



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF LITTLE ROCK

## Monthly News & Updates

April 2026 | VOL. 75  
ISSUE 4

### Worship Services

#### Apr 5: "Flower Communion"

Bring a flower! Rev. Paul will be in the pulpit.

#### Apr 12: "Embracing Possibility"

Jaimes Jensen-Loving will share "The Together Hum" and the Interfaith Center will be our Share the Plate recipient.

#### Apr 19: "All-Church Birthday Party"

This intergenerational service will take place in the Mehta Wing at 11am. It is a celebration of the gifts that surround us.

#### Apr 26: "Beyond the Divide"

Rev. Paul will be in the pulpit.

### 10 am Forum Topics

#### Apr 5: TBD

Forum will take place in Mehta.

**Apr 12: Share the Plate** - Our 2nd Sunday recipient is the Interfaith Center, featuring Rev. Patricia Matthews, Executive Director, as our guest.

#### Apr 19: TBD

Forum will be held in the Sanctuary.

#### Apr 26: "What's on Your Mind?"

Hosted by Clyde Bailey



### Flower Communion

APRIL 5th

Remember to bring a flower to contribute to the flowers on the front table during the service. Attendees will leave a flower and take a flower as part of this annual UU ritual. Extra flowers will be available to ensure all can participate.



### All-Church Birthday Party

APRIL 19th

This intergenerational service will take place in the Mehta Wing at 11am. You will be invited to sit at a table according to your birthday month. The service will contain familiar worship elements mixed with celebratory activities and, of course, cake and presents!

If you can volunteer to decorate a table and bring a sweet treat for any of the remaining months, please sign up on the bulletin board in Mehta. It is okay to sign up for a month that is *not* your birthday month - it connects you another month and creates extra fun!

### Outer Circle Deadline

The deadline for submitting information to the next Outer Circle is **April 28th**.

# UUCLR ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## SUNDAY MORNINGS (10am)

### Forum

Forum is an adult religious education program that meets in the south end of the Mehta Wing. It is a group which has a variety of programs and topics throughout the year. On 2nd Sundays, the 11am service's plate collection goes to a local charitable organization and a representative joins us in Forum as a presenter.

### REConnections Class

REConnections is for those in their second quarter of life who are looking to connect and reflect with like-minded peers (20's-40's). Topics vary from week to week, but no pre-work is required. The class meets with Forum on the 1st Sunday of odd-numbered months.

### REQuestors

This book discussion group meets weekly in the UUCLR library (virtual option available). You do not have to read the book to join in the discussion - new books are chosen throughout the year. If you would like more information or an invitation to participate online, contact Joe Meehan - [josmeehan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:josmeehan@sbcglobal.net).

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## MEAL FELLOWSHIP

### Vegetarian Potluck

On the 2nd Sunday of each month, a potluck is held in the Mehta Wing immediately after the 11am service. Attendees bring vegan or vegetarian dishes to share and volunteers assist with set-up and clean-up.

### LUUnch Out!

On the last Sunday of each month, anyone is welcome to join for lunch at a local restaurant immediately following the 11am service. This is a Dutch-style treat, so individuals pay for their own meal, but sit as a large group. The Membership Committee organizes the meal location each month.

### Small Group Dinners

Sharing a meal in someone's home is a great way to increase our connections and opportunities for building community. This clever event assigns guests to hosts for a potluck-style dinner party. RSVP is required a month in advance since so much coordination is required. New mid-day meal options are available! Gatherings occur in January, March, May, September and October.

Interested? Contact [DeAnn Shields-Marley](#)

## MONTHLY GROUPS

### Covenant Groups

UUCLR is committed to increasing our connections and opportunities for building community. Covenant Groups meet monthly for 2 hours and use a discussion framework that supports deep listening, deep exploration of secular and spiritual topics, and building deep connections. Questions? Contact [Linda Vanblaricom](#). Use this [Application Form](#) to let us know if you are interested in participating.

### Between the Lines Book Club

Between the Lines attendees meet in the Pehrson Room at 7pm on the 1st Monday of each month. The book list is created one year at a time and books are sometimes provided by CALS. If you are interested in joining, contact [Ann Orsi](#).

