



# the UNIGRAM

## What Does It Mean, to “Widen the Circle?”

*Rev. Dr. Barbara Coeyman, Interim Minister*

I know you’ve heard the phrase “Widening the Circle” in many UU contexts recently. “Widening the Circle” was the theme for UUCM’s 2022 annual stewardship drive. It is also the title of a current Adult Education class here at UUCM called “Widening the Circle of Concern,” a course based on a 2020 UUA report of the same title written by the Commission On Institutional Change (COIC).

This image of widening a circle is an apt one for liberal religion. A circle is an egalitarian geometric shape: no one point on a circle is most important. We often sit in a circle for conversations for spiritual deepening, or for groups organized by leadership of the whole, or for dialogue to repair conflict or restore broken covenants. Complementing the egalitarian shape of a circle, the image of expanding any of our circles expresses one of the basic premises of religion in a liberal mode: the premise that revelation is not sealed, that in the liberal way there are few absolutes, that the door is always open for more exploration, more dialogue about how to negotiate this journey called life. I love the verse by

*(continued on page 6)*

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## Faith—It Isn’t What You Might Think

*Rev. Dr. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister*

As I began thinking about it, I was struck by the many times—both large and small—when our lives invite and often require us to have faith of one sort or another. Some of these are very small indeed, and far from great significance: how we routinely turn on a light switch without giving a thought to whether the light will come on. We have faith, that is, in the light performing as anticipated...until it doesn’t. This “everyday faith” allows us to function with much less mental and emotional effort than would be the case otherwise.

In these everyday faith situations, sometimes having that faith violated proves to be really challenging to our faith, while other times it doesn’t. Most of the time, if we flip the switch and discover that the light is burned

out, we just replace the bulb and think nothing of it. But suppose we replace the bulb and the dogged thing still doesn’t light. That may prove to be a bigger challenge. You get the idea.

Our everyday lives also call on us to have faith in ourselves and in others. Our individual and civic lives would be utterly derailed otherwise. From the smallest decisions to the hugely consequential—marriage or partnership, coming out as someone who identifies as LGBTQI, deciding to resign from one job to take another, deciding to have or not to have a child. All of us can probably think of times in our own lives when this type of faith was challenged and undermined. In those situations, it’s important that we find ways to regroup and shore up that basic faith.

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## Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

*The theme for March is Renewing Faith*

**Multi-Platform Worship 10:45 am    Online Service: <https://bit.ly/UUCMSundayService>**

**March 6 – “When Strangers Meet: Radical Hospitality and Widening the Circle” Rev. Katie Romano Griffin**

The Rev. Fulgence Ndagijamanna has said that, “When strangers meet, endless possibilities emerge...” This concept is a key spiritual call to deepen our relationships with the stranger within and the strangers we meet in life’s journey as we endeavor to embody the work of the Widening the Circle of Concern report and truly embrace living into the Beloved Community Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preached about.

Rev. Katie (pronouns she/ella) is a multiracial Latinx/Italian minister currently serving a DC Metro congregation. She is one of the co-authors of the Commission on Appraisal Report, *Class Action: The Struggle with Class in Unitarian Universalism*, and she serves as a member of the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee. She has joined us today after enjoying the sites in Indy and visiting her cousin, Valerie, who lives in the area.

**March 13 – “The Language of Faith” Rev. Coeyman**

Our worship theme in March is “faith.” Today let’s consider what we mean by “faith” and why one of the most popular introductory readings for new members of Unitarian Universalism is a book called *Our Chosen Faith*. Let’s also examine how we personally talk about faith, so to review a UUA project started several years ago known as “elevator speeches.” A reminder that Daylight Saving Time begins today – spring forward!

**March 20 – “What Do We Mean by ‘Faith Development?’” Rev. Coeyman**

What do we mean by “faith development?” How does this term compare with “religious education?” What is important about the current trend toward “lifespan faith development” in UU Congregations? How do adults continue to grow and develop in their relationship with faith? What goals do you have for you own personal faith development? We will also recognize the Spring Equinox in this service.

