

The Ebenezer Star

The quarterly newsletter of the Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

July - September 2018

A Few Words from our President



Greetings, fellow AUUFers! May I just say how thankful I am that we are on this journey together!

I first came to the AUUF in the summer of 1993. I lived on Debardeleben at the time, so I frequently saw the wayside pulpit (our sign out front) and was regularly intrigued by the sermon topics. However, as a college student, “church” at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday (well, really ANYTHING at 10 a.m. on ANY day) was usually a low priority for me. But, one summer Sunday I decided to check this place out.

The topic was Soapbox Sunday and the format was small-group sharing. I walked into a room of total strangers and an hour later I knew something relevant, something important, something that mattered to those in my group. People took time to listen to one another and to really hear what they thought and how they felt about the world around them. I was hooked! Growing up Methodaptist (Methodist/Baptist) in Mississippi was NOT like this UU stuff! Asking questions was as important as finding answers. No one authority had a stranglehold on the Truth. And, so, my UU journey began...and continues.

This is an exciting time for us at AUUF! Many in our Fellowship have been here for decades, but we have also seen quite a few new faces in the last couple of years. I am thrilled that this place, the message of UUism, and the work we must do in the world is important to you, too! So, thank you for showing up, for speaking up, for signing up (gotta love those clipboards), and for listening to one another closely!

As we share the next couple of years together, there’ll be history-making things happening, including calling our next minister. This process offers an opportunity for us to “go deep” and search for the heart of AUUF. What are we about? What matters most to us? What message do we want to share with our larger Auburn community? What good works will we do? Soon it will be time for more small-group discussion akin to that Soapbox Sunday so long ago. I look forward to it and I hope you do, too! And, so, OUR journey continues!

Humbly,

Amy Phillips, AUUF President
president@auuf.net



Contents

AUUF MISSION



The Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship is a community dedicated to affirming a reverence for life and enriching the spiritual lives of its members. Here we honor the one and the many; here we welcome a diversity of thoughts, beliefs and passions; here we speak without fear and listen with open hearts. We gather to care for one another, share our burdens and joys, and celebrate life's passages.

Strengthened by this Fellowship, we bring a liberal religious presence to our larger community and work for a safe and just world.

Columns

- 1** A Few Words from our President
Amy Phillips, AUUF Board President
- 3** On Religious Exploration
Julie Meadows, Director of Religious Exploration
- 7** The Board at Work
Peter Livant, AUUF Board Past President
- 8** The VP of Finance, Planning...
Laura Kloborg, Vice President for Finance

Features

- 6** Committee Happenings
Ministerial Search Committee
- 10** Fellowship Fun, in Photos
Noriko Aoi and Conar Rochford, Photographers

Sections

- 4** Announcements and Events
- 11** Who's Who @ Auburn UU

The name of our newsletter, The Ebenezer Star, was inspired by the original purpose of the building in which the Auburn Unitarian Universalist Fellowship meets and an architectural feature on its ceiling. Newly freed black women and men constructed this building as a place of worship for their Ebenezer Baptist congregation. Inside, a hand-carved, four-pointed star is the unique focal point of the beautiful ceiling. It is our hope that The Ebenezer Star will serve – as storied stars often do – as a guide for navigating your journey while finding connection, meaning, and community.

On Religious Exploration

The new RE year begins revving up in August, and planning is well underway. Here's what to expect.

Moving Classrooms

We are splitting our original Manatee group into two classes due to the increased number of young children attending RE. Effective class and behavior management, combined with the needs of the Spirit Play curriculum, require more space. So, all three rooms on the south side of the RE Building are being dedicated to this group.

The Padawan Learners will shift into what used to be the Peace Train classroom after work is completed in the summer to repaint and replace the floor. Peace Train, meanwhile, will relocate to the Busch Center. The specific room there is yet to be determined, but, among other benefits, this move will allow youth easier access to the service they provide in support of *Diana's Pantry*.

Planned Class Activities

The two youngest groups are continuing with last year's very successful Spirit Play curriculum. Through storytelling, Spirit Play introduces young children to our UU principles. Children then engage with developmentally appropriate work that is specific to their needs and allows them an enriching experience as they process the Spirit Play story of the week.

