



the UNIGRAM

Covenant and Accountability

Rev. Dr. Barbara Coeyman, Interim Minister

“No single concept is more central to our faith understanding than being in covenant. It is at the core of our identity. It is how we ... build and sustain the Beloved Community. It is the foundation of our governance structures at all levels..... The very existence of Unitarian Universalism may very well depend on how UU members, congregations, and the (denomination) understand, practice, and celebrate our covenants.”

Unlocking the Power of Covenant (UUA, 2021, p. 3, 7)

Covenant is central to liberal religion. Covenants are promises we make for our common actions, for how we live together in mutual respect and love, how we walk together. The root of “religion” is “bound together.” Covenant is that binding glue. Covenants cultivate relationships, in religion and many other aspects of life. Marriage and life partnerships are sealed by covenant. Perhaps some readers of this Unigram are members of home-owners associations which include covenants about use of the grounds where they live. Covenant cultivates relationships. Covenant makes Beloved Community possible. Unitarian Universalism is a faith of “Deeds, not Creeds.”

(continued on page 6)

In This Issue

<u>Worship Schedule</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Religious Education News</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Youth Group</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Splinters from the Board</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Dedicated Offering</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Mini-Bazaar in the Woods</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Wheel of Life</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Calendar</u>	<u>9</u>

Even Now... A Thanksgiving Reflection for a Time of Hard History

Rev. Dr. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

How can we be thankful in hard times? There is no gainsaying that these are indeed very hard times: On a global level, the pandemic continues to disrupt people’s lives, national economies, supply chains. Climate change is rapidly making the planet a less desirable and, in some instances, impossible place to live and thrive. In the US, the government continues to be something of a shambles. In our beloved church community, we’re unpacking and beginning to deal with a lengthy and difficult history of clergy misconduct that has reverberated through our congregational life up to the present. Each of us, individually and families, has our own version of “hard times” that impact us.

Life simply isn’t always easy. Each of us comes with a history, too; it’s part of being human.

I find myself taking refuge, finding joy and gratitude, in the small things of everyday life: the birds who come to our feeders, including the juncos who arrived the day I was writing this essay, sunshine, wind in the trees, and rain on the roof, a warm blanket at the end of a long day, my husband going to pick up a few groceries we needed so I could work on this column this morning, my children’s and grandchildren’s having made good and authentic lives... So many gritudes!

But what about the things that make these tough times well... tough? Can we find reasons for gratitude and joy even there? I think we can. And

(continued on page 8)

Sunday Mornings at Our (Virtual) Church in the Woods

The theme for November is Holding History

Online Service at 10:45 am <https://bit.ly/UUCMSundayService>

November 7 – “It Matters What We Believe” Rev. Coeyman

The Unitarian religious educator Sophia Lyons Fahs authored a well-known passage about religious belief (*Singing the Living Tradition*, #657: “It Matters What We Believe”). In liberal religion, the beliefs of individuals are wide-ranging: some walled, some expansive, some like shadows, other like sunshine. Let’s consider not only **what** we believe, but **that** we believe, no matter the nature of our beliefs. Let’s be inspired by a well-known story about unsighted persons and their many views of an elephant.

November 14 – “Is There Common Ground?” Rev. Coeyman

American life seems extraordinarily and extremely divided, between rich and poor, progressives and conservatives, “haves” and “have-nots.” The need for common ground is critical, not only in political life, but also in our families, our organizations, our congregations. What does common ground look like? Perhaps some news ways of imagining conversations can offer new habits for hearing one another?

November 21 – “Gratitude for Harvest Feasts” Rev. Coeyman

In this multi-generational service in celebration of the season of gratitude and giving thanks, let us re-visit UUCM’s “Harvest Feast,” modified for our current online platform. During this month with a Soul Matters and worship theme of “Holding History,” our Harvest Feast calls us to remember all our ancestors: pilgrims of liberal religion, the original inhabitants of these lands we occupy, and all those who came before us.

November 28 – “Holding Humanity” Rev. Gordon Gibson

Sometimes when we look at history we use it to magnify 'our side' or to describe our victimization. This sermon will draw on stories, including some from the civil rights era, of people holding their own humanity, and even that of their oppressors, and in the process creating a more constructive history.

Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, Minister Emeritus of the Elkhart, Indiana, congregation. Gordon is a civil rights veteran, a founder of the Living Legacy Project which conducts civil rights pilgrimages, and a Unitarian Universalist historian.

