



the UNIGRAM

New Unigram Frequency

Rev. Dr. Joel Tishken, Developmental Minister

The Unigram is moving to six issues per year starting now. Issues will begin with the church year in August and follow this calendar: (1) Aug.-Sept., (2) Oct.-Nov., (3) Dec.-Jan., (4) Feb.-March (5) April-May, and (6) June-July. This is not the first time that an issue of the Unigram will cover two months. We did it as recently as July-August of this year.

Why did your staff and your board arrive at this decision together? There were two reasons. The first is that the function of the Unigram has changed significantly over the years. It was once the chief means for information. This is why there was once a time when the Unigram came out weekly. It was the vehicle that allowed all members and friends of UUCM to stay abreast of church happenings and weekly services. However, our options for disseminating information have changed over the years. Information can be easily shared through social media or the website. Email, the weekly eBlast, and the service bulletins have displaced the Unigram as the best place for information on upcoming services and timely matters. When the Unigram is put together, some services are five-six weeks away from the time of publishing. While we generally have

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Joys & Concerns

Rev. Dr. Joel Tishken, Developmental Minister

Chaplain Julia and I introduced a new method for Joys & Concerns (J&Cs) in September. Allow me to explain our thinking in why we've opted for this method—borrowed and adapted from UU Indianapolis.

Every UU congregation has a handful of people who feel powerfully about having spoken J&Cs. UUCM is no different. To the several people who have let us know your feelings about it, we've heard you. Rev. Julia and I are in agreement with you about the pastoral value of speaking our truths in our own voices. The choice before us, however, is not whether to have spoken J&Cs or not. There are far

more concerns to account for and balance than that. Allow me to take a few moments to explain what we are seeking to balance in the method we unveiled.

While spoken J&Cs does provide the pastoral advantage of allowing folks to voice their own truths, there are numerous disadvantages in that way of doing J&Cs:

1. Spoken J&Cs marginalizes newcomers and introverts. It takes courage to stand and speak before a group of people. Newcomers and visitors are far less likely to be comfortable with the prospect. We run the risk of them feeling

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Sunday Mornings at Our Church in the Woods

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

*October's Dedicated Offering recipient is Sunrise Inc. The offering will be collected October 1st & 8th.
Check out the Friday eBlast for information about each month's Dedicated Offering.*

October 1 – “Sunday School Reimagined” Rev. Joel Tishken & DLRE Jesse Daniel

October 8 – “Invention of Tradition” Rev. Joel Tishken

October 15 – “Our Tails Have Happy Endings” Debi Stephens of Muncie Animal Rescue Fund (ARF)

October 22 – Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer

October 29 – “Day of the Ancestors” DLRE Jesse Daniels

November 5 – “Article II Revisited” Rev. Joel Tishken

November 12 – “Voodoo” Rev. Joel Tishken

November 19 – *Harvest Service & Lunch* Rev. Joel Tishken

November 26 – Rev. Julia Corbett-Hemeyer

[Please note that topics are subject to change. Be sure to check the Friday eBlast for more detailed information about the upcoming Sunday service.]

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 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 9:30 am
Red classroom and 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 in the eBlast each Friday.

Zoom check-in at 9:15, discussion at 9:30 am
<https://zoom.us/j/4326211304> Passcode: UUCm#1859 (case sensitive)

What's Happening in Religious Education?

Jesse Daniel, Director of Lifespan Religious Education

For our Youth RE, this was the summer of the “Can-Do” spirit. Each week brought a new activity to help build the children’s self-confidence, empathy, and cooperation. We explored the woods and built fairy houses, conquered obstacle courses, experimented with different ways to fold and fly paper airplanes, and tried unfamiliar foods. We learned about architecture and created toothpick structures. One Sunday, our classroom became a community of blanket forts! We cheered each other on, listened to each other’s ideas, and worked together to accomplish things we couldn’t have done alone.

This church year, we’ll continue to cultivate our UU values as we work our way through the Superhero Playbook. Every Sunday, we’ll learn about a new superhero and what they value. Then, we’ll connect that to a UU principle and explore how we can use that superpower in our own lives. So far, we worked on being a warrior for peace, just like Wonder Woman, and having determination when facing difficult tasks, like Batman. Our next superhero will be Ms. Marvel – we’d love for you to join us!



~Jesse



Pokagon 2023

A long-standing UUCM tradition! A largely unstructured long weekend of nature, shared meals, and connection at [Pokagon State Park](#) near Angola, Indiana. Below are the details for those interested in joining for a few hours or a few nights.