**March 27 – “Faith without Certainty, Part Two” Rev. Coeyman**

The condition of “doubt” in the sense of “uncertainty” or “open-endedness” is core to liberal religion. In contrast with fundamentalism, liberalism asserts that truth is not fixed and theology is informed by current, reasoned knowledge about the world. This fluid approach to theology and religion can often feel risky. What role does doubt play in your life as a Unitarian Universalist? Do you believe in the story of the “Velveteen Rabbit?”

### Religious Education for Children & Youth

**RE Program – 10:45 am Sundays**

All children 2 years – 5th grade upon entering the church, will go directly to their classrooms: 2 & 3 year-olds in the Blue room; 4 years – 5th grade in the Fellowship Hall.

Youth in 6th – 12th grades are invited to attend the service in the sanctuary with their families. Their curriculum Sundays will now be a part of their Youth Group meetings which are held on Sunday afternoons.

Infants and toddlers up to 23 months will remain with their parents, as we will not be offering nursery care at this time. The nursery room will be available as needed.

### 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*

### Sunday Mornings at UUCM

To be as safe as possible, all children two years of age through 5th grade upon entering the church, will go directly to their classrooms. Our class for children 2 & 3 years old is in the Blue Room. Our class for children 4 years of age through 5th grade is in the Fellowship Hall. Youth in 6th through 12th grades are invited to attend the service on Sunday mornings. Their Curriculum Sundays are now a part of their Youth Group meetings which are held on Sunday afternoons. Infants and toddlers up to 23 months will remain with their parents, as we are not offering Nursery care at this time. The Nursery Room will be available as needed.

### Teachers Are Needed

Please consider the gift of your time and share your joy with our children one Sunday a month! This is a

wonderful opportunity to get to know our UU children and their families and learn alongside them! All teachers must be vaccinated for Covid-19 and complete two background checks. If you have any questions, please contact me at

[nadine@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:nadine@uuchurchmuncie.org)

### Soulful Home

I hope you have been enjoying the *Soulful Home* subscription that we send out at the beginning of each month! The theme for March is *Renewing Faith*. Soulful Home is about creating memorable and amazing moments as you explore the monthly theme with your family! RE families receive the Soulful Home packet at the beginning of each month.

*Nadine*

## Youth Events

*Nicole Kaplan, Coordinator of Youth Programming*

### 1000 Cranes for the 8th Principle

Youth Group is making 1000 cranes for the 8th Principle and plans to finish the last crane at our Youth Sunday service (April 10). Everyone is invited to join us. If you need supplies or to learn how, please email Nicole at [nicole@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:nicole@uuchurchmuncie.org).

### Diversity Celebration

Our Diversity Celebration is the conclusion of our Be the Change! anti-racism workshop.

This celebration will focus on diversity and multiculturalism and our time will be filled with food, games, a movie, and more. Everything we consume from media to dinner will have a multicultural focus and we will focus on supporting local BIPOC businesses and restaurants.

### Dates

March 6 - Youth Group - 12:30-2

March 12 - Diversity Celebration - 10 am - 10 pm

March 20 - Youth Group - 12:30-2

March 27 - Youth Group - 12:30-2

### Youth Sunday Service

Mark your calendars: Youth Sunday will be April 10th followed by a pizza party to celebrate.

Please be sure your youth has filled out [the form](#) so that I know how they want to participate. Ideally, everyone who plans to participate will attend youth group on April 3rd so we can put finishing touches on our service.

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

*Nicole*



## Check Out ShopWithScrip

*The easiest way to fundraise for UUCM*

If you go grocery shopping, do any online shopping, or buy gift cards for presents - ShopWithScrip is made for you! Commonly known as Scrip, you can buy gift cards for your favorite retailers and a percentage of your purchase total is donated from the retailer to UUCM. No additional money out of your pocket.

There are two ways to participate – order online at [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) or download the app - [RaiseRight](#). For a quick tutorial on the app (RaiseRight), check out this [YouTube video](#).

Signing up is easy!

Sign up instructions - as well as other FAQs - are available through this online document linked [here](#).

**ONLY UNTIL MARCH 17 - FOR A LIMITED TIME!** *Still hesitant about ordering online?* Print the [linked form](#) and buy gift cards without creating an online account. Complete the printed form, then mail or drop off your form with payment to the church office by 3pm on March 17. Accepted forms of payment include cash or personal check made out to UUCM with 'Scrip' in the memo line. Please do not mail cash, and let the church office know before you plan a visit on campus. The fundraising committee will place a bulk order and notify you as soon as your items are received!