### Short Stories Discussion Group

This is a gathering on the third Friday of each month from noon-1pm to explore and discuss an assigned short story reading. Join in Pehrson or via zoom for lively conversation. Bring lunch if you wish. Questions? Contact [Janice Peters](#). (This month - APRIL 24th)

### Our House Shelter Meal Team

Volunteers cook, deliver and serve a monthly meal at the Our House shelter on the 3rd Tuesday. To volunteer or for more information, contact [Kevin](#) or [Mindy](#).

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## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

### Food Pantry

Volunteers are needed to operate UUCLR's food pantry at McDermott Elementary. If you have time to help out on Thursdays or Fridays, contact Nell Matthews by email at [uuclrnell@gmail.com](mailto:uuclrnell@gmail.com). Monetary donations towards food purchase are always appreciated: [Donate Here](#)

### UUCLR Choir

There is no audition or exclusion with this group of music-makers! Rehearsals happen weekly on Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm in the sanctuary. The choir typically sings in the 11am service twice a month. Instrumentalists are also welcome to connect with the choir. Questions? Contact [Kendi](#)!

Contact the office for more information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 4/3 Card Playing Night (6-8pm, Pehrson)
- 4/5 Book Exchange & Recycling Sunday (Mehta)
- 4/6 Between the Lines Book Club (7pm, Pehrson)
- 4/8 Program Council Mtg. (5:15pm, Pehrson)
- 4/9 Site Ops Mtg. (12:30, Zoom)
- 4/12 Vegetarian Potluck (Mehta)
- 4/11 Fellowship Event (Mehta) \*RSVP by April 5th
- 4/14 Young at Heart Lunch (11:45am, Mehta)
- 4/19 Memorial Woodlands & Ground Walk (12:30)
- 4/21 Our House Meal Serving
- 4/21 UUCLR Board Meeting (7pm)
- 4/24 Short Story Discussion Group (Noon, Pehrson)
- 4/26 Parents Night Out
- 4/26 LUUnch Out! (location TBD)
- 4/28 8th Principle Team Meeting (5pm, Pehrson)

### Short Story Discussion Group

Friday, April 24  
Noon in Pehrson  
"The Meeting " by Alix Ohlin

### Young at Heart Luncheon

Tuesday, April 14



We look forward to seeing you on April 14, meeting at 11:45 for a taco buffet arranged by Joanne Kriehn and her helpers followed by a program presentation by Terry Goddard entitled, "The Connectedness of Life."

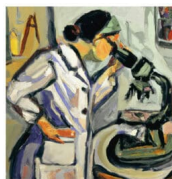
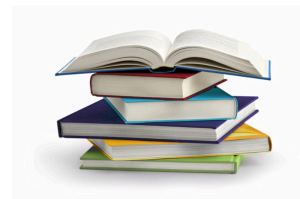
We ask for a donation of \$10. to offset costs. Please come early and stay afterwards to help put things away if you can.

Hope to see you all there!!  
Selma B., coordinator

View the online calendar to see times and locations of all the upcoming events - [www.uuclr.org](http://www.uuclr.org).

### REquestors New Book

Beginning April 12th, the book for discussion is *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain* by Oliver Sacks. We meet on Sunday mornings at 10 AM in the UUCLR library. You do not have to read the book to join in the discussion. If you would like more information or an invitation to participate online, contact Joe Meehan ([josomeehan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:josomeehan@sbcglobal.net)).



### Special Invitation from the Mehtas

Please join us for the **Drs. Paulette and Jay Mehta Creative Writing Award Ceremony and Reception**. The event will be held on **Thursday, April 9, 2026, from 4:00 to 6:00 PM** on the **12th floor of the Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute**, at UAMS in conjunction with the **Art From the Heart**.

Established in 2020, this award was created to encourage creative writing in fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry as a way to deepen humanism in the practice and science of medicine. The reception will feature faculty members speaking about the value of writing in medical practice and research, and Drs. Paulette and Jay Mehta will share the inspiration behind establishing the award. This year's first-prize recipients are Samrat Roy Choudhury for *The Time of the Stopped Clock*, Dana Garrison for *The Rally*, and Safi Alsebar for *Here in the Clinic in America*. Runners-up who will also be honored include Dongjoon Lee, Lakyn Webb, Isabelle Okito, Courtney Ragan, Jessica Morgan, and Kaileen Toh. Each winner will receive an award and other recognitions. First-prize recipients will read from their work, and all winning submissions will be featured in the summer issue of the UAMS literary journal *Medicine and Meaning*.