Registration: Interest must be indicated via Google form ([linked here](#)) or sign-up sheet before October 9th. As in the past, hard copy sign-up sheets are posted at UUCM. Either method works.

Dates: Come for a few hours or a few nights! The “main event” is Friday, October 13, through Sunday, October 15. If you wish to join on Thursday, October 12, please request so ASAP.

Costs: These costs are total, not per night. For overnight guests—adults are \$55/each, kids 3-10 years old are \$45/each, kids 2 and under are free. For those joining for a few hours/a single meal—a freewill donation is appreciated to help over food costs. Payment is appreciated by October 12th to the UUCM office via cash or check made out to UUCM with “Pokagon” in the memo. (Keep in mind—upon arrival there is a one-time state park gate fee of \$7/car.)

Activities: This is a largely unstructured weekend. We encourage attendees to take advantage of the activities and nature experiences of the park. Check out the park’s official website with information [here](#). Many attendees bring group activities, such as crafts, art supplies, games, etc. Make yourself at home!

Sleeping Arrangements: *No cabins are heated or cooled.* For those with mobility issues or older adults, there is the Counselor’s Cabin. There are the North and South Bunkhouses for those wanting more ‘communal’ living with other attendees/groups. There are 12 small cabins—good for individual families or a small group who wants to share space. [See camp map here.](#)

Meals: Menus are predetermined by the Pokagon leaders and kept as accessible as possible to the widest range of people. If you have specific dietary needs, please bring what you need while keeping in mind that fridge space is limited. Severe allergies should be shared with the coordinators.

Group “Chores”: Everyone is asked to sign up for a meal prep or meal clean-up job. No one works alone, and someone is always around to show you the ropes. Everyone cleans up their sleeping area before leaving camp and chips in with the common areas before check-out on Sunday. Many hands make light work!

Directions: [Linked here are driving directions from years past.](#)

Packing List: [Linked here is a recommended packing list from years past.](#)

Questions? Contact John Bartlett via phone or text at (317) 695-4862.

Mark Your Calendar – Fall Congregational Meeting

UUCM’s fall Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 22, at 12:30 pm. This will be an in-person meeting held in the UUCM sanctuary with an option to attend virtually via Zoom.

More information, including the agenda, will be published in the eBlast & Sunday service bulletins.

New Unigram Frequency

Rev. Joel Tishken (continued from page 1)

speakers locked that far in advance, that is not always the case. And even when we do, sometimes those speakers are still arriving at their topics. I am often still moving from a general to specific idea as services approach. There are also times when I scrap an idea and move to an entirely new topic based on what we've got happening. In short, the Unigram is simply not timely. It is not the best place for information on upcoming services or the latest happenings. The last Unigram may be weeks, even a month old (or more), by the time some services arrive. Service planning often moves a different direction than first advertised as plans are firmed up.

Other means of compiling and disseminating information are also easier and speedier, bringing me to the second reason. The Unigram takes a lot of hours to produce. Most of the staff writes articles. Some months my Unigram article reaches the same time effort as a sermon. The board president writes an article too—a role that doesn't need more to do. Once those of us producing content get it to our admin, Christie, she then spends hours manipulating the formatting to get everything to fit in an attractive manner. She's also the one who has to sometimes herd us cats when we're doing a poor job submitting our content on time. Christie also makes

sure that all the loops get closed which requires reaching out to all sorts of people requesting and verifying all sorts of details. All told, a lot of staff hours go into a Unigram each month. Your staff, myself included, are more than happy to do what is needed to make UUCM the best it can be for everyone. Yet is a monthly Unigram the best use of staff hours, especially given the other communication tools we now have? Your board and I reached the conclusion that no, it is not. We feel that some of that time would be better spent diverted to other responsibilities and opportunities. This is especially true now, when our numbers are down, volunteerism is stretched thin, and staff is needed to pick up some of the things in need of greater attention.

That said, there does remain a place for a newsletter in the life of a congregation. A newsletter continues to have benefit for the articles. It is a venue to address on-going and long-range topics that do not require timeliness. This is why we're preserving the Unigram and only reducing the frequency. Let's give it a try. It is a change with little to no risk attached. If it works for us, great. If we ultimately find it does not work for us, future changes can effortlessly occur.