For questions or comments, please contact **Denise Ewing** with the fundraising committee at [dewing218@gmail.com](mailto:dewing218@gmail.com).

## Service Auction 2022

### *It's coming!*

The 2022 Virtual Service Auction will take place online from **Friday, April 29 to Sunday, May 1**. We will again be using Auctria to host our online auction with hopefully an in-person element on Sunday, May 1.

### Donations

A hosted event? A pool party? Propagated plants? A service like leaf raking, window washing, child/pet care? A home cooked meal? Fresh bread? Lessons?

Tech Support? The list of ideas is **endless!** Don't ponder too long - we need donor sheets by April 15th. Click [here](#) to access the digital donor sheet.

If you have any questions, reach out to a fundraising committee member!

Denise Ewing, [dewing218@gmail.com](mailto:dewing218@gmail.com)

Linda McKean, [lwmckean@comcast.net](mailto:lwmckean@comcast.net)

Jennifer Parks-Strack, [jennifer.e.parks@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.e.parks@gmail.com)

Malissa Tong, [malissa.tong@gmail.com](mailto:malissa.tong@gmail.com)

## UUCM History Timeline

Have you visited the **UUCM History Timeline** yet?

It will be available in the sanctuary through March. Please plan stop in at UUCM to add your personal reflections and read postings of others.

If you are attending in-person this Sunday, be sure to check it out. You may also contact **Christie** ([christie@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:christie@uuchurchmuncie.org) or 765-288-9561) to schedule a time during office hours when you can have the sanctuary to yourself. Take time to look through key events to help spark memories and reflections, as you enjoy the peace and beauty of our sanctuary. Materials for posting your memories, as well as instructions for doing so and a covenant for participating in this project, are available in the sanctuary. Feel free to include photos and other images on the Timeline.

We encourage everyone to participate in this project, and to read the Timeline more than once: it is important to know all you can about Where You Come From, so to clarify What You Are Now, and Where You Are Going in the future as a congregation of liberal religion in Muncie (paraphrasing Hymn #1003).

## March Dedicated Offering: UU the Vote!

**UU the Vote** supports congregations and UU organizations in activating thousands of UUs in 2020 to mobilize voters, counter voter suppression, and engage in spiritually grounded, values-based issue conversations with voters in their communities. This is a grassroots campaign that relies on grassroots support.

UU the Vote helps congregations to identify their common interests, provides guidance on the legal requirements for electoral work by nonprofits, educates congregants through many documents and webinars, and links individuals and congregations wishing to engage in activities supporting their efforts. Through UU the Vote, we can connect with UU's across the country working on issues of importance, such as antiracism, LGBTQ rights, protecting the environment, and promote voter access to the polls. UU the vote not only provides practical tips, but also spiritual support to UU's trying to make a difference.

Your contribution is a way to sustain and enhance UU efforts to make the voices of progressive people of faith heard in an effective way.

You can donate in the collection basket or via text-to-give during the services on March 13 and 20, or you can mail a check to the church. Make checks out to UUCM and note "UU the Vote" on the memo line.

## What Does It Mean, to “Widen the Circle?”

*Rev. Barbara Coeyman* (continued from page 1)

early twentieth-century poet Edwin Markham, often cited as a core expression of Universalist theology:

He drew a circle that shut me out,

Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.

But love and I had the wit to win:

We drew a circle and took him in.

Consider how this image of an ever-widening circle applies to your life: to your daily endeavors in home and family and school and work, as well as to your roles and responsibilities as a participant in this congregation which is grounded on the values, principles, and covenants of liberal faith.