Religious Education for Children & Youth

RE Program – Saturdays 10:30-noon

In the month of November, we will continue to meet on Saturdays for our **RE Gatherings from 10:30-noon**. We will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall to enjoy a story and activity, followed by free time on the playground if the weather allows. **Please note, that we will not be holding a RE Gathering on Saturday, November 27.** Masking and social distancing are required inside the UUCM building.

Adult Religious Exploration

Adult Discussion Group
Every Sunday, 9:30 am
Via Zoom

This group is a chance for people with various personal beliefs to get together and openly discuss a variety of topics. You’ll find weekly topics and a Zoom link listed in the eBlast each Friday.

Religious Education Corner

Nadine Tringali,
Director of Religious Education



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I hope you have been enjoying the *Soulful Home* subscription that we send out at the beginning of each month! The theme for November is **Holding History**. It is about creating memorable and amazing moments as you explore the monthly theme with your family!

Nadine

Remember the Sky Joy Harjo

Remember your birth, how your mother struggled to give you form and breath. You are evidence of her life, and her mother's, and hers...
Remember the earth whose skin you are...
Remember you are all people
and all people are you..."

Full poem found at

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/remember-0>

Youth Events

Nicole Kaplan,
Coordinator of Youth Programming

When Youth Group meets on Zoom, we are in Zoom #2 <https://zoom.us/j/5150188364> Passcode UUcm#1859

November Birthdays

Alice - 10th

Regional Youth Gatherings

Youth from UU churches around our "Heartland" region (MI, IN, OH, KY) gather on the third Sunday of each month to play games. It is a very laid-back gathering and the youth present get to decide what games are played.

We will meet Sunday, November 21st from 4-5:30 in UUCM's Sunday Service space. Keep an eye out for reminders and the link.

This is a great opportunity to make connections with new friends who we hope to someday get to meet in person at Cons and other events.

Dates

6 - Mini-Bazaar from 10-1; volunteer opportunity

7 - OWL 7-9 redo; no YG

14 - Curriculum Sunday

21 - OWL 7-9 redo; regional youth gathering 4-5:30

28 - OFF

Caregiver Gathering

November 18th from 7:30 to 9 will be our gathering for parents and caregivers of middle and high school youth. This month will be mostly social with an opportunity to talk about what we'd like to focus on at future gatherings and a chance to play the games our youth have been enjoying on Jackbox.

Have a wonderful month! I hope to see you around!

Nicole



Splinters from the Board

Benjamin Strack, President

I want to thank all of you who have joined in discussions on our options for future ministry, either in our official town halls, more casual conversations, or through the survey. After deliberating, the Board of Trustees has decided that we will move forward in search for a Developmental Minister to join with us in the second half of 2022.

Our interim minister, Rev. Barbara Coeyman, has been wonderfully supportive of our search for our future path, and will now be helping the board in creating developmental goals that we will share with you before the end of this year, prior to making them official in our search documents. A search committee will be assembled early in the new year, and we will begin our process of finding the next minister for our beloved community.

Onward we journey together,

Ben

Muncie Afghan Refugee Resettlement Committee (MARRC) Needs YOUR Help

We need your help!! In the coming months, Muncie will have the honor of welcoming a (as of yet an unknown) number of families who have been displaced from their homes in Afghanistan.

Many of these families made it to the US with nothing but the clothes on their backs and will be starting from scratch when they land in Muncie.

[Click here for details about what's needed now.](#)

November Dedicated Offering: Hoosier Environmental Council

The Hoosier Environmental Council (HEC) is Indiana's leading educator and advocate for environmental issues and policies. Their collaborative approach to working with stakeholders has been effective in a state that does not always prioritize the quality of its citizens' lives. The Hoosier Environmental Council is the voice of the people for the environment in Indiana — the organization with the passion and the plan to tackle our environmental challenges and help make our state a healthier, better place to live and do business. They aspire to build a statewide movement that embraces Hoosiers of all walks of life – Republicans, Democrats and Independents, of all races and backgrounds – united to build a more positive future for our children.

HEC is tackling the issues of building a sustainable economy, environmental health and justice, and water and wilderness protection. Under this big umbrella are efforts to address climate change, coal ash pollution, factory farm waste, quality of drinking water, forest protection, and many other environmental concerns. Their efforts directly align with our Seventh Principle: "Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

You can donate via text during the Sunday service on November 7 or 14, or mail a check to the church office and note "Nov DO - HEC" on the memo line.

Mini-Bazaar in the Woods
November 6, 2021, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
JUST OVER A WEEK TO GO!

The Fundraising Committee will be hosting a Mini-Bazaar on November 6! Weather permitting, it will be held outside under tents and masks will be required. We will not be advertising it to the general public as we did with previous bazaars.

