



UUCR

Inside UUCR

*A Guide
for Receiving, Understanding,
and Serving
In Community*

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Introduction to this document

Welcome congregants, members, and friends alike!

For close to 70 years, individuals and families have gathered at UUCR, finding a place where spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual needs are met and opportunities to serve are found. This document is meant to help inform you about the vibrant, aspirational and stimulating community you will find here. It highlights the many programs, events, and spiritual partnerships that are making UUCR the place it is.

In all that we do at UUCR, we are guided by our community **Values: Lifelong Spiritual Discovery; A Beloved Community; and A Just World.** And we actualize our values with our **Mission: To Practice Courageous Love.**

As you explore what UUCR can mean to you and your family, you will find opportunities to serve others in this community and beyond.

This small document, though packed with information, will not meet all your informational needs. Indeed, it is just one starting place. And because specific contact information can change, contact information is not provided here. Please email the office at office@uucr.org to be connected directly with any listed group.

We hope you will start to explore and learn about UUCR with what you find here, and continue with other congregants, ministers, lay ministers, and our highly qualified staff. [Please ask your questions!](#)

There are many pages of additional information at our website uucr.org. Links to some of the information that can be found there are provided in *Inside UUCR*. And of course members and friends already engaged in UUCR will want to be regular readers of UUCR “[E-Communications](#)” and announcements in Realm.

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*Inside UUCR begins with our **UUCR Covenant of Right Relations.***

Our Covenant of Right Relations outlines principles and expectations designed to promote the best and most gracious functioning of our beloved community.

With this we declare how we desire to engage each other, and the world at large, as we *Practice Courageous Love.*

## **UUCR Covenant of Right Relations**

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**We, the members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville, dedicated to a free and responsible search for truth, meaning, and spiritual growth, agree to this covenant in order to promote a vibrant, healthy congregation. As a member/friend, I covenant**

### **With the Congregation to:**

- ❖ Share my personal talents, time, and other resources with UUCR while respecting the commitments I have made outside the church community.
- ❖ Appreciate that our UUCR community makes decisions through democratic processes.
- ❖ Recognize that our church will evolve as our membership changes.

### **With Other Members/Friends to:**

- ❖ Engage in healthy, honest communication--listening well and speaking with respect, understanding, and caring.
- ❖ Ensure that interactions via social media are conducted with equal respect, understanding, and caring.
- ❖ Work respectfully to resolve concerns directly with the parties involved. If an issue remains unresolved, to seek resolution through a minister, the Board of Trustees, or other appropriate UUCR channels.
- ❖ Honor the unique identity of each member and friend.
- ❖ Respect and appreciate the work of all volunteers.
- ❖ Accept and forgive imperfection.
- ❖ Respect the personal boundaries of each person and be mindful of the importance that UUCR be a welcoming and safe place for all.

### **With the Minister to:**

- ❖ Be open to the person, message, and leadership of the minister.
- ❖ Work with the minister in the spirit of shared ministry.
- ❖ Respect the personal time of the minister and his or her family.
- ❖ Be open and honest with the minister both with praise and in disagreement, and share my concerns directly in a respectful manner.
- ❖ Work through the Committee on Ministry if I have unresolved issues with the minister.
- ❖ Remember that the minister is human like the rest of us, and have reasonable expectations.

## With the Staff to:

- ❖ Be courteous and respectful.
- ❖ Be thoughtful when requesting services and using staff work space.
- ❖ Work respectfully to resolve concerns directly with the parties involved. If an issue remains unresolved, seek resolution through a minister, the Board of Trustees or other appropriate channels.
- ❖ Respect work hours and the personal time of staff.
- ❖ Show appreciation for work done.

April 5, 2012

Our Covenant of Right Relations outlines principles and expectations designed to promote the best and most gracious functioning of our beloved community. To resolve conflict at an early stage, our [Conflict Resolution Policy](#) identifies steps to be followed in UUCR when conflicts within the congregation require a more formal structure for resolution. If needed, a matter can go to trained members of the Board-approved Conflict Resolution Team activated by the Committee on Ministry.

## What We Believe

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Unitarian Universalism is a liberal religion— that is, a faith that keeps an open mind to the religious questions people have struggled with in all times and places.

We are covenanted people: we freely choose to be in community together, practicing *courageous love*. We serve and work to build *Beloved Community* in our spiritual community, while working towards transformative justice in the world and within ourselves. We strive to live our faith in our everyday lives, as diverse and dynamic people.

We believe that religious authority doesn't come from any one book or person or institution, but from within ourselves. We rely on personal experience, conscience, and reason as the final authorities in our faith.

Although our historical roots are in the Jewish and Christian traditions, we also draw from humanist teachings, earth-centered traditions, wisdom from the world's religions, and our own experiences of life and spirit.

As Unitarian Universalists, [our beliefs are diverse and inclusive](#), and we have no shared creed. Within our shared covenant, our *Eight Principles*, we support “the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.”

“*The Principles* are not dogma or doctrine, but rather a guide for those of us who choose to join and participate in Unitarian Universalist religious communities.”