Let me say more about both the publication and the class: “Widening the Circle of Concern.” In my view, these new materials represent a significant turning point, a transformation in Unitarian Universalism’s capacity to practice the equity and equality we profess in principle. In several recent sermons I have reviewed some of the big-picture challenges Unitarian Universalists have experienced since the mid-twentieth century in creating authentic diversity, multi-culturalism, and restorative justice. Many attempts to widen the circle in race, class, and gender met with less than acceptable success. Then in 2017 Unitarian Universalism experienced a major rupture over lack of diversity in staffing at upper levels of the denomination. This controversy led to resignations of at least three white men in positions of authority, including the national president. An interim trio of three ministers of color filled the presidency until the first woman was elected in her own right in 2018. The interim trio recommended establishing the COIC to create both a process of truth and reconciliation and programs to identify and dismantle white supremacy culture. The volunteers serving on the COIC were a team of eight lay and ordained members. Their work led to the published report in 2020 and subsequent curriculum: a new way forward in defining new habits for centering the margins. Initiatives to increase diversity in hiring are working: for example, the current Leadership Council of the UUA is approximately forty percent people of color.

Here at UUCM, the adult education class “Widening the Circle” is in progress through May. The class meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., in partnership with the UU congregation of Fort Wayne. Even if you have not yet participated, it is not too late to register for the next session, on Wednesday March 23. This class can lay excellent theological and practical groundwork for what I’ve heard is a strong desire among you, to develop a more concerted program of social justice here at UUCM. Indeed, a robust social justice program is one of the Goals for the Developmental Ministry which begins in August 2022.

Information about registration for UUCM’s Adult Education “Widening” class also appears in recent weekly eBlasts. Registration is required, at this link: <https://signup.com/go/qeaWcQK> Note that this form asks you to register for each session separately. I encourage everyone taking this class to secure a copy of the 2020 COIC “Widening” COIC report. You can download a copy free of charge at [https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/widening\\_the\\_circle-text\\_with\\_covers.pdf](https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/widening_the_circle-text_with_covers.pdf). For a hard copy, see the inspirit UU Book & Gift Shop: <https://www.uuabookstore.org/Widening-the-Circle-of-Concern-P18686.aspx>. I also strongly urge you to download a copy of the study guide, which is found at [https://www.uua.org/files/2020-10/widening\\_study\\_action.pdf](https://www.uua.org/files/2020-10/widening_study_action.pdf).

See you in church!

*Rev. Barbara*

### MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2022

MidAmerica Regional Assembly 2022 is now open for registration! Join us on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 10am – 2pm ET / 9am – 1pm CT. Our keynote speaker is social justice educator, storyteller and speaker, [CB Beal](#)! There will be worship, the annual business meeting, a keynote address and conversation as well as community break out rooms for discussion. There is a sliding scale fee between \$25.00 to \$50.00 and scholarships are available. Learn more and register today! <https://www.uua.org/midamerica/ra/2022>



## Faith—It Isn't What You Might Think

**Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer** ([continued from page 1](#))

I think of faith primarily as *trust* or confidence. For me, it certainly is not believing something for which I have no evidence. It isn't a Pollyanna "everything's gonna be all right" faith. It really isn't a matter of belief at all. Rather, it's a basic attitude, a fundamental stance I take up toward life, one of *trust*, tempered (I hope) by a healthy dose of realism and caution.

Our faith in our UUCM community's leadership has been tested recently, and to a lesser extent, continues to be. We can also describe faith as having confidence in the honesty or integrity of a person or thing. This description is especially helpful in our current situation. I don't claim to have any sweeping, global solutions that will suddenly "fix" us. There isn't one, anyway. The fix is that we all work on it together, consistently, and with abundant good will. What I want to do is put the lack of faith in ministry and leadership that we've seen at UUCM in a broader context, and offer some suggestions.

Part of that larger context is that faith isn't a big "religious word," but something we do every day, usually without thinking about it, as I've described above. It's been co-opted by conservative religious interests to some extent, but it certainly has a life beyond "belief in the supernatural."

Another context is that many Americans have lost faith/trust in institutions in general. This has been documented in several carefully researched studies. Few if any institutions have escaped this more generalized fall off in confidence, including religious institutions and their leadership. The immediacy of communication made possible by the internet has been and continues to be a wonderful thing. However, it also contributes to there being a lot of unvetted information out there, partial information, misinformation, and disinformation. Today's information, even if accurate, may not be next week's. We need not look further than covid for plentiful examples.