## UUCLR's Annual Fellowship Dinner

**\*\* Saturday, April 11 \*\***  
**Food and Fun**

**to celebrate the culmination of our 26-27 Pledge Drive  
and  
the culmination of our 75th Anniversary year of Celebration!**

Please join us in the Mehta Wing at 5:30 for a Social Gathering with drinks and appetizers. Dinner will be served at 6:15. We will take this moment to look towards a bright future for UUCLR with what we hope will be a fantastic Pledge Drive full of heart and hope. We will also take one last look to the past as we honor our Church Elders and our past 75 years as we "Pass on the Light!"

Do not miss this opportunity for fun entertainment, food and fellowship!

**RSVP by April 5th by clicking on the link below.**

**RSVP to the April 11th Fellowship Event**



**Haven't completed your pledge form?**

No problem. Use the link on our homepage or pick up a paper form in the foyer.

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## REFLECTIONS: “Embracing Possibility”

April’s “Soul Matters” theme is *embracing possibility*. Some local ones:

\* Last week - for the first time in a while - I attended a meeting of Arkansas Grassroots United (AGU), a community organizing coalition working on several issues of local concern.



One project addresses flood warnings and environmental safety concerns. Hot Springs is now using sirens for flood warnings as well as tornado warnings. AGU is gathering information about how they did that and how it’s working for them. If it seems workable in Little Rock, they hope to develop a proposal and work with local residents, influencers, and decision-makers for building a similar system here. I tagged along to their meeting with North Little Rock’s Director of Emergency Services where we sounded her out on the idea and learned about how things work in her department.

Another AGU project is researching the various likely impacts of two AI datacenters planned for the area east of downtown, one at the Port of Little Rock (across I-440 from the airport) and the other about 20 minutes south of there in Wrightsville (between I-530 and the river). The environmental impact – especially their water use (150,000 gallons per day per datacenter) and discharge – and the impact on residential electric bills are primary concerns.

\* Later this month, as part of the city’s Downtown Master Plan, the City of Little Rock, studioMAIN, Downtown Little Rock Partnership, Philander Smith University, the Dunbar Historic Neighborhood Association, and other partners will sponsor a revitalization project on historic West Ninth Street, called “Beyond the Divide.” It will temporarily reconnect West Ninth across I-630, to prove that reconnecting the neighborhood is viable, with future potential for permanent infrastructure improvements. Funded by a \$25,000 grant from Smart Growth America, this “quick-build” demonstration will create a temporary walkable, artistic, and historical corridor between Broadway and State Street to honor the area’s history as a hub for Black commerce and entertainment. Planned improvements include safer pedestrian access, artistic installations, and public space, intended to remain for several months to a year.

\* At our annual Fellowship Dinner on April 11<sup>th</sup>, we’ll begin to embrace possibilities for the coming year – the first of our next 75!

Keep an eye out for opportunities to explore these various possibilities in the coming weeks!

**Rev. Paul Beedle**  
**Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock**

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## HALBERG ECOLOGY CAMP

The Arkansas Audubon Society Halberg Ecology Camp is held each June at Camp Clearfork, a U.S. Forest Service camp between Hot Springs and Mt. Ida. First-year campers experience a variety of subjects including ornithology, aquatic biology, mammalogy, botany, entomology, geology and herpetology. This camp for students who have just completed 5th, 6th, or 7th grades. There are two sessions: June 7-12 and June 14-19. Click on the link to learn more or register. Need a scholarship to help with camp registration fees? Talk with Fin Judkins, our DRE.

[Learn More!](#)



### Caring Concern

Dr. Johnye Elizabeth Strickland, Professor Emerita of UALR, passed away peacefully on March 29. She started lecturing at UALR in 1959 and later became Head of English Department. She founded the UALR Oral History Program in 1973 and held numerous leadership positions in organizations related to Arkansas women and history as well as serving as the Board President of UUCLR.