Please consider a donation to the Food or Plants booths! Bake some of Grandma's famous banana bread. Can some of your fresh raspberry preserves. Propagate or divide up some of those houseplants. Donate via the [donation form](#), or contact the booths directly: Food Booth - Jan Moore, Judy Lowe, or Susan Bossung; and Plant Booth - Judy Craig or Cheryl LeBlanc.

Donations can be dropped off Thursday, Nov-4 from 2-4pm; Friday, Nov-5 from 5-7pm; Saturday, Nov-6 from 8-9:30am at the church; or by coordinating directly with the booths.

♪♪ Live music provided at the event by Ric Dwenger! ♪♪

DONUTS AND DRINKS: Coffee, apple cider, and Concannon's donuts being served up for your enjoyment!

FOOD BOOTH: Get those culinary juices flowing. Start making those melt-in-your-mouth desserts, comfort food freezer meals, jams & jellies, outstanding cookies, freezer-friendly soups, delightful pies, superb salad dressings, bountiful breads, almond tarts, and other foods that are your specialty. Please package cookies in smaller batches. Remember to label each package with your name, the ingredients, and a suggested price. Deliver them during donation times above.

PARKING SPACE RAFFLE: Buy in for a chance to use the designated space by the front walkway until November 2022! 1 ticket for \$25, or 5 tickets for \$100. Raffle tickets available from Nov-6 through Nov-20. Winner announced during service on November 21.

PLANT BOOTH: Snag some amazing plants to spruce up your home or office! Your cuttings, repotted plants, wreaths, etc. - all are welcome here! Deliver them during donation times above.

QUILT RAFFLE: This year's quilt is entitled 'Kaleidoscope'! Buy ahead of time online [here](#) or via mail. Tickets bought in advance (online or via mail) must be received by November 3rd. Or you can buy tickets the day of the bazaar until 12pm. Winner will be drawn at the end of the bazaar. 1 ticket for \$5, or 5 tickets for \$20.

SCRIP: If you ever buy gift cards or shop at stores - this is for you! Browse a catalog of nearly 650 retailers and buy your gift cards for holiday gifts, birthday presents, or your weekly shopping. Amazon, Panera, Kohl's, Target, and SO MANY MORE! A percentage from each gift card purchased is donated back to the church. Pre-pay at the bazaar and we'll place a group order for this first go-around. More details available on Nov-6

SWAG: Order great UUCM logo items, including short and long sleeve shirts, crew neck sweatshirts, hooded sweatshirts, water bottles, and coffee mugs. Clothing available in youth and adult sizes, XS to 3-4X.

VENDORS: GreyCat Studios, Christine Lussier - Offering up beautiful ceramics vessels and tiles.

Susan Taylor - Providing a wide assortment of crocheted ornaments and decorations, plus hand-carved wooden items (including Harry Potter wands and more).

(continued on page 6)

Mini-Bazaar in the Woods (continued from page 5)

How will payment work? This year we will be centralizing payment at a Checkout Booth. All church-sponsored booths will have receipts in duplicate with booth names listed. Start a receipt at your first booth and add on as you go! Accepted payment methods include: cash, check (made out to 'UUCM'), and credit card. Consider adding a donation to cover the cost of credit card fees. Vendors determine their own methods of payment and accept those separately from church-sponsored booths.

How can you help?

- Come out to the event on Saturday, November 6, between 10am-1pm.
- Volunteer your time to work that day - setup, at a booth, or teardown.
- Sign up to donate some food for folks to take home. (Baked goods, desserts, frozen meals, bread, jams, jellies - anything you can think of!) [Donation form](#)
- Donate your extra plants, planting supplies, or cuttings! [Donation form](#)

Contact a member of the Fundraising Committee with questions or to sign up to help!

- Jennifer Parks-Strack, jennifer.e.parks@gmail.com
- Denise Ewing, dewing218@gmail.com
- Malissa Tong, malissa.tong@gmail.com
- Linda McKean, lwmckean@comcast.net

*If the weather does not cooperate, we will move indoors with capacity limits and the booths spaced throughout the church. That decision will be made by the end of day Thursday, November 4.

Covenant and Accountability

Rev. Barbara Coeyman (continued from page 1)

Last year this congregation created an All-Church covenant, and many committees and teams wrote or reviewed their covenants. The topic of "covenant" is alive and well at UUCM and among other Unitarian Universalists. The title of a new study, *Unlocking the Power of Covenant*, clues us in on the importance of covenant. Covenants define positive, productive relationships. There is power in the capacity to repair and renew and reaffirm covenants if they be broken. Our Unitarian ancestors first defined their covenant in 1648 in a document called Cambridge Platform. Our Universalist ancestors followed suit in their Winchester Profession of 1803. After merger in 1961 to create the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Seven Principles became the defining covenant of the UUA.