~ Rev. Barbara Wells Ten Hove

## **Unitarian Universalist congregations affirm and promote:**

[1st Principle](#): The inherent worth and dignity of every person;

[2nd Principle](#): Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;

[3rd Principle](#): Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;

[4th Principle](#): A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;

[5th Principle](#): The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;

[6th Principle](#): The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;

[7th Principle](#): Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

[8th Principle](#): Journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse and multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions. [This 8th Principle was adopted by the UUCR membership May 22, 2022]

## **New expression of Shared Values:**

At the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association in June 2024, UUs voted to replace the UUA's existing Seven Principles and Six Sources language in our bylaws with language describing Unitarian Universalism through [these shared values](#), with Love placed at the center:

- **Interdependence:** We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.
- **Pluralism:** We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.
- **Justice:** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.
- **Transformation:** We adapt to the changing world.
- **Generosity:** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.
- **Equity:** We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.

## Our Congregational Covenant:

**Love is the spirit of this congregation,  
and service is its law.**

**This is our great covenant: to dwell together in peace,  
To seek the truth in love, and to help one another.**

### The UUCR Minister and Staff

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#### **Reverend Dr. Rebekah Savage, Called, Settled Minister**

Reverend Rebekah (she/her) serves as the beloved spiritual leader of our faith community in many ways.

She guides, nurtures, and challenges the congregation's spiritual focus; provides pastoral care and counseling; leads and provides oversight for regular and special services; represents Unitarian Universalism in the local community and beyond; engages in interfaith and Public Witness activities; and much, much more.

Rev. Rebekah also performs and leads many necessary administrative tasks, including the supervision of the UUCR staff.

More about Rev. Rebekah can be found here: <https://uucr.org/minister>

For detailed information about the values, standards, and expectations of UU ministers, please see the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association's "Guidelines for the Conduct of Ministry" <https://uuma.org/page/guidelines>

#### **Reverend Mykal Slack, Assistant Minister for Lifelong Faith Formation**

Reverend Mykal serves UUCR's Faith Formation programs with vision, care, and deep commitment.

He supports the spiritual growth of people of all ages—children, youth, and adults—by designing and guiding meaningful faith formation programs rooted in Unitarian Universalist values. From Sunday morning classes to multigenerational worship and special events, Rev. Mykal nurtures a lifelong journey of learning, questioning, and spiritual development within the UUCR community.

You can learn more about Rev. Mykal by visiting <https://uucr.org/rev-mykal>

## Ministerial Interns

Ministerial interns are seminarians pursuing a vocational call to the Unitarian Universalist Ministry. Under the leadership and direction of Rev. Rebekah, and with the support of Internship Committees, ministerial interns participate in worship planning and delivery; provide pastoral care; support many of the lay ministries of our congregation; and participate in the life of UUCR in accordance with their ministerial development needs and learning objectives.

## Other Professional Staff

Our beloved community and all we do would not be possible without the dedicated work of all the members of our professional staff. For information about our talented staff and their work, please see our website or use this link: <https://uucr.org/about-us/staff>

## Worship, Music and Arts Programs and Teams

Every worship service is an offering of beauty and passion, a living symbol of life's questions and struggles, and a guide for living our values. Through worship, we connect to both the universal and the singular, the outer and inner realms of life.

Each service weaves together sermon, music, poetry, silence, prayer and meditation, children's stories, and the congregation's joys and sorrows. The result is a Sunday experience of harmony and diversity where we explore many possible paths to wisdom, connection, and changing the world.

### **Worship Arts Team**

The Worship Arts Team supports the minister in planning and creating worship services. A Worship Associate assists in the pulpit most Sundays, and a Worship Steward sets up the sanctuary for service. Members of the team plan and lead several Sunday services during the year, and the team also coordinates with guest speakers to the pulpit.

Contact: [worshipcommittee@uucr.org](mailto:worshipcommittee@uucr.org)

### **The Music Program**

We are blessed with an abundance of talent at UUCR! Learn more about our vibrant music program: <https://uucr.org/worship/music>

**The UUCR Community Choir** is open to everyone ages 14 and up (younger singers may be accepted on a case by case basis). You may join the choir at any time. From late August through early June, the choir rehearses once a week on Thursdays from 7:30PM-9:10PM and performs approximately every other week on Sunday mornings. UUCR offers free childcare (ages 5 and up) during choir rehearsals for the children of singers. The choir is led by our Director of Music & Arts. Contact: [music@uucr.org](mailto:music@uucr.org)

**Wildberry Jam** is a women's trio coordinated by Julie Graf. Wildberry performs about once a quarter during worship. Contact: [wildberry@uucr.org](mailto:wildberry@uucr.org)

**Bonfire** is UUCR's house band and is coordinated by Ody Leonard and Jennifer Ambrose. They welcome new players and singers at any time, including youth who show proficiency with their instrument. Bonfire performs about six times per year during worship and also plays at various special events. Contact: [bonfire@uucr.org](mailto:bonfire@uucr.org)

**Tuba Noodle Casserole** is a brass & wind ensemble coordinated by Julie Graf and Michael Holmes. They play periodically throughout the year including getting ready for the holidays. TNC is open to youth & adults. Contact: [tubanoodle@uucr.org](mailto:tubanoodle@uucr.org)

**The Chamber Ensemble** focuses on classical piano, strings & woodwinds and is coordinated by Staff Pianist Justin Furnia. They play once per quarter and are open to new members. Contact: [chamberensemble@uucr.org](mailto:chamberensemble@uucr.org)

UUCR also features **external ensembles** that contain UUCR members. We have two members who sing in barbershop quartets: Niambi Powell sings in HALO (an award-winning African American barbershop quartet) and Michael Holmes sings in the Glen Echoes. They are not open to new members, but perform during worship and other events at UUCR one to two times per year.