### April's Worship Theme:



### UUCLR on the Radio!

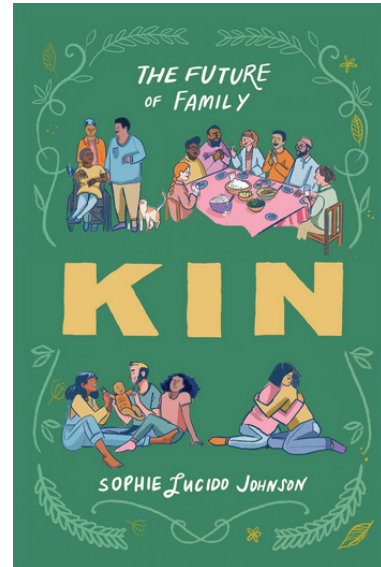
Tune your dial to KABF 88.3 and you might just hear the soothing voice of our own, Rev. Paul Beedle during 60-second segments throughout the month. Special thanks goes out to Tony Mansell for the idea and the energy to make it happen!

UUCLR is putting some of it's communication budget towards reaching new audiences - can you think of a way to get the word out?!

## Board President's Message

I am always fascinated by the new selections shelves at our fabulous Central Arkansas Library System (CALs) branches. I recently found a book that has caught my imagination as we consider the future of our beloved community. I checked out *Kin: The Future of Family* by Sophia Lucido Johnson, and I'm pretty sure I'm going to need to buy a copy for myself!

The author explores the many ways we can broaden our understanding of "family" to create relationships that go deeper than traditional understandings of friendship with some practical suggestions to get started. Some of her possibilities include regularly sharing meals with friends or neighbors, especially during the week; creating a little pod and assigning jobs to share the load of errands; joining together on projects based on common interests; creating a swap group; sharing physical resources from camping supplies to tools; sharing space such as a group garden; joining other parents to negotiate childcare; and care-taking as we all age.



Many of her ideas sound familiar if you look at our UUCLR calendar, from small group dinners to clothes and tools swaps to card night to veggie potlucks and more. And the author discusses the ways that we all benefit from diverse and intergenerational relationships. In all fairness, I've only just started her book, and I can't wait to see what else she covers. I am also excited (as always!) to see what our beloved community will add to our current activities and priorities as we deepen our care for each other and our community. So, today I'd like to ask you to consider the possibility that our lives can be easier, as well as more interesting, fulfilling, and fun, if we share our lives and our loads with each other.

With love and gratitude,  
Laurie Smith Prud'homme

## March Board Meeting Summary

Following approval of the minutes, the board heard reports from Rev Paul, Finance Committee, Program Council, and the Site Operations Council. The board reviewed reports from the ad hoc committees including Governing Docs and OWL Feasibility.

In old business, the board reviewed the proposal from the Health & Safety team regarding security measures as well as responses from the congregation. After a lengthy discussion of the proposal, the board voted to hire an armed, uniformed LRPD police officer to provide security during Sunday church services and on other occasions as the board deems appropriate. Marci reported on the pledge drive and budgeting process and Debbie gave an update on the Fellowship Dinner. In addition, the board voted to induct Bill and Nancy Kimpel into the Cornerstone Society.

In new business, Marci reported that the Executive Committee interviewed a candidate for bookkeeper that Marci would like to hire, and the board agreed to this plan.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, April 21st, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Smith Prud'homme, President

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Live Thankfully Resale Boutique

# SPRING CLEANOUT FOR A CAUSE

*Give your clothes a second life—and  
your neighbors a helping hand.*

**APRIL 6 - APRIL 11**

Your Neighborhood Drop Point



## Donation Guidelines

- **Women's clothing, shoes, and accessories**
- Like-new or gently used
- Spring/Summer preferred
- Donate as is or in a trash bag



## Your Impact:



Live Thankfully is a 501(c)3 upscale resale boutique featuring gently used women's clothing, shoes, accessories home goods, and furniture.

Your donations stay local, supporting women and youth from crisis through partners like Immerse Arkansas. **Together, we have given over \$460,000 back to our community!**

## Connect with us!

@livethankfullylr  
livethankfullylittlerock.com  
10020 N Rodney Parham Rd  
Tues-Sat: 10 AM - 4 PM



**LGBTQ**

Welcoming Congregation

## UUCLR is a Welcoming Congregation

Each of us has worth and dignity, and that worth includes our gender and our sexuality. As Unitarian Universalists (UUs), we not only open our doors to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, we value diversity of sexuality and gender and see it as a spiritual gift. We create inclusive religious communities and work for LGBTQ justice and equity as a core part of who we are. All of who you are is sacred. All of who you are is welcome.