In covenantal religion, with actions as core, relationships are defined horizontally among and by the members of the community. This does not mean that in covenantal religion we don't believe in

anything. Quite the contrary: each of us is strongly urged to have beliefs, to follow theologies which help guide our lives. But we aren't obliged to have the same beliefs, to follow the same creeds. Each person is free to choose her or his or their own beliefs, which may change tomorrow, and to respect the belief choices of others. Do you see how covenants help us strike a balance between the individual and community: individual theologies paths, working together as we live in community.

Covenants apply to a single congregation, and across congregations. Covenants apply to the relationships of religious professionals such as ministers. Covenants also apply to social justice projects such as the current Afghan resettlement program here in Muncie: many people of different religious traditions, or no traditions, walking together, in realizing the common action of resettlement for our new neighbors displaced from their homeland.

(continued on page 7)

Covenant and Accountability

Rev. Barbara Coeyman (continued from page 6)

UUCM's all-church covenant consists of four promises. Let me offer a few prompts about each promise: *At UUCM we commit to:*

1) Welcome with open hearts and minds all who gather here; What does welcome mean to you? How do you demonstrate welcome, live it, turn welcome into an action? Do you welcome other people who are not like you? Do you welcome new ideas, habits, and projects?

2) Encourage others with our words and actions: The verb "encourage" relates to welcome. Do you encourage new ideas, activities, and suggestions? Do you follow up your words with actions which demonstrate support?

3) Share ideas freely, listen deeply, and disagree respectfully: Do you create brave spaces in which you share ideas freely? Deep listening is core to creating non-oppressive, trusting Beloved Communities, without resistance or retaliation from others.

4) Celebrate diversity and creativity: Diversity and creativity flow from the previous actions, especially the action of disagreeing respectfully. Celebrating diversity nurtures creativity, reminding us that we don't need to do things the way we've always done them.

Still, the words of a covenant don't mean much in the long run if we don't live by the actions the covenant calls us to. Covenant requires that we accept responsibility for the intentions and the impacts of our actions. Covenant requires accountability so that we move from a collection of individuals saying and doing whatever we want, to a community truly living by common norms and expectations. Accountability gives covenant its strength and durability.

Perhaps we don't think about accountability much when we are living out well the values of a covenant. In contrast, it's when our actions or the actions of others go against the meaning of the covenant that accountability is called for. If we think of covenant as walking together on the same path of right relations,

at roughly the same speed and in the same direction, should one of us --- including myself --- begin to veer off the path toward unhealthy or hurtful habits, it is the obligation of the one on the path to pull the other back in, gently, easily, with love.

Perhaps you have thought of accountability as "calling out" the actions of another. Sometimes accountability is even interpreted as censorship. Both interpretations suggest division and separation, not connections. Instead, why not consider vocabulary which connotes staying together: instead of "calling out" someone veering off the path, think of "calling in" that person, so to restore connections, not to kick the other out of connections. Perhaps accountability feels risky to you. To that, it is important for a covenanted community to have commonly understood policies and procedures in place, so to create safe, brave spaces so that the act of calling another back in doesn't backfire and result in ostracism or retribution of the truth-teller.

To develop trusting habits of accountability, a few suggestions: If you see an action which goes against a covenant, first, do a reality check: confirm that what you think you see is really what is going on: sometimes we can misinterpret words and actions of others. If indeed some action is out of covenant, first ask yourself if you have any role in this, and what can you do to help restore the covenant. Then ask who else might have contributed to deviating from the covenant and call others back in, graciously, lovingly, with curiosity.

Creating covenants, we affirm values. Promoting accountability, we live those values and cultivate creative and loving relationships.

UUCM All Church Covenant, adopted May 2021

We commit to:

Welcome with open hearts and minds all who gather here;

Encourage others with our words and actions;

Share ideas freely, listen deeply, and disagree respectfully;

Celebrate diversity and creativity.

Rev. Barbara

Even Now...A Thanksgiving Reflection for a Time of Hard History

Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer (continued from page 1)

I'll focus on the troublesome and disconcerting history of clergy misconduct that we have been dealing with in our church community. Because, here too, I'm convinced there is ample reason for gratitude and even joy.