**UUCR Drum Circle** - The UUCR Drum Circle is currently being reorganized. If you have ever tapped your foot to a song on the radio you have all the rhythm you need to share in the healing power of communal drumming. No experience is required, and you need not bring a drum (though by all means bring one or any other percussion instrument.) Contact: [drumcircle@uucr.org](mailto:drumcircle@uucr.org)

**Sonaria** is a treble voice ensemble. Its primary focus is community building and spiritual growth through music. Sonaria meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month from September through May and occasionally performs in worship services. Currently led by Cynthia Shires-Thurston, it is open to new soprano and alto members. Contact: [sonaria@uucr.org](mailto:sonaria@uucr.org)

## **The Music Committee**

The Music Committee supports the music and arts program and the Director of Music and Arts in the use of music to enhance the life of the church, both in Sunday services and through other musical events that support the social justice goals of UUCR and provide outreach to the larger community. Contact: [music@uucr.org](mailto:music@uucr.org)

## **Usher-Greeter Team**

This friendly team of volunteers help set the tone for our services and are indispensable. Contacts: [ushers@uucr.org](mailto:ushers@uucr.org) | [greeters@uucr.org](mailto:greeters@uucr.org)

## **The A/V Technology Committee**

The Audio and Video Technology Committee maintains and runs the sound and video systems at UUCR in the Sanctuary and Founders Hall, including listening assistance

systems. Every Sunday, trained volunteers operate our audio and video systems in the sanctuary to provide the congregation and visitors an engaging experience, whether they are present in the sanctuary or attending remotely. Contact: [av@uucr.org](mailto:av@uucr.org)

## Decorations Committee

At every service and sometimes on special occasions you will enjoy an arrangement of beautiful flowers in the sanctuary. They are provided by UUCR Decorations Committee members on a rotating basis. Contact: [flowers@uucr.org](mailto:flowers@uucr.org)

## Lifespan Religious Education Programs and Teams

### **Faith Formation Programs for Children and Youth**

UUCR's Faith Formation Program for children and youth engages young people in the lifelong process of forming their beliefs, values, and ways of being in the world. Our classes are planned with the faith development needs of each age-group and the diversity of learning styles in mind. The skilled and dedicated volunteers for UUCR's children and youth are the greatest gift and strength of our program. Knowing that children develop their beliefs and values not only in classes but through all their involvements in the congregation, we create and foster opportunities for the regular participation of our children and youth in the worship, social events, and social action activities of the congregation. Parents will also find here the resources and supportive community they need to be effective in their role as their child's most important faith educators and spiritual guides. Contact: [rev.mykal@uucr.org](mailto:rev.mykal@uucr.org)

### **Family Faith Formation Team**

This leadership team provides administrative oversight of Family Faith Formation programming, including budget and policy approval, curriculum decisions, and the recruitment of volunteers. Team members serve as ambassadors of faith formation to the congregation-- facilitating communication and feedback between the program staff and leadership and the rest of the congregation. Contact: [familyfaith@uucr.org](mailto:familyfaith@uucr.org)

### **Adult Faith Formation Collective**

The Adult Faith Formation Collective facilitates programs and events that promote and sustain adult faith development and spiritual practices; help UUCR members and friends learn about the history and current issues in Unitarian Universalism; and provides programs that teach the wisdom contained in other world religions. Members guide *Emerson's Café*, a drop-in conversation where important faith concepts and ideas are explored, and also maintain UUCR lending libraries. Contact: [aff@uucr.org](mailto:aff@uucr.org)

## **Social Justice Committees, Groups, and Affiliations**

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### **The Social Justice Committee**

*Social justice* is a vital part of the mission of our congregation, leading, supporting, and engaging the congregation on social justice concerns, providing tangible ways to live our Unitarian Universalist principles in the community and the world. The Committee is comprised of several subcommittees or task groups that carry out the work of the committee by financially supporting social justice and human services organizations, working in coalition with other social justice groups, volunteering on projects in support of human services and social justice organizations, and encouraging congregational exploration and action on social justice issues. The Committee coordinates and/or supports efforts across several areas of social justice and human services, some of which are Working Groups of the congregation, and others are human service organizations outside UUCR. Contact: [socialjusticechairs@uucr.org](mailto:socialjusticechairs@uucr.org)

The subcommittees are listed below. Please contact SJC Chairs for any groups without contact information.

### **Environmental Action Group**

The EAG seeks to raise awareness, improve our congregation's natural environment, and encourage sustainability practices for present and future generations by working with members and the congregation to reduce our negative impact on the Earth as individuals and as a collective, and by partnering with environmental organizations to combat the impacts of climate change, protect the Chesapeake Bay, reach 100% clean, renewable energy, and eliminate waste in Montgomery County. Current projects include terracycle and recycling; and electrify everything, which examines church energy systems seeking opportunities to update them. Contact: [environmentalactiongroup@uucr.org](mailto:environmentalactiongroup@uucr.org)

### **Get Out the Vote**

UUCR The Vote, working through a partnership with the national UU The Vote and the Center for Common Ground, provides a meaningful way for congregants to promote democratic values and engage in nonpartisan get-out-the-vote efforts. UUCR's Social Justice Committee and the Share the Plate program provides funding to offset the cost of postcards, stamps and other basic supplies. Using voter lists and scripts provided by the Center for Common Ground's Reclaim Our Vote (ROV) campaigns, congregants contact registered voters in target states, informing marginalized people about issues at stake in their state's election and how to obtain more information about voting in their specific counties. Contact: [vote@uucr.org](mailto:vote@uucr.org)

### **Habitat for Humanity**

Each summer, UUCR volunteers return to western MD to work with Garrett County Habitat for Humanity (HFH) for one week. Contact: [habitatforhumanity@uucr.org](mailto:habitatforhumanity@uucr.org)

## **Haiti Medical Mission**

UUCR supports Sante Total, a non-profit working in Jacksonville, Haiti. Supported projects have included clinic construction, hospital bill and medication cost coverage, school lunch program, food distribution for seniors, and educational support.

