



the UNIGRAM

An Introduction, a Reintroduction, or a Re-Reintroduction to our Acting Minister

Rev. Dr. Joel Tishken, Acting Minister

Depending on how long you’ve been part of UUCM, this piece might be an introduction, a reintroduction, or a re-reintroduction. I grew up in southeast Wisconsin. Since leaving Wisconsin for graduate school in the early 1990s, I’ve lived in Texas, Georgia, Washington, and now Indiana. My wife, Lee Ann Powell, and I, own a mid-century house on a 1.3 acre forested property in Richmond. We’ve been together since 2008. Lee Ann is the head of academic advising at the Richmond branch of Ivy Tech. We share our home with a widower bunny, four guinea pigs, and nine cats—all adoptees, and all with Roman and Norse mythological names. My first career was as a professor of history and religion. My academic specialty was in new and alternative religions of Africa and the African Diaspora. Lee Ann and I both left academia in 2015 for new ventures. We ended up here for me to attend seminary at the Earlham School of Religion.

This coming church year is the third time I’ve been blessed to serve as a minister at UUCM. The first was as Intern Minister from August 2017-June

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“Awakening, Coming Back Together, Going Forward”: Initial Thoughts on the Coming Year

Rev. Dr. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer, Community Minister

I’ve been thinking a lot about this coming church year. And I’m excited, hopeful, and invigorated! I will admit I’ve been feeling a bit frayed around the edges. Staffing changes, uncertainty in so many areas, things just not being “normal,” continued constraints imposed by the pandemic not being over, not seeing as many of you in church in person, lack of personal contact among us staff... And that’s just here at UUCM.

But I sense strongly that change is in the air. The tune and lyrics of the Easter hymn, “Lo, the Earth Awakes Again” have been running through my head. I’m feeling a real sense of *awakening*, of throwing off some of the cloudy pall that I expect we’ve all felt at some time

over the last few years. And it feels wonderful, positive, and promising.

We are indeed *coming back together*, too. I’m seeing more and more of you in person on Sunday mornings, while we’re also working on ways to help our remote congregants feel integrated with the whole. We’ll be a multiplatform congregation for the foreseeable future, and keeping both contingents connected is essential to coming back together. Committees are beginning to meet more in person, with less reliance on Zoom. We’re planning for in-person staff meetings on a regular schedule. As of the last Sunday in July, that venerable institution, our post-service coffee hour, is back!

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Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

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

August 7 – “The Power of Community” Bibi Bahrami

Bibi Bahrami started in the Muncie community as a refugee herself and has been supporting Afghan women and children through her organization AWAKEN (Afghan Women’s and Kids’ Education & Needs) for the last twenty years. Bibi will discuss how MARRC (Muncie Afghan Refugee Resettlement Committee) began and how the organization has succeeded and resettled over a hundred refugees with the support of the community in the last year.

August 14 – “A Brief History of our Seven Principles” Rev. Dennis McCarty

The Seven Principles are a hot topic these days, as congregations discuss whether to add an 8th Principle. Our summer theme calls us to “come together” in order to “go forward.” In that spirit, it helps any discussion of our Principles to know their deep history.

Born in western Colorado, Dennis McCarty decided at age 7 he wanted to become a novelist. He did have several fantasy novels published by Ballantine/Del Rey in the 1980’s, but was increasingly hearing a call to liberal ministry. He graduated from Meadville Lombard Theological School in 2003, served his parish Internship at People’s Church, and was called to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbus, Indiana. He retired in 2015 and is now their Minister Emeritus.

Over the years he has written novels, songs, nonfiction books, plays, and magazine articles—and *lots* of sermons. Since retiring from the parish, he has been answering a slightly different call, to share words and music related to his evolving sense of spirituality. His book, *Reflections: on Time, Culture, and Spirits in America*, was published in April, 2018. His latest book *Sherlock Holmes at the Siege of Troy*, returns to his fantasy roots. His current book project, *The Celluloid Periscope: Movies as Windows into America’s Soul*, will be published in 2023.

August 21 – “Comfort Inn” Rev. Joel Tishken

We have all witnessed situations where people said less than helpful things to people in a bad situation. Perhaps some of us have been recipients of such remarks, or regret having made them. How can we best support others when they are suffering? Together we’ll explore strategies of how we can become better sources of care and support.

August 28 – Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer

Religious Education for Children & Youth

RE Program – 10:45 am Sundays

Every Sunday – 2&3 year-olds in the Blue room; 4yr/K-5th grade class – *Magic Summer*

All children and youth begin in the sanctuary with their parents. We have a designated area up front by the glass doors that is designed for our families with young children. There are pillows, books, and a variety of manipulatives. The worship service in the sanctuary begins at 10:45. Our class for 2 & 3 year-old children is held in the Blue Room and is available at 10:30. Following the *Story for All Ages* and the *Lighting of the Children’s Lantern*, the congregation sings the 4yr/K-5th grade children out to their class. Youth in 6th through 12th grades are invited to attend the service on Sunday mornings. 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 is open and available for parents to use.

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 in the eBlast each Friday.