~Rev. Joel

Sharing Gratitude

September 2023 marked an important milestone for our office administrator, **Christie Williams**. Christie has now been with UUCM for 25 years! Another way to measure it is that she has prepped 1300 Sunday services. Whether in years or services, either way it is a big number. Christie makes it no secret that she did not intend to remain in the job. She first imagined keeping the job a year or so before moving to something else. Yet she "quickly realized how special this group of people was and I knew that I belonged here." We are all grateful that you made that decision, Christie, and have stayed a part of UUCM all these years. Thank you for being at the center of the UUCM universe and keeping everything in order as wonderfully as you do. Our congregation wouldn't be the same without you. Happy 25th anniversary!

~Rev. Joel

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."

Joys & Concerns

Rev. Joel Tishken (continued from page 1)

that J&Cs is a thing for the in-group. Being nice is merely the beginning of being welcoming. Being welcoming is about services being for everyone, not just the insiders or those most comfortable with how things are. Whenever possible we should strive to avoid giving visitors the feeling that they are outsiders and matter to us less than the interests of insiders. This concern is not theoretical. More than one newcomer and former member have shared their perception that UUCM does have an insider group(s). Folks have made clear that numerical growth is a significant concern for us. Spoken J&Cs is contrary to that interest. Additionally, regardless of whether someone is a newcomer or not, not everyone is comfortable with public speaking. There are those for whom the idea is so intimidating they simply will not do it, and therefore we will never hear from them. On the other hand, making cards available to all, to be read by our chaplain or another: (a) democratizes access to everyone—long-range member and newcomer alike, and (b) broadens access by not requiring comfort in public speaking to participate.

2. Spoken J&Cs rewards the extraverts among us. Often times spoken J&Cs becomes a parade of familiar people who are most comfortable taking the microphone. Some of them seemingly have momentous things that require sharing almost every week. I was once a member of a congregation where the same person remarked about how pretty the corn was every week for weeks on end. That same person also gave us regular updates, and not briefly, on everything their grandchildren were doing. Every day issues such as those do not, in my mind (whether I am in the audience or the pulpit), rise to the level of importance as to warrant regular air time during J&Cs. Having the floor dominated by an extraverted minority is poor hospitality. Regular and lengthy boasting

about your grandkids, or telling us about the eighth time you were moved by corn, is taking space away from others when they may truly need it for more significant issues. There is pastoral value and hospitable grace in discerning which of our things truly need sharing and public air time and which are everyday matters that every person in the room has. Before and after services is a great time to share our everyday matters with others. In other congregations that use J&C cards akin to those we recently introduced, it is our experience that congregants seem to be much more respectful of one another in bringing their most important news in order to leave room for everyone.

3. No matter which side of the pulpit we are on, Rev. Julia and I are both troubled by the cringe-worthy moments that will inevitably happen when a spoken J&C of utter tragedy is followed by one of great triumph, or vice versa. Because spoken J&Cs come in a random order of how people take the mic, things sometimes get very uncomfortable and awkward for subsequent speakers, and everyone, when we're taken on an emotional roller-coaster ride in quick succession. And if you are the person that just shared a great triumph or tragedy, it might seem disrespectful, harmful even, to have the tone shift so dramatically on the tail of your remark. Gathering J&C cards allows us to arrange them in a pastorally-sensible order so that someone's worst day ever isn't followed immediately by another person's best day ever. Additionally, the person presenting them can provide some words or a few moments of silence to better respect when tender things are shared. This does not occur when the microphone simply gets passed down the line. J&Cs that are written and read can be presented and framed much more carefully, tenderly, and pastorally.

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Joys & Concerns

Rev. Joel Tishken (continued from page 6)

4. And lastly is the impact spoken J&Cs can have on a worship service. Most of the time this is less significant than the hospitality and pastoral concerns raised above. However, it is true that sometimes spoken J&Cs interrupt the overall flow and arc of the service when they go too long. Those of us who plan the services work hard to create an experience I describe as a plateau—with a climb, an apex and leveling off in the middle, and then a descent toward an ending. Spoken J&Cs can sometimes disrupt that flow sufficiently that the overall arc of the service never fully recovers.

Making decisions in community is challenging. Many times decisions are bound to have both supporters and detractors. It is simply not possible for everyone

to always have things the way they like them. There is more than one way to do Joys and Concerns and each presents different pros and cons. Spoken J&Cs does have the pastoral advantage of allowing words to come in one's own voice. But this method comes with a number of costs, as outlined above. Spoken J&Cs is widely disliked among ministers for a reason. Ministers are tasked with taking the full range of concerns into account and implementing the things we feel do the greatest good. I wanted to put some effort into explaining the ministerial and pastoral balancing that has gone into the recently unveiled method. Please give this new method an opportunity. It is doing much more than it might first appear.