Contact: [haiti@uucr.org](mailto:haiti@uucr.org)

## **Hunger Relief Task Group**

The Hunger Relief Task Group directly addresses hunger and promotes food security in our community, toward the goal of all people having access to sufficient, safe, and healthy food. Task group efforts include food donations for Manna Food Center, support of and volunteering at Gaithersburg Soup Kitchen, taking intake calls and delivering emergency food to neighbors in need through Rockville Help, Inc., and annual Thanksgiving baskets for Community Reach of Montgomery County's Holiday Giving Program and New Neighbor Interfaith Alliance. The Group also has a relationship with The UpCounty Hub, an expanding non-profit food resource collection and distribution organization addressing food insecurity throughout northern Montgomery County and provides meals for the Interfaith Works Women's Center. Contact: [hunger@uucr.org](mailto:hunger@uucr.org)

## **Immigration Action Group**

The Immigration Action Group educates our faith community on issues affecting immigrants in Montgomery County and throughout the nation and collaborates with other faith-based and community organizations to engage in both service and policy actions on behalf of immigrants. It has collected clothing and shoes for immigrants arriving in Washington, D.C., supported Afghan families arriving in our area, and advocated for just and humane laws and policies for immigrants. The Group works with New Neighbors Interfaith Alliance by tutoring youth, moving furniture, bringing groceries, and driving to medical appointments. It joins with partner advocacy organizations like Evacuate Our Allies (EOA) coalition and Church World Service to advocate for unaccompanied migrant children and other immigrant protections and works with UU Legislative Ministry of Maryland to urge the Maryland General Assembly to pass laws to protect immigrants. Contact: [immigration@uucr.org](mailto:immigration@uucr.org)

## **LGBTQ+ Task Force**

The LGBTQ+ Task Force is a sub-committee of the Social Justice Committee whose focus is on the issues surrounding the LGBTQ community both within our congregation and our community at large. Contact: [lgbtq@uucr.org](mailto:lgbtq@uucr.org)

## **Rainbow Youth Alliance**

The Rainbow Youth Alliance provides a unique and much-needed service to the LGBTQIA high school population of Montgomery County. Trained adult facilitators provide a safe and affirming space for all youth to connect, ask questions, and explore with others. Contact: [ryacoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:ryacoordinator@gmail.com)

## **Medicaid Waiver Program**

The Waiver program is designed to help vulnerable people age in place in their homes rather than going to a nursing home.

## **Mitten Tree**

As part of our holiday celebrations in December, we collect mittens and scarves to be donated to Interfaith Works for distribution.

## **Poor People's Campaign**

UUCR attends meetings of the Poor People's Campaign and collaborates with them on issues specific to Marylanders such as fair wages, renters' rights, and voter registration.

Contact: [ppc@uucr.org](mailto:ppc@uucr.org)

## **Rockville Bicycle Hub**

The Rockville Bicycle Hub has been helping adults and children obtain bicycles for almost ten years. This fall, RBH was able to assist Afghan families obtain bicycles so the adults could go to work and the children could experience the freedom of transportation.

## **Share the Plate Program**

A portion (ordinarily 50%) of UUCR's Sunday "plate collection" goes to support community organizations serving vulnerable populations. The Committee manages this Program, in consultation with the Ministers, to reflect congregational priorities and commitments. Organizations that benefitted from Share the Plate in FY23 included: Mary's Center, Gaithersburg Soup Kitchen, Rockville HELP, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, Housing Unlimited, Interfaith Works, Beacon House, Community Reach of Montgomery and its Kaseman Clinic, Manna Food Center, and Sante Total. Contact: [share@uucr.org](mailto:share@uucr.org)

## **Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland**

The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) is a statewide advocacy network of Unitarian Universalists working to educate, mobilize, and coordinate UUs on specific issues before the Maryland General Assembly. Working in coalition with established state and national organizations, we as UUs model a reverence for the interdependent web of all existence which fosters justice, health, and equity in society. Legislative priorities have included criminal justice reform, climate change, immigration, and health care. Extensive details of UULM MD current legislative priorities can be found at <http://www.uulmmd.org>

## **UUCR Social Justice Emergency Fund**

The fund was established to allow UUCR to respond to emergencies in our local community. We have been able to provide financial assistance to the residents who were displaced when a condominium in Gaithersburg exploded and gave financial assistance to the UUA disaster relief fund when they helped a UU church in Florida that had been severely damaged by Hurricane Ian.

