



the UNIGRAM

Rev. Joel's Almanac for August-September 2023

Rev. Joel Tishken, Developmental Minister

I am dedicating my July-August Unigram article to showcasing some of what is coming to UUCM in the coming months. Here is my forecast on some of the good things I see coming to UUCM.

Theme: I, like many others, found our 2022-23 annual theme of ❤️ UUCM to be helpful in our planning and a positive contribution to our morale. I would like to continue annual themes for the next several years, perhaps for the entirety of our developmental period. Our DLRE, Jesse, helped me in settling on **"Return Again"** for the annual theme 2023-24. Perhaps, like me, the lyrics "Return Again" by Shlomo Carlbach are coming to your mind.

Return again, return again
 Return to the home of your soul
 Return to who you are
 Return to what you are
 Return to where you are
 Born and reborn again

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Splinters from the Board

Kirk Robey, President

Happy New Year!

As we start the new church year in July we have some new and some not-so-new things to celebrate.

Reverend Joel has begun his new role as our full-time Developmental Minister. The Board will be working with Joel to set specific objectives for his role in meeting the 5 Developmental Goals that all of us voted on 2 years ago. We will also be working with all of you over the coming months to set some specific objectives for us as a whole congregation to help meet those goals.

Reverend Julia has a new title of Chaplain, a title that better reflects the role she has served in our church for many years.

We now have a new Director of Lifespan Religious Education, Jesse Daniel, who is new to this role, but not to our church since she grew up in our RE program.

We have a new Board Vice President, Lynne Hale, and, if you vote at the upcoming congregational meeting (July 16, 12:30 PM) for the slate of officers proposed by the Nominating Committee we will have a President-elect, Susan Bossung, and

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Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

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

There is no Dedicated Offering in July. Watch the eBlast for information about our August recipient and the dates of the collections.

July 16 – “The Wisdom of Marie Kondo” Rev. Joel Tishken

Organizing authority Marie Kondo has been a sensation in the US since the launch of a Netflix show in 2019. The greatest wisdom Kondo offers concerns not organizing, but life. Join us as we consider how a different way of thinking about objects can be life-transforming. *Everyone is invited to bring an object that sparks joy for you. There will be opportunities for sharing about our objects.*

July 23 – Tim Allison, guest speaker

July 30 – “The Holy & Unholy History of Bread” Kirk Robey

August 6 – “The Death of Sunday School and the Future of Faith Formation” Rev. Joel Tishken

August 13 – “The Why of Worship” Rev. Joel Tishken

August 20 – “Order and the Order of Service” Rev. Joel Tishken

August 27 – Iris Chalk, guest speaker

Religious Education for Children & Youth

RE Program – 10:45 am Sundays

All children begin in the Sanctuary with their grownups and church community. Families are invited to sit wherever they are comfortable, plus, we have an area designed for young families with pillows, books, and a variety of manipulatives up front by the glass doors, where little ones can see what's going on during the service.

Following the Story for All Ages and the Lighting of the Children’s Lantern portions of the service, the congregation sings the children out to their Religious Education class. A family's grownups are always welcome to attend class with their children!

A nursery for infants and toddlers up to 23 months is available starting at 10:30am.

For more information about our Religious Education Program, please contact our Director of Lifespan Religious Education, **Jesse Daniel**, at jesse@uuchurchmuncie.org.

Adult Religious Exploration

Adult Discussion Group

Sundays at 9:15 am, via Zoom only through July 30

**Beginning August 6 we will return to in-person meetings at UUCM at 9:30 am, with a Zoom option.*

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.

What Does Lifespan Religious Education Mean?

Jesse Daniel, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

As your new Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE), I've been spending a lot of time reflecting on and researching how I can best serve our church community. The differences between a Director of Religious Education and the new title are, on the surface, not that different. Just one word! But that word, lifespan, is hefty. It contains longevity and inclusivity. When framed in Religious Education, the word "lifespan" signifies that everyone is both a teacher and a student. A multigenerational community of learners and an entire lifetime of learning. How exciting! How invigorating! How intimidating. How humbling and uncomfortable at times.