We have been forced by the circumstances in which we've found ourselves to look at some things we had been avoiding for a long time. Because we hadn't dealt with them, they were affecting how we relate with each other now. It seems to me that the Board and our congregation have pulled together under the leadership of Rev. Barbara, our Interim Minister, to begin to uncover and heal the wounds of the past. We cannot rewrite history, the stories of our past, but we do get the opportunity to write a different kind of story going forward, both as individuals and as a church community. That in itself is cause for gratitude and rejoicing.

Our (relatively) new church covenant is a part of this different story. Not a creed, not a rule book, it grew organically as we discussed how we wanted to be together and develop a new congregational culture. It guides us and provides for accountability as we work toward personal and communal healing.

Our Coming Back Together conversations are another reason for gratitude, and many members of our congregation have reported that their participation in them has been a source of joy as well. Rev. Barbara is hoping to offer the Circles of Trust experience again as well. Having participated

in one of these myself, I would highly recommend them to others. We can be grateful for these and other opportunities to begin to live into the kind of community we want to be.

I'm really tired of virtual worship, and I know a lot of others are too. We want more, and that's both understandable and OK. But thank goodness for it! It has stabilized and fed us through the pandemic. We may not have seen each other in person, but we at least still know what we look like, if only in two dimensions! It's provided high quality sermons, music, and has expanded our horizons of what can be done in worship. We can be grateful for the tireless efforts of so many people to make our virtual worship what it's been. And we're poised to move into a truly multiplatform worship experience when the time is right.

Although we cannot know with certainty when we will gather for worship in person again, it's beginning to look as if doing so may be more than just a theoretical possibility. For that, we can be both joyful and thankful.

Even as we struggle with the negative parts of our history, we know would not be the church community we are had that history been different. We are who we are because of our past, and we will be who we are in the future because we choose to write a different kind of story for our future together.

In gratitude, expectation, and hope,

Rev. Julia

The prophetic tasks of the church are to tell the truth in a society that lives in an illusion, grieve in a society that practices denial, and express hope in a society that lives in despair.

~Walter Brueggemann

November 2021 UUCM Calendar

Online calendar: <http://www.uuchurchmuncie.org/members/calendar/>

Regular Weekly/Monthly Events

Check the eBlast for links to these Zoom meetings and more.

RE Gathering	Saturdays	10:30 am - noon
Adult Discussion Group	Sundays	9:30 am
Worship Service	Sundays	10:45 am
Youth Group – see page 3 for schedule	Sundays	1:30-3:00 pm
Choir Gathering via Zoom	1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays	8:00 pm
Board of Trustees	2 nd Wednesday	6:30 pm
Stewardship Committee	Thursdays	10:00 am

November Meetings & Events

Check with committee chairs or church office for Zoom links

Soul Matters Facilitators	Monday	Nov 1	7:30 pm
Bazaar Donation Drop-off	Thursday	Nov 4	2-4:00 pm
Bazaar Donation Drop-off	Friday	Nov 5	5-7:00 pm
Bazaar Donation Drop-off	Saturday	Nov 6	8-9:30 am
Mini-Bazaar in the Woods	Saturday	Nov 6	10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Board of Trustees – special meeting	Sunday	Nov 7	Noon
OWL	Sunday	Nov 7	12:30 pm
Pastoral Associates	Tuesday	Nov 9	4:00 pm
Transition Team	Monday	Nov 15	7:00 pm
Committee on Ministry	Thursday	Nov 18	7:00 pm
OWL	Sunday	Nov 21	12:30 pm
Regional Youth Gathering	Sunday	Nov 21	3:30 pm
Unigram submissions due	Wednesday	Nov 24	9:00 am
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Nov 24	7:30 pm
Church office closed for Thanksgiving	Thursday & Friday, November 25-26		

UUCM Office Schedule

Monday

1:00-4:00 pm

Tuesday-Friday

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

The office will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 25-26, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

The office is open by appointment only – please call or email before dropping in. Masks are required inside the building.

Items for the eBlast are due by 9:00 am each Thursday. Please use the [Publicity Form](#) to submit your announcements. Articles for the December *Unigram* are due Wednesday, November 24. Please send as attached Word docs to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org.



Wheel of Life

Mari R. (Rosie) Musick, longtime member of UUCM died on October 24, 2021. You can view her obituary here:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/muncie-in/mari-musick-10417742>

If you have a major life event you'd like the church community to be aware of, please submit it to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org and note "Wheel of Life" in the subject line.

UUCM Staff & Leadership

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Office Hours: Monday 1:00 – 4:00 pm | Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Unitarian Universalist Church of Muncie

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