What we've experienced at UUCM, while about individuals and groups, took place within this much larger setting of conflict around religious language and a generalized culture of mistrust. How can we go about restoring that trust, then? A few suggestions:

Let's listen to each other. It seems so simple, and yet it can be so difficult. When confronted with behaviors, opinions, or points of view we disagree with, don't

immediately jump to "I don't agree with you & you're wrong." Stop and really *listen*. Why might the person hold this point of view? What might have motivated the behavior? We can also recognize and honor our *own* hurt if we've been hurt by someone, and take the step of letting the person know they have hurt us. Healing, if it is to happen, must happen from both sides.

As Rev. Kimberley noted in her sermon last month, can we acknowledge that ours is not the only truth. It is our truth, and it's important for our lives, but it isn't the only truth. Others hold truths that are equally significant for them. We can learn from others' truths, too, and they from ours.

It gets harder for most of us when the issue is behavior rather than ideas. I'm not at all suggesting that intolerable behaviors be met with acceptance of the *behavior*, or overlooked and allowed to continue. However, we can still meet the *person* engaging in the behavior with grace. That's a crucial difference. We can still ask what motivated the behavior. We can still seek a solution *together*. We can still listen to one another. We can assume good intentions while acknowledging unskillfulness and clumsiness in carrying out those intentions. Have any of us not found ourselves in that situation? I certainly have!

We can also realize that none of us is one-dimensional. We're each a mix of attitudes and behaviors, of emotional intelligence and times when we just don't get it. We all make mistakes, and we each have our moments we can be proud of.

We can also remember that those who have stepped forward to lead us are not the same people as those in our history. They aren't perfect either, but they *are* different. It's sometimes easy to let feelings about previous people spill over onto the next person who fills that role. If we feel ourselves reacting, we can stop and ask, "who am I reacting to?"

As a church community, we share something *very* precious—love for our church family and the desire to see both the congregation and the individuals in it flourish. May we let that be our pole star as we go forward, honoring the past, embracing the present, and trusting in the future.

In Faith,

**Rev. Julia**

## March 2022 UUCM Calendar

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

### Regular Weekly/Monthly Events

*Check the eBlast for in-person locations or links to these Zoom meetings*

Adult Discussion Group via Zoom	Sundays	9:30 am
Multi-Platform Worship Service	Sundays	10:45 am
RE Classes – see page 3 for details	Sundays	10:45 am
Youth Group – see page 3 for schedule	Sundays	12:30 – 2:00 pm
Choir Rehearsal	Tuesdays	7:30 – 9:00 pm
Board of Trustees	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday	7:00 pm

### March Meetings & Events

*Check with committee chairs or church office for in-person locations or Zoom links*

Worship Associates	Wednesday	March 1	7:30 pm
Membership/CoM	Thursday	March 3	8:00 pm
Pastoral Associates	Tuesday	March 8	4:00 pm
Book Club	Thursday	March 10	7:00 pm
Leadership Council	Friday	March 11	7:00 pm
YG Diversity Celebration	Saturday	March 12	10 am – 10 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	March 17	7:00 pm
OWL Overnight	Friday	March 18	4:00 pm
Finance Committee	Saturday	March 19	10:00 am
Transition Team	Monday	March 21	10:00 am
Unigram submissions due	Wednesday	March 23	9:00 am
Widening the Circle – Adult Ed.	Wednesday	March 23	7:00 pm

### UUCM Office Schedule

#### Monday

1:00-4:00 pm

#### Tuesday-Friday

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

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 next *Unigram* are due Wednesday, March 23. Please send as attached Word docs to [uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org).

### Board Resignation

At its January meeting, the Board of Trustees accepted the resignation of our Past President **Emily Wornell**. We thank Emily for her dedication and commitment to our community, and share with you this message from her:

*It is with a heavy heart, and after much deliberation, that I have decided I need to step down from the board early. The opportunity to work with MARRC (Muncie Afghan Refugee Resettlement Committee) came up unexpectedly, and I'm currently working roughly 15 hours/week on MARRC, in addition to my regular full time job. Those people closest to me have graciously helped me see that I need to move something off my plate, and I've made the hard decision that the "something" is the UUCM board. My resignation was effective in December of 2021.*



## UUCM Staff & Leadership

### Staff

**Rev. Dr. Barbara Coeyman, Interim Minister**  
[barbara@uuchurchmuncie.org](mailto:barbara@uuchurchmuncie.org)

**Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister**  
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**Nadine Tringali, Director of Religious Education**  
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### Board of Trustees

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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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