On their Multigenerational RE website, the UUA highlights the differences between and the importance of both intergenerational and multigenerational religious education. In order to have a thriving religious education, they make it clear that we need both. Right now, UUCM offers intergenerational religious education for those who are interested; adult RE volunteers working in the classroom is a perfect example. The good news is, we do that every week! Our RE volunteers are amazing. Our nursery workers pour love and attention into our youngest members. Our OWL facilitators offer guidance and information to each cohort and work tirelessly to ensure the program keeps growing.

Even so, the number of adults involved in traditional RE roles are a small part of the adult congregation. In order to move toward a multigenerational community of learners, we are going to need to expand our ideas of what religious education is, who it involves, and where it takes place. According to the UUA, the goal of

multigeneration, or lifespan, religious education is to create "a congregational life where all are welcomed, included, and encouraged to lead and participate at any age." As your new DLRE, I invite you to our first of many lessons we can learn from each other; this one comes from a tradition that our RE youth use to begin every Sunday.

As the children help light the chalice, we recite the "Rainbow Pathway" to help center us in our UU Principles. Two of those sayings seem especially poignant as we move toward a multigenerational learning community. When we light the red candle, we remember that we should "respect all people, they have dignity and worth." Lighting the yellow candle, we affirm that "young and old, together in community" is our ideal church family. Let's take these two phrases to heart as we all embark on this new Lifespan Education adventure together.

Congregational Survey

Slipping into the youth education part of the job feels comfortable for me. I've spent 15 years surrounded with curriculum, writing lesson plans, and setting up classrooms. I can redo bulletin boards, catalog books, and organize materials with ease. The past month, I've spent a lot of time updating the classrooms and displays. It needed to be done and was within my skill set. While I am confident and comfortable in that part of the job, I need your help in so many other ways. If you haven't already, please take a moment to complete the [congregational survey](#) that has been in the last few eBlasts. Your feedback is welcome and appreciated.

~Jesse

Special Summer Congregational Meeting

UUCM's special summer congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, July 16, 2023, at 12:30 pm. This will be an in-person meeting held in the UUCM church sanctuary. There will also be an option to attend virtually via Zoom (<https://bit.ly/UUCMSundayservice>).

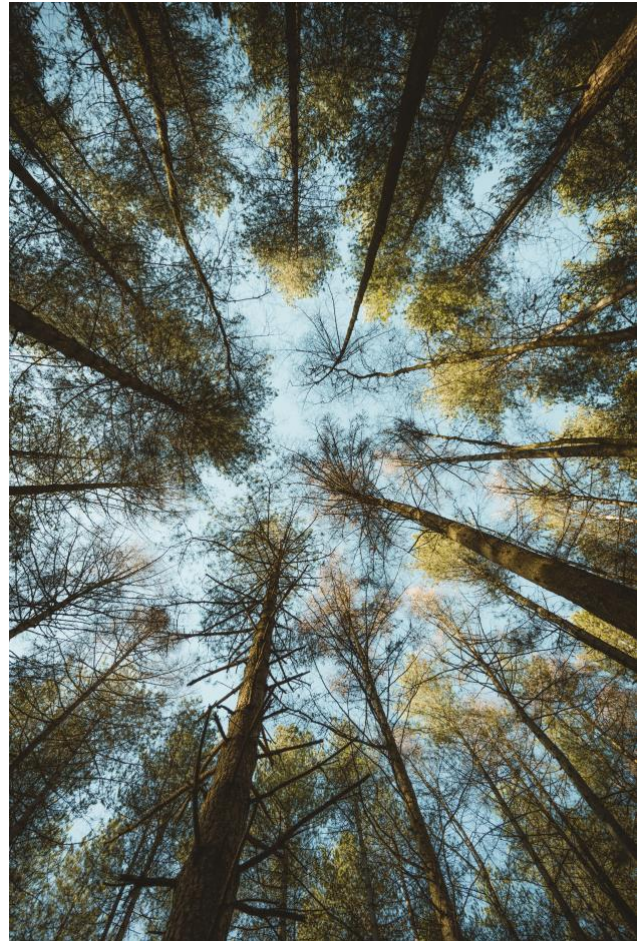
Agenda for the July 16, 2023 congregational meeting