## Other Social Justice Direct Affiliations

- ❖ Beacon House
- ❖ Community Reach of Montgomery County
- ❖ Interfaith Works
- ❖ Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
- ❖ Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice

## Membership & Communications Programs

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### New2UUCR

New2UUCR is a great way to get your toes wet and learn about our faith tradition broadly speaking, as well as our particular expression of it here at UUCR. You will explore Unitarian, Universalist, and Unitarian Universalist history and thought, and will have the opportunity to form and deepen bonds with your fellow congregants. Though joining the congregation as a member is not a necessary expectation of taking this class, New2UUCR fulfills our requirement of an orientation for those who are pursuing membership. (Offered once a month.) Contact: [uucr@uucr.org](mailto:uucr@uucr.org)

### Newcomer Chats & Welcome Breakfasts

Newcomer Chats are opportunities to ask the questions you're most curious about, whether they be about UUCR or Unitarian Universalism more broadly. A great way to be engaged at any point in the year, especially if you've made your way to UUCR between sessions of New2UU. We also hold a monthly "Welcome Breakfast with the Minister" for anyone who has come to the congregation within the prior twelve months.

Contact: [uucr@uucr.org](mailto:uucr@uucr.org)

### Archives & History

Archivists assure publications and other information about UUCR are stored and available for research. Contact: [archives@uucr.org](mailto:archives@uucr.org)

### Outreach & Growth Team

This team's mission is to help UUCR develop new strategies for connecting with the community around us and inviting them to check-out UUCR. Ideas for new strategies may include creative social media campaigns to share UUCR's work, co-sponsoring events with local organizations, mobilizing UUCR to attend local events as ambassadors and representatives of UUCR so that we are recognized as active and visible members of our community. Contact: [outreach@uucr.org](mailto:outreach@uucr.org)

## Buildings, Grounds, and Technology

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### Aesthetics Committee

The Aesthetics Committee promotes a beautiful and welcoming worship and meeting space at UUCR. The Committee members organize several art shows each year and

consult with committee and staff on matters of color and design as requested. Contact: [aesthetics@uucr.org](mailto:aesthetics@uucr.org)

## **Buildings Committee**

The mission of this committee is to help maintain the congregation's facilities in a condition that allows UUCR members and friends, as well as other end-users, to perform the wide variety of activities that take place here. The committee organizes volunteers such as Tool Time Group/Power Tool Gang to perform occasional routine maintenance and repairs. The committee also advises the Church administrator on the selection of contractors as needed for other repairs and about service contracts for building systems such as HVAC, elevator, and fire alarm systems. The committee makes recommendations to the Board regarding Capital Improvements. Contact: [buildingschair@uucr.org](mailto:buildingschair@uucr.org)

## **Landscape & Grounds Committee**

This committee advises the church administrator in selection and evaluation of contractors who provide regular annual maintenance of the church grounds as part of the annual budget cycle. The committee also helps manage additional grounds needs such as necessary removal and pruning of trees and bushes, and organizes volunteers to assist in grounds maintenance activities such as weeding and planting annuals.

The committee also leads in developing plans for the overall improvement of the church landscape, and (subject to conditions and approvals set forth in the Site Beautification Policy) may expend funds from the Site Beautification Operating Fund, which is replenished annually through invested earnings of the restricted Site Beautification Fund, only if market conditions permit. Contact: [groundschair@uucr.org](mailto:groundschair@uucr.org)

## **Information Technology Committee**

The IT committee ensures that UUCR's IT needs are met by provisioning internet, network, computers, desk phones, software, and video technologies that allow UUCR to support its programs while providing first response when the UUCR staff cannot resolve an IT problem. If you have a question or wish to be an IT volunteer, reach out to Bill Newhouse via [it@uucr.org](mailto:it@uucr.org).

## **Spiritual & Caring Opportunities**

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### **Pastoral Care Team**

The purpose of UUCR's Pastoral Care program is to support the ministers in reaching out to congregants with special needs. Pastoral Care Team members minister to those who are undergoing health problems, dealing with grief or other life changes, or experiencing isolation because of age or disability. Assistance can take many forms: transportation to doctor appointments, providing meals, sending cards, visiting in hospitals or at home, and helping with memorial receptions. Pastoral care team members provide a spiritual

presence and a listening ear for those who are no longer able to attend services. Contact: [pastoralcare@uucr.org](mailto:pastoralcare@uucr.org)

### **Peer Depression Support Group**

Living with depression isn't easy, and can cloud your thinking, judgment, and worldview. It can make you feel weary, and like you're working twice as hard as you need to - just to make it through the day. Peer support groups are designed to offer acceptance, understanding, and validation for congregants living with depression.

The UUCR group is a peer to peer support group, and is open to all UUCR congregants living with depression who wish to explore this resource. The group is not to be used as a replacement for mental health treatment, but as a support and resource for those who struggle with this condition. The group meets via zoom, twice a month in confidential meetings. Members are asked to make a commitment to attend meetings for 3 months. During open sessions, the commitment can be renewed. Three times a year (November, March and July), the group will open up to new members who are welcome to attend up to two meetings before deciding if the group is a good fit for them. We currently meet via zoom on Saturday mornings at 9:00 am. The meetings are co-facilitated by Lisa Reed and Marlene Deal. Contact: [peersupport@uucr.org](mailto:peersupport@uucr.org)

### **Women's Open Spiritual Connection Group**

The WOSCG is open to all women interested in exploring spirituality together while gaining creative insights and connection with each other. Typical meetings include introductions/check-in, a guided meditation, a creative self-exploration activity, the sharing of insights gained, and a closing. Contact: [woscg@uucr.org](mailto:woscg@uucr.org)

### **Small Group Ministries**

UUCR Small Group Ministries (SGM) sessions offer members opportunities for deep listening and to develop meaningful relationships while exploring personal beliefs. Based on a monthly theme, members can't help but grow through the sharing of ideas, feelings, perceptions— and that's what Small Group Ministries is all about. These groups are the heart of connection for some members of our congregation. Once or twice a month, groups of 8-10 people gather in covenant to delve deeper to explore faith practices in a safe, respectful environment. This year we are moving towards using the rich resources of the Soul Matters program. Between SGM sessions, Soul Matters invites ideas for faith experiences based on individual interest and preference. Whether you are new to UUCR or have been around for a while, consider joining a SGM. All are welcome!