Religious Education Corner



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Our **Summer RE Program** runs through the last Sunday in August, with classes held outside as long as the weather permits. If we have inclement weather the class will be held in the Red Room. This summer we are using the curriculum *Magic Summer* by Soul Matters for our 4yr/K-5th grade class. Our lead teachers are **Sophia Taylor** and **Maggie Bartlett**, assisted by **Kendall Hollems** and **Kathryn Enos**. The 2&3 Year Old Room is staffed by **Vivian White**, **Iris Chalk**, **Kathryn Enos**, and **Maggie Bartlett**.

UUCM Religious Education Committee



Splinters from the Board

Eleanor Trawick, President

At the first meeting of the new Board of Trustees in July, each person spent five minutes speaking about their wishes and dreams for the congregation in the coming year. It turns out that the Board's collective wishes closely parallel the Developmental Ministry Goals for 2022–2027, which the previous Board authored. These five goals, paraphrased for reasons of space, are:

1. increase trust, mutual respect, and encouragement in the congregation
2. optimize our use of both professional staff and volunteers
3. reinvigorate our social-justice advocacy and engagement with the community
4. deepen our understanding of religious histories and diversity within the congregation
5. create plans to care for our building and preserve it for future generations

Here are some of my thoughts about these goals.

I encourage everyone in the congregation to be conscious of your tone when you are communicating with others. If you are irritated, angry, or hurt, try to find a way to express that emotion so that you disarm the conflict and lower the tension rather than the opposite. Re-read your e-mails before you hit "send." Resolve to be part of the solution to distrust and disrespect rather than part of the problem.

The Board will do a staff analysis through the Mid-America Region: we will be analyzing staff hours and considering whether or not the church might be better served by shifting those hours and tweaking

job descriptions. The Committee on Ministries will be studying our various committees to be sure we are making the best use of our volunteer hours.

When our forebears built the downtown Universalist church, they wanted it to have "a steeple taller than any other church in town." We should aspire through our social-justice work to have a metaphorical steeple higher than that of any other church. Let's all think of ways that our congregation can become more engaged with the community of Muncie and east-central Indiana. What can we do *as a congregation*, not just as individuals, to make a positive difference?

Our diversity of beliefs is a source of strength for us. When you are attending church on Zoom, look at the people in the boxes surrounding yours; when you attend in person, look at those seated around you. Be aware that each of those individuals likely has a religious background and views different from yours. Let's find ways, informally and through small-group ministry, to find out more about each other's beliefs and experiences.

Our building is more than 55 years old. The HVAC system is outdated. Some parts of the building and property (if you look at them with an outsider's eyes) are not very attractive. Our small Property Maintenance Committee works hard to repair and maintain the building, but it is a huge task. We need a long-range plan and considerable financial investment to address the needs of our aging building.

Do you have ideas about how we can work together toward these goals? I'd like to hear them! Talk to me, or to another Board member.

Eleanor

August Dedicated Offering: AWAKEN in Afghanistan and in Muncie

UUCM's August Dedicated offering goes to support AWAKEN (Afghan Women's and Kids' Education & Needs). AWAKEN's founder, Bibi Bahrami, will be the presenter of the Sunday service on August 7. Here's some information from our recipient's website www.awaken.org:

The Afghan people are going through immense difficulties, left without food and basic necessities of daily living.

While many Afghans have been able to find refuge and new homes, many more are left behind. We plan to continue serving the Afghan people to the best of our ability while also maintaining safety. We continue to provide emergency relief including a recent food distribution. We also continue to run our Behsood Health Clinic, the Birthing Center, and the Mobile Clinic!! This included a few adjustments to comply with national policies. Our vocational centers are on hold at this time.

We have also shifted some of our funding and efforts towards helping Afghans leave Afghanistan and resettle in new countries, including the U.S. This includes Muncie, Indiana through our new sub-organization – MARRC (Muncie Afghan Refugee Resettlement Committee).

MARRC pledges to support each Afghan family for 6 months so they can get their feet under them, find jobs, and establish themselves as a thriving part of our community. This commitment will require an exceptional fundraising effort from all of us. Help us build a future together with our new neighbors. As a fully voluntary organization, 100% of your tax-deductible contribution will go directly to the support of our new neighbors.

You can donate with check or cash in the offering basket, or via text during the Sunday service on August 7 or 14. Make your check payable to UUCM and note "AWAKEN" on the memo line. Thank you for your generous support!

Pokagon Fall Family Retreat Returns!

Save the date! October 14-16, the Pokagon Fall Family Retreat makes its return after a short couple of years hiatus due to an Indiana DNR cancellation and COVID-19. The retreat is a great time to bond and form deeper connections with fellow UUs in the stunning natural beauty of Pokagon State park and the WPA era Group Camp along the shores of Lake James near Angola, Indiana. All members and friends of the congregation are welcome to attend and the camp is all ages friendly and accessible for those with disabilities. To learn more, ask questions and sign up to attend, contact **Jan Mundell** by phone or text at 765-730-9554 or email **Lisa Cox** at inweebie@yahoo.com. We will be looking forward to seeing you there!

