto-immune diseases. Husband Brian Vaught has set up a fundraising site to help the family afford the treatment she needs. To read her story or contribute, please follow this link -- <https://www.gofundme.com/michellesv>

Rev. Eskildsen's Sabbatical



A ministerial sabbatical is a period of leave to be used for personal and/or professional development not possible during the course of normal congregational life and work routines. Sabbaticals are not vacations, but pathways to viewing vocations in new ways, through fresh eyes. Many people travel, experience different cultures, or learn new skills during sabbaticals.

The intent of a sabbatical is to return to a congregation renewed, refreshed, and with new insights. Rev. Alison takes her sabbatical during her seventh year of service to the Fellowship. Her goals include catching up on professional and spiritual reading, taking at least one contemplative spiritual retreat, and making stronger connections with local community and faith leaders in Athens, in addition to having time just to be (to think, reflect, and experience being, rather than doing) as a way to recharge her spiritual and professional energies.

Rev. Alison takes her sabbatical in two parts: first in August 2016, then in March through May 2017. She'll

continue her time away during June and July 2017, her contracted vacation and study leave times. During her absence the Lay Ministers will continue to have responsibility for the programmatic life of the Fellowship. Rev. Don Randall has increased pastoral care responsibilities and minimal staff oversight. Rev. Alison will communicate monthly with the congregation via the Tapestry newsletter, but will not respond to communication from the Fellowship during this sabbatical time.

If you have any questions about the sabbatical, please see Jane Mayer. For questions about programs, please contact the Lay Minister responsible for that area. And, for pastoral concerns, please contact Rev. Don.

Rev. Alison is grateful to the Fellowship for allowing her this time away. She knows it will be a productive time for both her and the Fellowship.

August Cause of the Month Time and Talent Opportunities

In addition to giving treasure to the August Cause of the Month, you are invited also to give time and talent to U-Lead by doing the following:

1. Mentor on Thursday nights from 6:00-8:00. This would take the form of helping students study for a particular section of the SAT or ACT college entrance exams, helping them with high school or college homework, or helping them apply for colleges and/or scholarships.

2. Provide a meal for our Thursday night meetings. We have an average of 30 students and mentors. Some donors cook a meal, others have pizza or sandwiches delivered, and others contact a restaurant to donate a meal.

3. Provide transportation for students making college campus visits.

4. Donate gently used items for college living.

For further information on these August Cause of the Month Time and Talent Opportunities, contact JoBeth Allen (jobethal@uga.edu).



UU Fellowship of Athens

780 Timothy Road, Athens, Georgia 30606
706-546-7914 — www.uuathensga.org

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 am-4 pm
Other times by appointment.

To share news, email infoshare@uuathensga.org
by noon Thursday each week.

For pastoral care concerns, contact

Susan Ponsoldt, CARE Program Coordinator, 706-548-4821.

Rev. Alison Eskildsen, Minister

706-424-9449 (c), rev.eskildsen@uuathensga.org

Rev. Dr. Don Randall, Community Minister

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Morgan Watson, R.E. Director

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