Contact: [sgm@uucr.org](mailto:sgm@uucr.org)

### **UUCR Memorial Garden and Wall of Remembrance**

The southeast corner of our property has long been used for the placement of the ashes of our loved ones. In 1998, the congregation formally designated this area as a Memorial Garden. The Memorial Garden is a meditation grove with winding wooded pathways with benches for quiet reflection. UUCR also has established a Memory Board that enables

members and friends who choose to do so to install a bronze nameplate with the name and the years of birth and death of loved ones as an ongoing memorial who have been part of the UUCR community. The Memory Board is located on the wall of Building 4 directly facing the sanctuary. *The Memorial Committee*, working closely with the Minister, serves as the day-to-day point-of-contact with the general congregation for information on UUCR's memorial practices. For more information, write to: [memorial@uucr.org](mailto:memorial@uucr.org).

## **UU Christian Fellowship**

The mission and purpose of the UU Christian Fellowship is to provide a time for gathering UUCR members who identify as Christian to reflect on, discuss, grapple with and celebrate what it means to be Christian. The group offers Advent services on Sunday afternoons in December leading up to Christmas and celebrates Easter. The group is new and continues to discuss what would make the group meaningful. The group welcomes all who wish to explore what it means to be UU and Christian. We normally meet monthly; however, day and time are changing, so please contact [uucf@uucr.org](mailto:uucf@uucr.org) or [christian@uucr.org](mailto:christian@uucr.org) for schedule information.

## **Wheel of the Year Group**

The Wheel of the Year is a yearly calendar of holidays that has been adopted by the Earth-Centered, Pagan and Wiccan Communities. At UUCR, we are a small group ministry that offers a place for those in our congregation who follow an Earth-Centered path, including those who identify as Pagan, Wiccan or Goddess-Centered, to enjoy fellowship, to celebrate the Wheel of the Year holidays and to discuss topics important to our particular path to divinity. We meet to hold ritual and to share food in community on the solar festivals, as well as assisting in Sunday services that honor Wheel of the Year festivals. We keep the eight holidays/festivals, four Solar Festivals (the Solstices and Equinoxes) and four Cross Quarter Days (Celtic cultural festivals). They are Winter Solstice/Yule, Imbolc, Spring Equinox/Ostara, Beltane, Summer Solstice/Litha, Lughnassa/Lammas, Fall Equinox/ Mabon, and Samhain. Contact: [woty@uucr.org](mailto:woty@uucr.org)

## **Fellowship and other Opportunities**

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### **The Annual Fellowship Dinner**

Usually held in March, this all-congregation event is a wonderful chance to meet new UUCR members, catch up with old friends, share culinary gifts, and have a relaxing evening together. A new *Fellowship Gatherings & Events Team*, rooted in our traditional annual Fellowship Dinner, is under development, with the purpose of ensuring we are both inclusive and safe in our congregation-wide gatherings.

Contact: [fellowshipdinner@uucr.org](mailto:fellowshipdinner@uucr.org)

## Dinners for Eight

D48 is a rotating mix of UUCR members and friends who meet for dinner and conversation in each other's homes. New members are especially welcome! Learn more and sign up to attend by sending an email message to [dinners48@uucr.org](mailto:dinners48@uucr.org).

## Craft Group

Share artistic knowledge, ideas, and conversation over crafts! Contact: [crafts@uucr.org](mailto:crafts@uucr.org)

## Hospitality Team

The indispensable Hospitality Team organizes the distribution of coffee, tea, and other drinks and accompaniments after services on Sundays and provides various levels of assistance in events staged by other groups when there is a need.

Contact: [kitchen@uucr.org](mailto:kitchen@uucr.org)

## Emerson's Café

Emerson's Café provides adult members of UUCR an opportunity to explore spiritual, faith, and religious concepts through conversations. Topics are chosen each week in advance, and the conversations are meant to flow from the heart as well as the mind. The conversations are organized and led by members of the Adult Faith Formation Collective. Contact: [emersons@uucr.org](mailto:emersons@uucr.org)

## Literary Fiction Book Group

UUCR members are welcome to join this stimulating and congenial group. Members choose works of fiction, past and present. There is an interest among members of this group to focus on outstanding prose and in-depth character studies within the context of well-developed plots. Contact: [litfic@uucr.org](mailto:litfic@uucr.org)

## UUCR Book Club

The UUCR Book Group meets monthly. Books for discussion are chosen by the group and presented at the meeting by different members. All those who enjoy reading are welcome to participate. Contact: [bookclub@uucr.org](mailto:bookclub@uucr.org)

## Quilters

The mission of the Quilters is to create one quilt each year to be raffled at the Fall Fundraiser. This group provides the possibility for anyone who practices needlework to experience group participation in the making of a beautiful product, while enjoying the warmth and support of friends who share an interest. Contact: [quilters@uucr.org](mailto:quilters@uucr.org)

## Sonaria

Sonaria is a treble voice ensemble. Its primary focus is community building and spiritual growth through music. Sonaria meets on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month from September through May and occasionally performs in worship services. Currently led by Cynthia Shires-Thurston, it is open to new soprano and alto members.