1. Approve the minutes of the May 21, 2023 Congregational Meeting
2. Election of Slate of Officers for 2023-2024 (Susan Bossung, President-Elect; Jane Duckworth, Treasurer; Aryn Sweeney, Nominating Committee)
3. HVAC Report and HVAC Task Force recommendation.
4. Vote on the Recommendation from the HVAC Task Force
5. Recommendation from the Board of Trustees on Financing the HVAC Installation
6. Vote on the Recommendation on Financing the HVAC Installation
7. Adjournment

Do Plants Really Have the Capability to Communicate?

This past April 30th, Dr. Kevin Purrone gave a talk to our congregation about consciousness and our universe. Part of the talk focused on the interconnectedness of plants and trees, and their ability to communicate with one other, which generated a lot of interest amongst members of the congregation. Some of the sources he used in his lecture originated from some rather thick academic papers requiring subscriptions. However, for those who would like to further explore the topic, he has recommended two accessible books.

The first is "The Hidden Life of Trees," by Peter Wohlleben, which focuses on plants and trees. The second is "Entangled Life," by Merlin Sheldrake, which focuses on fungi. Dr. Purrone really enjoyed addressing the congregation and has expressed an interest in returning, so sometime in the future, he may have an opportunity to expound on some of his thoughts.



June Service Preview

Rev. Joel Tishken (continued from page 1)

The lyrics, like the theme, will have resonance in different ways for different people. This is why it will prove to be an effective theme. The meaning of the theme may change for you as the church year goes on. You may find yourself holding several meanings at once. Here are some of the potential meanings I am seeing.

One broad sense of returning again relates to returning to a greater sense of normal, personally and for our community, following the trials and strife of covid and quarantine church. Everyone and everything was deeply impacted by the global pandemic, quarantine, and the political context in which it all occurred. Some suffered greatly by losing their loved ones, their livelihoods, their businesses, and their relationships. Even those of us who did not suffer in those grand ways still suffered from isolation and dislocation of our lives and habits. To cope, new strategies and habits were developed. Many of us, myself including, are still sorting through the old, the adapted, and the new. Which parts are worth returning to and which are not? What adapted and new habits should be preserved? How do we wish to be born and reborn again? Are there parts of ourselves we lost that we wish to return to again? The same questions remain for our community, as it does all congregations and organizations. What should church be like after quarantine church? These questions have a range of spiritual, social, psychological, and practical issues for us to consider. I wonder if overcoming quarantine church might be a good developmental goal to add?

Homecoming: Another sense of returning again is quite literal. I created a **UUCM Homecoming** that will take place September 10. Church homecomings are common among southern churches and this is where I got the idea. Anyone who has ever had a connection to UUCM, past or present, is invited to join us for a service and luncheon. If you've been considering returning again, this event would be a great time to do so as you'll be among many others



having the same experience. We all want to see you. Please reach out to those you haven't seen at UUCM recently and let them know we'd like to see them return again. More details about the homecoming will be announced as the date gets closer.

As an outgrowth of Homecoming, all **young adults (self-defined) are invited to a luncheon on September 17** (the Sunday after Homecoming) with Rev. Joel, DLRE Jesse, and Chaplain Julia. We would like to hear from you about why UUCM is struggling with its generational representation. What has prompted some of you to drift away? How can we do better?

Developmental goals: The developmental goals were created not so long ago; they're approaching two years old. However, they were created amid quarantine church with a rather different staff than we currently have. So while not so old, a decent amount of water has nonetheless passed under the proverbial bridge. This is why I propose we revisit the developmental goals together during service on September 17th. Do we wish to revise the current goals? Do we need to add or subtract from the list? This service will also give us opportunity to refresh our memories about the purposes of a developmental ministry and what we'll doing together the next five (or more) years.