The Padawan Learners (who graduated to Jedi last year) are leaving a galaxy far, far away and heading to Hogwarts to connect with our UU Principles. Their RE year begins with the traditional overnight followed by a pancake breakfast served to the AUUF members in the Busch Center. This is a much loved event where the kids make pancakes on Sunday morning and the congregation shows up early, makes a donation, and enjoys a wonderful breakfast and fellowship. Don't pass up this opportunity to get to know these magical students! Look for the announcement in this issue and mark the date on your calendar.

Our AUUF near-teens and youth (AKA Peace Train) continue putting UU principles into action through supporting *Diana's Pantry* and the Alabama Water Watch (AWW) program. Service to *Diana's Pantry* involves two Sundays a month, one to inventory new food donations and the next to put together boxes of items requested by those who have a need. Also, one Sunday a month, they perform chemical testing and biomonitoring at a section of the Choctawhatchee Creek in the Tuskegee National Forest. The chance to be in the woods, the practice of being good stewards of the Earth by water testing and, possibly, the s'mores cooked over the campfire keeps them looking forward to this monthly event.

And, oh, by the way.... On June 23, Peace Train youth were guest speakers at the AWW Annual Meeting, and their dedication to this project was recognized with an award. **Congratulations to our Peace Train youth!**

\$\$ RE Donation Challenge \$\$

Expanding to meet growing RE demand while needing to operate this year's program with half of last year's budget presents a few challenges. Fortunately, a generous benefactor wants to invest in the RE program and is offering to match additional donations by AUUF members and friends up to \$500. Details are forthcoming, but please consider participating in this challenge to benefit the religious exploration of the children in our AUUF community!



Julie Meadows, Director

Religious Exploration

auufdre@gmail.com

Announcements and Events

Visit the UUSC Market

The UUSC Market appears most Sundays at the back of the Fellowship Hall. The Market is a way for our community to share their bounty and creativity while raising money for the UU Service Committee. Items for sale change regularly. There are no set prices; rather, buyers place an amount of their choice in the donation jar in exchange for their purchase. All proceeds go to UUSC.

Not only can you purchase...you can donate! Does your garden put out more than you need? Fresh produce always sells well. Bring your veggies already cleaned and in amounts easily used or with bags for dividing up as needed. Bakery items are popular, as well as small art pieces and handmade items.

In the past nine months, the market has raised over \$600 thanks to all the generous donations to the table – of both items and purchases. Contact Cindy Reinke (uuscauuf.org) if you have questions.

Religious Exploration (RE) Activities Begin Mid-August

Schedule of events through September:

August 18-19: RE Overnight /Pancake Breakfast (middle class)

August 19: Ingathering Sunday

August 26: Teacher Dedication/Sundae Sunday (official registration for RE)

September 9: Teachers ready their classrooms

September 16: Pinwheels for Peace

September 23: RE Classes Begin

You Are Invited to the 5th Annual RE Pancake Breakfast, Sunday, August 19

Please plan to join the middle RE class in the Busch Center kitchen for pancakes they will make from scratch for you, served with all the fixin's. Donations of any amount will be accepted to offset the costs of purchasing all this deliciousness.*

This is a fun and informal opportunity meant to encourage intergenerational interaction among AUUF members and friends. So, come carry on an annual tradition of sharing a meal with some of the young people of our Fellowship.



*If donations exceed these costs, the additional funds will go toward purchasing the material to make Hogwarts student robes that the middle RE class will wear as they work to combat horcruxes, move toward the goal of a peaceful world community with justice for all, while employing the right of conscience, and showing a deep respect for the interdependent web of life.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Program for 4th – 6th Graders Begins August 12

Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education program that helps participants make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. Children gain knowledge, life principles, and skills they need to understand and express their sexuality in holistic, life-enhancing ways. AUUF offers separate OWL classes for grades K-1st, 4th-6th, 7th-9th, and 10th-12th. The next ten-session OWL program begins August 12 for 4th-6th graders. Contact Julie Meadows (auufdre@gmail.com) for further information.



Meeting schedule through September:

August 12: 2:00-4:30 Mandatory Parent/Child Orientation

August 19: OWL session 1 (1:30-2:45/3:00-4:15)

August 26: OWL session 2 (1:30-2:45/3:00-4:15)

September 9: OWL session 3 (1:30-2:45/3:00-4:15)

September 16: OWL session 4 (1:30-2:45/3:00-4:15)

September 23: OWL session 5 (1:30-2:45/3:00-4:15)

September 30: OWL session 6 (1:30-2:45/3:00-4:15)

Personnel Committee Openings

As AUUF continues to grow, needs for paid staff grow also. Please consider your availability to serve as a member of the newly forming AUUF personnel committee. Several part-time positions need to be filled. Contact Amy Phillips, AUUF President (president@auuf.net), with your questions or to volunteer.