Joys and Concerns

Sharing our joys and concerns with one another during Sunday worship helps to strengthen the bonds of community among us. As we bear witness to one another's lives, the ups and the downs, we come to know others and ourselves better. It also gives others a chance to comfort or rejoice with us, and us with others. Particularly with multi-platform worship, it lets those who are remote know what's going on in the lives of those in the sanctuary and conversely. You may use the loose-leaf notebooks provided in the entryway for this purpose, or type your joy or concern in the chat if you're attending remotely.

~Rev. Julia

An Introduction, a Reintroduction, or a Re-Reintroduction

Rev. Joel Tishken (continued from page 1)

2018. UUCM will always hold a special place in my heart because it was the place where I truly learned about being a minister. I was enrolled in my last few seminary classes at the same time. I completed my Master of Divinity degree in May 2018. The second time was from February-May of 2019. While Rev. Seth was on sabbatical, I served as the Sabbatical Minister. And now, here we are, together again after more than four years.

Since Jan. 2020, I am serving as the part-time minister at the UU Community Church of Hendricks County, in Danville. That congregation made the decision to ordain me more than a year ago. (Though we held off on a ritual celebration of it until we returned to in-person services a few months back.) When your board approached me about whether I'd be interested in serving you this year, I responded that of course I was! But I asked if we could design the job in such a way that it was less than full time. That way I could continue to serve at Hendricks County too.

A lot of distressing and trying things have happened in our world the last few years. Our congregation is an important refuge and safe space. I look forward to us doing good work together for one another and for the world. I am delighted to be with you all again. You honor me in inviting me to serve as your minister once again.

Rev. Joel

Right Now, This Is What Is: A Spirituality of Restraint

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

Since the appropriate people were notified in the appropriate order, Rev. Joel and I have been emailing about how we'll organize our working together this year. Not all of that is in place yet; it will likely be a work in progress for some time. Having Rev. Joel on board is a significant aspect of *going forward* as a congregation. He brings a demeanor and a perspective that I believe will be helpful as we seek healing and move forward. It's also the thing that most directly affects my ministry.

I want to use the rest of my column this month to clarify what that looks like for my role with you all. Here's what I know *right now*. As Rev. Joel mentioned in his brief greeting the last Sunday in July, he will be preaching the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month. I will preach regularly on the fourth Sunday of every month, a change that I look forward to eagerly. I will also assume full responsibility for pastoral care at UUCM. I'll be the "minister for pastoral care," as Rev. Joel put it, working with our Pastoral Associates to provide seamless pastoral care with and for all our beloved community. This all is an amazing and very welcome opportunity for me. I will be curtailing some other responsibilities (e.g., guest preaching) to maintain my focus on these two significant ministries.

There's a lot of change happening. Let's remember the basics: self-care, grace for ourselves and each other, assume good intentions, live in the present, look toward the future, and ask what's *possible*, rather than rehashing what's been wrong.

With hope,

Rev. Julia

August 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	9:15 am
Multi-Platform Worship Service	Sundays	10:45 am
RE Classes – see page 3 for details	Sundays	10:45 am
Coffee Hour	Sundays	After service

August Meetings & Events

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

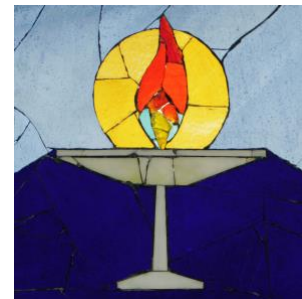
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Aug 3	7:30 pm
Church Office Closed	Friday	Aug 5	
Pastoral Associates	Tuesday	Aug 9	4:00 pm
Board of Trustees	Wednesday	Aug 10	7:00 pm
UU Book Club	Thursday	Aug 11	7:00 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	Aug 18	7:00 pm
Church Office Closed	Fri & Mon	Aug 19 & 22	
Volunteer Fair	Sunday	Aug 21	After service
Unigram submissions due	Wednesday	Aug 24	9:00 am
Volunteer Fair	Sunday	Aug 28	After service
OWL 7-9 Parent Orientation	Sunday	Aug 28	Noon

Rev. Julia's Times Away

As my schedule stands now, I will be out of town from August 12th through 14th. I'm also guest preaching at Hendricks County August 21st and may drive over there the night before. You are always welcome to contact me via email (julia@uuchurchmuncie.org). If it's an emergency, call the church office (765-288-9561). If the office is not open, leave a message on my voicemail.

Coffee Hour Returns

Coffee Hour has resumed as of July 31. Until further notice, coffee will be served at the kitchen counter with condiments in the Fellowship Hall, where masks may be removed. Thanks to the following coffee service team leaders: **Susan Bossing, Katie Frederick, Jerry McKean, Cindi Marini, and Bea Sousa**. Questions? Text Bea Sousa, at 765-215-9573.



UUCM Office Schedule

Monday

1:00 – 4:00 pm

Tuesday- Friday

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

The office will be closed Friday, August 5, Friday, August 19, and Monday, August 22.

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, August 24. Please send as attached

Word docs to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org

UUCM Staff & Leadership

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