I am excited for the start of the 2023-24 church year. I foresee many good things in the future of UUCM. It's a perfect season to Return Again.

~Rev. Joel

Happy New Year!

Kirk Robey (continued from page 1)

Treasurer, Jane Duckworth, and a new Nominating Committee member, Aryn Sweeney.

Also at the congregational meeting we will discuss and vote on how to replace our not-so-new HVAC system with a new, more efficient, and greener system. We also will need to vote on how to pay for that new system. Eleanor Trawick provided a good summary of this in last month's Splinters From the Board Unigram article. The very good new thing is that bid estimates that have come in are significantly lower than we had expected. It will still cost us a lot of money, but with each of us making a new financial commitment to maintain this church building that means so much to us, we can be both warm and cool for many years to come.

Isn't it exciting to have so many new things this year?

Kirk



Sharing Gratitude

Tiny vases with gentle flowers, plates of sweets, yummy soups and casseroles. From Day One, when my pituitary tumor blast through our front door and changed everything for Ron and me, this church has held us in light and love. Phone calls, texts, and note cards came with good vibes and well wishes. How lucky are we to be a part of this amazing group of wanderers! I cannot adequately express the depth of gratitude I feel for all of you. So many days you were the nudge it took for me to set one foot in front of the other. And I sincerely thank you. So does Ron! *~Jan & Ron Moore, with an embrace*

If you have a note of gratitude you'd like to share in the next Unigram, please send it to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org, subject line "Sharing Gratitude."

Upcoming Events for Fundraising

One of our fall events still has spots available! All proceeds go to UUCM fundraising. Contact uucmfundraising@gmail.com if interested.

UUCM Bazaar-Themed Dinner (Saturday, October 28): Six spots available, \$75 each—Imagine our wonderful bazaar as a meal! What would you choose to represent each booth category? That is the challenge Bea & Lynn Sousa and Caroline & Mike Sullivan have accepted as the theme for their five course meal on October 28. Attendees guaranteed to leave energized for the work and joy of our 2023 Bazaar in the Woods. Vegetarian options gladly supplied with at least two weeks' notice. Location: TBD

July / August 2023 UUCM Calendar

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

Regular Weekly 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	Sundays	10:45 am
Coffee Hour	Sundays	After service

July / August Meetings & Events

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

Congregational Meeting	Sunday	July 16	12:30 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	July 20	7:00 pm
Kitchen Cleaning	Saturday	July 29	10:00 am
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Aug 2	7:00 pm
Pastoral Associates	Sunday	Aug 6	12:00 pm
UU Book Club	Thursday	Aug 10	7:00 pm
Committee on Ministries	Thursday	Aug 17	7:00 pm
Unigram submissions due	Monday	Aug 23	9:00 am



UUCM Summer Office Schedule

Monday

1:00 – 4:00 pm

Tuesday- Thursday

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Closed Fridays

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 23. Please send as attached

Word docs to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org

♥ UUCM? Tell a Friend!

Have a friend who would like to know more about UUCM? Forward this eBlast so they can see what's happening, invite them to join you if the topic would interest them, or send [this link](#) so they can sign up for the weekly eBlast and monthly Unigram.

UUCM Book Club

The UUCM Book Club meets at the church on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00pm, at the church. It is informal and anyone is always welcome! We will be reading the following books for the remainder of the year.

- August: *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead
- September: *The Many Daughters of Afong Moy* by Jamie Ford
- October: *Dinners with Ruth* by Nina Totenberg
- November: *Squeeze Me* by Carl Hiaasen

UUCM Staff & Leadership

Staff

Rev. Dr. Joel Tishken, Developmental Minister
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Christie Williams, Office Administrator
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Dr. James Helton, Director of Music
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Board of Trustees

Kirk Robey
President

Lynn Hale
Vice President

Maggie Bartlett
Secretary

Eleanor Trawick
Past President

Please note: the positions of President-Elect and Treasurer will be filled by vote at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, July 16. See [page 4](#) for meeting details.

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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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