Now Hiring

AUUF seeks an Administrative Assistant for 6 hours per week. Seeking applications from non-members only. Contact Amy Phillips (president@auuf.net) for job description, application form, and/or additional info.

Potluck Sunday Services

The Sunday Services Committee, chaired by Shahla Barrow, is looking to attract younger members of the wider community to our Sunday services. Topics of potential interest have been identified and scheduled on Potluck Sundays through December. To the right is (half of) the graphic Shahla created that will appear on fliers to be posted on campus and elsewhere.



Together with our monthly second Sunday potlucks, these Sundays offer an opportunity for AUUF to invite, welcome, and “break bread” with others who may share our value of a “free and responsible search for truth and meaning” (but may not have found us yet).

Committee Happenings: Ministerial Search

On Friday and Saturday, June 1 & 2, the Ministerial Search Committee (MSC) met at a retreat in Opelika with Rev. Phillip Douglas, the UUA's assigned Transitions Coach for our Fellowship. Those MSC members representing AUUF are Marcia Rossi, Robert Zabawa, Ivan Phillips-Schmidt, Temesgen Samuel, Eddie Peek, Jay Schryer, Jan Newton, and Tom Hodges. Our Opelika retreat with Rev. Douglas was successful and the MSC is now beginning in earnest our journey toward settling a new minister.

On Sunday, July 8, the AUUF's first summer Picnic Potluck at the AUUF, members of the MSC will present an overview of its role and projected timeline in the search for our settled minister. Part of the MSC's task in the settled minister search is to conduct Cottage Meetings, which involve the MSC interviewing AUUF staff and members to voice their opinions about the search itself. At this point in the process, the congregation is encouraged to ponder such questions as:

- ❖ How would you describe the AUUF to prospective settled ministers?
 - ❖ To prospective members?
 - ❖ To a close, non-member friend?
- ❖ After our minister has been with AUUF for a year, what will be your measures of success?
- ❖ What achievements will make you say you are glad the settled minister is among us?

The MSC realizes that summer is a time when some AUUFers may be traveling or otherwise not in regular attendance. Not to worry! We value everyone's thoughts and opinions on this search, and we intend to continue our Cottage Meetings into the Fall, when more AUUF members will be available to attend.

So, whether you are able to join the MSC on July 8 or not, please think about your answers to these questions. We look forward to hearing from you in the months to come.

Ministerial Search Committee

Submission Guidelines

Articles for *The Ebenezer Star* may be submitted to communications@auuf.org for consideration (max. 500 words, but let's talk if you have ideas for longer articles). Poetry, photos, and art work are also welcome. Deadline for the next issue, October - December 2018, is September 15, 2018.

Announcements and events may also be submitted at any time. Please include a title, dates and times, location, blurb (max. 100 words), cost (if any), and contact information. All submissions are subject to editorial discretion and revision.

The Board at Work

Over the last three months, the Board of Trustees has finalized building use policy, wrapped up the canvass and budget, conducted the Annual AUUF Business Meeting, and continued to address old problems and emerging needs. Read on for more details.

At the April meeting, the Board of Trustees put the finishing touches in place and approved the “Policy on Use of AUUF Buildings and Grounds by AUUF and Non-AUUF Groups or Individuals.” With building use “solved,” some problems that were compressed and quiescent made a grand entrance. One such was the management of the Playground and Nursery. Since, neither of those enterprises, surprisingly, has been the responsibility of any committee or person, the Board is in the process of working toward a solution. Another relatively new problem is reconfiguring room use in the Busch Center, and (related to that) finding more space for the RE program. Stay tuned.

The Spring 2018 Stone Soup Canvass was a product of Board planning and lots of effort. Looking soberly at the progress of the Canvass in mid-April, Board members realized that AUUF couldn’t fund a full-time Minister for next year. Therefore, they approved a search for a three-quarter time Interim Minister. After the final pledges were tallied, Board members labored mightily to recraft a 2018-19 budget. Thanks to all who worked on the Canvass, especially to the canvassers and Board members, Greg Schmidt and Darrell Crutchley. Of course, thanks to all AUUFers who pledged generously.