~*Rev. Joel*

2023 Bazaar in the Woods

Hey folks, our **2023 UU Bazaar in the Woods** is fast approaching! It will be held Saturday, November 4th, from 8am-2pm, and we need to think about what each of us can do to make it a success. We will need gently used clothing for the **Encore! booth**, which will be back again this year-YAY! We also need plant cuttings, garden items, etc., for the **Plant booth**, items for the **Collectibles booth**, and don't forget those special items for the **Silent Auction**. The **This & That booth** is great for getting rid of those items that are still useful but might be better in a new home, or tools that you've outgrown. There is also the **Jewelry booth**, **Books booth**, **Children's booth**, and more. The day will begin with coffee, juice, and **Kirk Robey's** wonderful cinnamon rolls. A **Food booth** will offer some very tempting goodies and frozen meals for you to purchase and to enjoy later.

The *Bazaar in the Woods* has always been a highlight of Muncie's bazaar season, and we want keep that reputation. If you would like to be a part of this event, however large or small, please contact us! This is a great way to meet people and get involved in a fun and worthwhile project. Not only do we have wonderful church booths, but we also have some very creative outside vendors that come to sell their wares. We also provide music throughout the day to accompany your shopping.

Watch the eBlast and a special Bazaar issue of the Unigram (mid-October) for more information. Put the date on your calendars and get ready for a special day!!

Thank you,

Bruce & Judy Craig, Caroline Sullivan, Sue Errington, Cindy Turner, and Susan Bossung

October / November 2023 UUCM Calendar

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

Regular Weekly Events

Adult Discussion Group: Multi-Platform	Sundays	9:30 am
Worship Service: Multi-Platform	Sundays	10:45 am
RE Classes	Sundays	10:45 am
Coffee Hour	Sundays	After the service
Potluck Dinner	Tuesdays	6:00 pm
Choir Rehearsal	Tuesdays	7:30 pm

October / November Meetings & Events

OWL 4-6	Sunday	Oct 1	12:00 pm
New Member Class	Sunday	Oct 1	12:30 pm
Board of Trustees	Tuesday	Oct 3	7:00 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Oct 4	7:00 pm
Teen Group	Saturday	Oct 7	5:00 pm
UU Book Club	Thursday	Oct 12	7:00 pm
Fall Retreat at Pokagon	Fri-Sun	Oct 13-15	
Pastoral Associates	Sunday	Oct 15	12:00 pm
Congregational Meeting	Sunday	Oct 22	12:30 pm
OWL 4-6	Sunday	Oct 22	1:00 pm
Kitchen Cleaning	Saturday	Oct 28	10:00 am
Parents Night Out	Saturday	Oct 28	5:00 pm
Bazaar Set-Up	Sunday	Oct 29	12:30 pm
OWL 4-6	Sunday	Oct 29	1:00 pm
Worship Associates	Wednesday	Nov 1	7:00 pm
Bazaar in the Woods	Saturday	Nov 4	8:00 am – 2:00 pm
OWL 4-6	Sunday	Nov 5	1:00 pm
Board of Trustees	Tuesday	Nov 7	7:00 pm
UU Book Club	Thursday	Nov 9	7:00 pm
Post-Bazaar Rummage Sale	Saturday	Nov 11	8:00 am – 12:00 pm
OWL 4-6	Sunday	Nov 12	1:00 pm
Teen Group	Saturday	Nov 18	5:00 pm
Pastoral Associates	Sunday	Nov 19	12:00 pm
OWL 4-6	Sunday	Nov 19	1:00 pm
OWL 4-6	Sunday	Nov 26	1:00 pm



UUCM Office Schedule

Monday

1:00 – 4:00 pm

Tuesday- Friday

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

The church office will be closed October 13 & 27. *Our new Sunday office hours* will be 9:00 am – 1:00 pm, October 29.

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 / January *Unigram* are due Wednesday, November 22nd.

Please send as attached Word or Google docs to uucm@uuchurchmuncie.org

♥ UUCM? Tell a Friend!

Have a friend who would like to know more about UUCM? Forward this **Unigram** 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 Staff & Leadership

Staff

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

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