Contact: [sonaria@uucr.org](mailto:sonaria@uucr.org)

## Young Adults Group

The Young Adults Group provides opportunities for people ages 18-35 to connect through social and spiritual development. Contact: [youngadults@uucr.org](mailto:youngadults@uucr.org).

## A Brief Look at the Governance of UUCR

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### **Introduction and The Board**

UUCR uses a “Strategic Board” model of representative leadership, with major or critical decision-making reserved for the voting congregation. The major areas of responsibility of our *General Trustees* and *Officers of the Congregation* (both generally referred to as “The Board of Trustees”) are: congregational mission-vision discernment; fiduciary responsibility and oversight; policy development; assessment; and strategic planning. The day-to-day management of UUCR is undertaken by qualified staff.

For official details of the governance of UUCR (By-Laws, Policies, Strategic Plans...) please see <https://uucr.org/resources/governance> and <https://uucr.org/resources/policies-and-procedures-archive>.

Highlights are summarized below.

### **UUCR Board Meetings**

The Board holds *Regular Meetings* once a month, which are open to the congregation. *Regular Meetings* are posted in the UUCR Calendar of Events. The Board may also hold *Special Meetings*, with not less than two-day notice to the congregation. *Closed Executive Sessions* may be held to discuss sensitive matters, such as personnel issues and contracts. Contact: [president@uucr.org](mailto:president@uucr.org)

### **The Election of the General Trustees and the Officers of the Congregation**

The *General Trustees* and the *Officers of the Congregation* are elected by the congregation at the May *Congregational Meeting*. The Senior Minister and the immediate Past President also serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board.

Three *General Trustees* serve staggered three-year terms and may be re-elected for one consecutive term.

The *Officers of the Congregation* are: The *President*, who serves for one year following the year of their election as *Vice President*; the *Secretary* and the *Treasurer*, elected for three-year terms.

(Assistant Treasurers, who are not members of the Board, are also elected for three-year terms.)

### **Nominations for the Board of Trustees**

A seven-member *Nominating Committee* (reporting to the congregation) works throughout the year to gather a slate of Board nominees, which must be reported to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the May *Congregational Meeting*. Six members of the *Nominating Committee* are elected by the congregation and serve in staggered three-year terms, and one member is elected by the Board and serves a one-year term. In

addition to nominations presented by the Committee, nominations may also come directly from the congregation: any three members may sign a nominating petition, addressed to the Secretary of the Board. Ballots must not indicate whether a candidate was nominated by the *Nominating Committee* or came from the congregation.

Contact: [nominations@uucr.org](mailto:nominations@uucr.org)

## **Communications with the congregation**

All meetings and decisions of the board (apart from sensitive information, such as personnel matters) are regularly summarized and communicated to the congregation and staff by announcements, electronic publications, the bulletin board, and within *Congregational Meetings* and “Town-Hall” meetings. Board related meeting summaries are available on our website at <https://uucr.org/resources/governance>

## **Congregational Meetings and Town-Hall Meetings**

At least one annual *Congregational Meeting* for the election of Board Members and other business must be held in May. Traditionally, another *Congregational Meeting* is held in January. Informative meetings, such as “Town Hall” meetings, are held throughout the year by call of the Board. Other *Congregational Meetings* may be called by one-eighth (1/8) of the voting congregation. To conduct the business of the congregation, *Congregational Meetings* require a quorum of one-eighth (1/8) of the members entitled to vote and require a 10-day prior written notice to UUCR congregants.

## **Committees Reporting to the Board or Minister**

### The Leadership Development Team

The Leadership Development Team provides leaders and potential leaders with resources, training, and support, including mentors, in order to equip them to fulfill their roles with effectiveness and meaning. The team supports congregational leaders in meeting UUCR goals and objectives. Contact: [leadershipdevelopment@uucr.org](mailto:leadershipdevelopment@uucr.org)

### The Connections Team

The Connections Team identifies and shares UUCR's most essential service needs, and engages the congregation to fill those needs. The team provides access to the data and resources needed, and coordinates the annual Service Recognitions.

Contact: [connections@uucr.org](mailto:connections@uucr.org)

### Finance Committee

The Finance Committee, which includes the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers, oversees the financial affairs of the congregation. It oversees and helps coordinate the annual canvass budget, maintains fiscal year spreadsheets used to track canvass and Board budgets, provides financial analyses for Board use and decision making, reviews monthly Treasurer Reports and operating income and expenses, provides revenue/expense projections, provides financial reporting, drafts and updates financial policies for board approval, supports church leaders/committee chairs as they execute their portions of the

budget, maintains electronic copies of official financial records, and performs financial reviews of church books. Contact: [financechair@uucr.org](mailto:financechair@uucr.org)

### The Canvass Team

The Canvass team has oversight of the annual Canvass (the annual pledge drive). [See below, *Fundraising at UUCR.*]

### Planned Giving Committee

[See below, *Fundraising at UUCR.*]

### Investment Committee

The Investment Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending investment vehicles for all long-term and mid-term financial assets of the congregation.

### Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee provides support to the Ministers and the Board for the administration of church employees.

### Rental Team

The Rental Team develops and oversees our rental program that provides essential income to support UUCR's operations. The rental program must be consistent with the Board's goals, UUCR's mission and overall space availability. The Rental committee serves as the primary point of contact with the nursery schools on matters related to negotiating cooperative agreement lease renewals and interpreting lease provisions. The Church Administrator is responsible for day-to-day rental activities and negotiates and signs short-term rental agreements consistent with Board policy. The *Rental Marketing Team* creates and executes marketing strategies to promote our rentals, especially weddings and other one-time events. Contacts: [rentals@uucr.org](mailto:rentals@uucr.org) & [rentalchair@uucr.org](mailto:rentalchair@uucr.org)

### Congregational Data Team

This team helps to gather, analyze, and visualize the important information and "stats" of our community (e.g., participation, funding, demographics, etc.) These efforts are intended to help the board and the congregation better understand our trends and needs. With this information, informed decisions about how and what we are doing may be made to focus our efforts. [This team is in formation.]

### Committee on Ministry (Chartered)

The Committee on Ministry (COM) works with our ministers and members of the congregation to care for and strengthen the overall ministry of the congregation. The Committee on Ministry examines, evaluates, and supports ministry within the Congregation, including the Minister, professional staff, and lay leadership, and advises the Board on issues related to ministry. Contact: [COM@uucr.org](mailto:COM@uucr.org) | [ministry@uucr.org](mailto:ministry@uucr.org)

## **Fundraising at UUCR**

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All the ministries described herein, our beautiful UUCR spaces, and our extraordinary staff all require financial support through fundraising.

### **The Canvass (the Annual Pledge Drive)**

The Canvass, held every year in February and March, is the most important fundraising event of the year at UUCR. All members and friends are canvassed and asked to make an annual financial pledge to support the operations of UUCR. The canvass is responsible for almost 80% of UUCR funding. The canvass also provides special opportunities to refresh mindfulness about what UUCR does for congregants, families, and our community, and increases awareness of the congregation's income, costs and obligations. The results of the canvass are the primary basis for annual financial planning and related decision making by the Board of Trustees. The latest and prior canvass documents (and associated financial information) can be found by searching "canvass" [on our website](#).

Contact: [canvass@uucr.org](mailto:canvass@uucr.org)

### **Planned Giving and the Legacy Society**

Legacy gifts, through planned giving, special gifts to the Endowment Fund, or unrestricted gifts to the Board of Trustees make a valuable commitment to the future of UUCR and our faith. UUCR gives special recognition to members of the congregation who formally indicate that, through their estate planning, they will leave bequests to ensure UUCR will be able to serve future generations of UU's and meet new challenges. These congregants receive a special honor in UUCR: membership in the *Legacy Society*. For more information, please contact the Planned Giving Committee by writing to [planned-giving@uucr.org](mailto:planned-giving@uucr.org) or [legacy@uucr.org](mailto:legacy@uucr.org).

### **Capital Campaigns**

In a Capital Campaign members and friends may be asked to make special contributions to support a specific major capital project, such as a renovation or a change to UUCR buildings or grounds.

### **The Annual "Fall Fundraiser," "Action Auction," and other Special Events**

There are two special events which are integral to fundraising in UUCR: The "Fall Fundraiser," and the spring "[Action Auction](#)" of valuable services and goods donated by members of the congregation. These very enjoyable events bring in about 4% of UUCR's operating funds. You will want to attend both! Other special events may be held for purposes other than general revenue, such as the Ethier Music Fund benefit concert, which supports the music and the arts program.

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## Making Corrections / Additions to *Inside UUCR*

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As with any effort in our dynamic congregation, there will always be room for improvements, and there may be changes. We welcome your suggestions, additions, and corrections!

Is something you are a part of, or want to know more about, missing, changed, or unclear? Let us know!

Please get in contact with the current editor of *Inside UUCR*. Write directly to [communications@uucr.org](mailto:communications@uucr.org).

THANK YOU!

## Our Mission & Vision

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The mission and vision of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville is to *Practice Courageous Love*.

## Our Values

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- ❖ Lifelong Spiritual Discovery
- ❖ Beloved Community
- ❖ A Just World

## Our Board of Trustees

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**Mark Shannon**, President, [president@uucr.org](mailto:president@uucr.org)

**Rick Simpson**, Vice President, [vp@uucr.org](mailto:vp@uucr.org)

**Julia Earp**, Secretary, [secretary@uucr.org](mailto:secretary@uucr.org)

**Karl Irikura**, Treasurer, [treasurer@uucr.org](mailto:treasurer@uucr.org)

**Virginia Runko**, General Trustee, [generaltrustees@uucr.org](mailto:generaltrustees@uucr.org)

**John Miles**, General Trustee, [generaltrustees@uucr.org](mailto:generaltrustees@uucr.org)

**Mia Morris**, General Trustee, [generaltrustees@uucr.org](mailto:generaltrustees@uucr.org)

**Kent Hancock**, Immediate Past President, [kent.hancock@uucr.org](mailto:kent.hancock@uucr.org)

## Our Staff

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**Rev. Mykal O'Neal Slack**, Asst. Minister for Lifelong Faith Formation

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