Speaking of money, a subset of the Board participated in a two-hour webinar dealing with a UUA initiative called “Wake Now Our Vision.” In a nutshell, if you change your will to include a bequest AUUF, the UUA will send us a check for 10% of the value of your bequest next summer. And when you

die (and we all do that) AUUF will benefit from 100% of the bequest in your will. Win-win, now-later. But this program is first come, first served. So, *we need to get going on this before the UUA runs out of money for this!* Speak to Amy or Kitty or Jerry for more details.

Flash!! Coming soon to an AUUF website near you! The latest version of *How To Do UU*, which contains our bylaws, descriptions of committees, rules, procedures, policies, folk remedies, and recipes for moonshine. It is a highly imperfect document, but the Board thought it should be out there where everyone can bask in the imperfection.

At its final meeting of the 2017-18 year, the Board unanimously approved hiring the Reverend Marti Keller as half-time Consulting Minister for next year, beginning in August. It was a joyful end to an Interim search process that was a bit of a rollercoaster ride. Space limitations prevent recounting the almost nonstop highs and lows but the outcome was terrific. Rev. Keller will cast her spell on us and we will change, grow, be inspired, and be thankful and thrilled that we’re UUs. Welcome, Marti!

The Board would love to hear from you. A preliminary agenda for the Board meeting is sent out to the Board on the first Sunday of the month. The Board meets the second Sunday of the month, after potluck at 12:15 p.m. in the Busch Center. If you have an item that you think the Board should consider, talk to or email Amy Phillips (President). Or grab anyone else on the Board: Laura Kloborg (VP for Finance); Darrell Crutchley (Treasurer); Kristen Starr (Secretary); one of our four Trustees – Ruth Crocker, Diana Eidson, Chris Basgier, and Jim Newton; or, yours truly, Peter Livant (Past President).

The VP of Finance, Planning...

The first Friday in December this year falls on the 7th. Mark your calendars, please, because this is the date of AUUF's largest fundraiser, the Annual Auction. Did you know that, on average, 10% of AUUF's annual budget depends on our auction? We will need everyone's efforts to make it a success.

Donations of items and services to be bid on at the auction is the first and most obvious need. Even now, 5 months ahead of time, be mindful of possessions that you are considering giving away. The beautiful, antique lamp that doesn't quite fit your décor anymore. Original artwork pieces or collector's items you've outgrown. The racing bike you were thinking of selling on eBay. Set them aside for the auction.

Are you a potter, a baker, a candlestick maker? Do you love to host groups of folks for a meal, a tailgate, a pool party? Consider the things you enjoy doing or making and offer to do or make them for (or with) others as a service to bid on. Between August and October, you will enter descriptions of your donated items and services using our on-line process. Be thinking. Be creative.

A second, less obvious, but critical need is for people to donate their time to auction preparation, auction-night management, and post-auction follow-up. The auction has run smoothly over its many years, because the folks who volunteer to help run it do their tasks with dedication. Also, because it is often the same people who have been willing and able to volunteer for these tasks, repeated practice makes...“pretty darn good.”

However, having done many of the myriad tasks required to put on the auction, I speak from years of experience when I say that AUUF needs for additional and, yes, less experienced people to take part in learning and “owning” these tasks. Now is the time, while the “old hands” are still around, to learn what they know, so that our most important of fundraisers will continue to be profitable for many years to come. Besides, the more people who know about how a task is done, the more flexibility there is when it comes to job-sharing or finding a last-minute replacement.

The task list below offers a general picture of what goes into pulling off a successful auction. Do you see a task (or tasks) you recognize as fitting your skills or interests? I've included the names of those who have had lots of experience with these tasks. Talk to them if you would like to find out what's involved.

Before I get to that list, there's one job above all others that is most essential: **Job Duties Manager (JDM)**. The JDM recruits folks to carry out the various tasks, makes a master list of these volunteers, and keeps up with them until auction time. For many years, Ken Walters, with his kindness and persistence, ably filled this role. Since his passing, I have filled it. But, it's time for someone else to take over, so that I can turn my attention to my additional responsibilities as VP for Finance. Please contact me if you are willing to step up.



Laura Kloberg
Vice President, Finance
finance@auuf.net

Auction Tasks

Pre-Auction Preparation

Collection of items (LK)

Photograph items for catalog (LK)

Online database set-up and management (DC)

Dividing donated items into silent and live auctions (DC, LK, TR)

Numbering items for silent and live auctions (DC, LK)

Review, edit auction program for online and print display (AK, EA)

Produce printed auction programs (DC)

Produce bid cards (DC)

Silent auction table set-up (LK)

Item transfer from storage to Fellowship Hall (CL, LK)

Room set-up (bar tables, food table, finance tables, chairs) (LK)

Advertising: Print media (EA, KS)

Advertising: signage (TR)

Auction-Night Management

Childcare coordinator

Greeters (JM)

Food servers (KF)

Kitchen manager (recruit food donations; auction-night food management) (KF)

Bar Keep (recruit donations of liquid refreshment; auction-night bar management) (MM)

Silent auction closers (LK)

Auction bid spotters (PL)

Finance management: register bidders and assign numbers (AK, KS)

Finance mngmt: Enter data in on-line bid management software (DC)

Finance mngmt: hand record bids and bidder numbers (back-up) (DC)

Finance mngmt: collect money from winning bidders (AK, KS)

Runners/"Vanna's"

Auction-Night Follow-up

Collect and resolve unclaimed bid items (LK)

Resolution of items with no bids

Offer/provide assistance to winning bidders to carry out heavy or awkward items

Kitchen clean-up crew (KF)

Bar clean-up crew (MM)

Silent auction area clean-up crew (LK)

Vacuuming crew

LK=Laura Kloberg; DC=Darrell Crutchley; TR=Terry Rodriguez; EA=Ellen Abell; AK=Amy Kaiser; CL=Carolyn Levy; KS=Kristen Starr; JM=Jerry McCreary; MM=Macho Men; PL=Peter Livant

Fellowship Fun, in Photos

Valentine's Express card-making is always a fun occasion for all ages...and so is card-giving and -receiving!



Game nights. Pastime with good company.



With every ending of the RE year, a picnic...good eats and good times.



Who's Who @ Auburn UU

Consulting Minister (beginning in August)

Rev. Marti Keller

minister@auuf.org

Director, Religious Exploration

Julie Meadows

auufdre@gmail.com

Office Administration

Billye Welburn

officeauuf@gmail.com

Minister Emerita

Rev. Diana Jordan Allende

dallende1010@gmail.com

AUUF Board of Trustees

President	Amy Phillips	president@auuf.net
Past President	Peter Livant	pastpresident@auuf.net
VP Finance	Laura Kloberg	finance@auuf.net
Secretary	Kristen Starr	secretary@auuf.net
Treasurer	Darrell Crutchley	treasurer@auuf.net
Trustee (exp 6/19)	Ruth Crocker	trustee@auuf.net
Trustee (exp 6/19)	Jim Newton	trustee@auuf.net
Trustee (exp 6/20)	Diana Eidson	trustee@auuf.net
Trustee (exp 6/21)	Chris Basgier	trustee@auuf.net

AUUF Council

Aesthetics	Carolyn Levy	aesthetics@auuf.net
Buildings	Shannon Price	buildings@auuf.net
Communications	Ellen Abell	communications@auuf.net
Congregational Support	Carolyn Levy	congregational@auuf.net
Denominational Affairs	Jason Pratt	denominational@auuf.net
Green Sanctuary	Jan Newton	green@auuf.net
Grounds	Noriko Aoi	grounds@auuf.net
Membership	Cathy & Ted McVay	membership@auuf.net
Music	Andrew D	music@auuf.net
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Nominating (exp 6/19)	Terry Rodriguez	nominating@auuf.net
Nominating (exp 6/20)	Becki Retzlaff & Jamie Harrison	nominating@auuf.net
Religious Exploration	Ayesha Alam	re@auuf.net
Social Action	Billye Welburn	socialaction@auuf.net
Sunday Services	Shahla Barrow	sunday@auuf.net
UUSC	Cindy Reinke	uusc@auuf.net

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P.O. Box 669
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Location: 450 East Thach Ave.

Connect with Us

Sunday Services always at 10:00 a.m.

Web Site: www.auuf.org

Email Listserv: Connect@auuf.org

To Subscribe: auuf.org/subscribe

Facebook.com/AuburnUUFellowship

Newsletter submissions:
communications@auuf.org

**Volunteers are
the Heart of
AUUF**

Please remember to
volunteer to help our
community thrive!!

www.auuf.org/signup