# Our First Dirt Communion

On March 22nd, UUCLR participated in our very first Dirt Communion as part of a wider service celebrating the Spring Equinox. This ritual is new to us, but not new to UUs!

Laurie Smith-Prud'homme was inspired to incorporate this seasonal ritual after she discovered information about it on the UUA's Worship Web while researching another UU ritual: Fire Communion.



Much like Water Communion, participants were asked to bring a small container of dirt with them from any place that brings them joy or peace - or feels special to them for any reason. Congregants came forward to add their dirt to a communal flower pot and say a few words about where it came from. The dirt will be mixed together and incorporated around a tree which will be planted in the back woodlands.



*Photos by Rebecca Roetzel*

*Above: Jonah Santos with mom, Stephanie*

*Upper Right: The line of participants with Jeanne*

*Brown with the microphone while adding her dirt.*

*Lower Right: Jan Bowen adds her dirt.*



## Origins of Crystal's Dirt...

The dirt contributed by Crystal Amos came from the new orchard at Providence Park! You can learn more about the volunteer effort and the work of this new organization by viewing the video.

[View Providence Park Video](#)



## Paper Goods Needed at Pantry

Faith in Action is requesting people to donate paper towels and toilet paper for the McDermott Elem. School pantry. The Food Bank doesn't carry them and the families we serve can't buy them with SNAP benefits. Please put them the hallway near the office and Sue will pick up periodically.



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to our beloved, **Jean Pennucci!** We were lucky to be able to celebrate this milestone with her on her actual birthday after service last Sunday.



## Evelyn and Katy inspect dirt during the 10am RE hour on March 22nd.

The kids learned about dirt and soil prior to the Dirt Communion service. Our dedicated RE Teacher, Sarah Hyndman shared about what makes up dirt, what lives in the dirt, and how healthy soil keeps the whole world healthy. The kids were able to go outside to collect dirt in jars to be used during the communion service.

## A NEW APPROACH...

Please note that the small paper recycling bin has been removed from the sanctuary. The large, well-marked bin has been moved into the main foyer. Please try to switch your habit of dropping your order of service into the recycling bin **after** you've left the sanctuary.



# Are you getting all the news you need?

We have several ways of communicating!

Friday Email Blast  
Sunday Morning Email Blast  
Sunday Order of Service Insert  
Bulletin Boards (Thomson & RE Wing)  
Outer Circle - Monthly Newsletter  
New! - Parent GroupMe Chat  
Website - [www.uuclr.org](http://www.uuclr.org)  
Facebook - /UUCLR



**So many beautiful people!** If you'd like to take a photo for your directory listing, please contact the office. Thank you, Membership Team, for your work to keep our records up to date!

## April Birthdays

April 01 Margaret McLellan  
April 03 Valerie McNee  
April 04 James Scribner  
April 06 Joey Ben-Hanania Lenz  
April 06 Ben Savana  
April 10 Rose Govar  
April 13 Andrew Kessel  
April 13 Vicky Kessel  
April 13 Indra Reyes

April 14 William Goolsby  
April 16 Lisa Brents  
April 21 Fin Judkins  
April 23 Ava St Ana  
April 27 Joanne Kriehn  
April 27 April Ambrose  
April 28 Teresa Knight  
April 29 Greg Barr

*See a birthday that is missing or incorrect?  
Please let Membership or the office know!*

# Sentience Surrounds Us

AN EARTH DAY WORSHIP RITUAL

8:00 pm ET • 7:00 pm CT • 6:00 pm MT • 5:00 pm PT

APRIL  
22



Unitarian Universalist  
Ministry for Earth



Human beings often believe that our emotions and intelligence uniquely set us apart from nature, yet this could not be further from the truth. In fact, it is because we are part of nature that we sense, feel, and think. The natural world is alive, vibrant, and buzzing with multiple intelligences – some of them different or beyond our human capabilities. Science confirms what ancient wisdom already knew: Earth is full of creatures who are both sentient (capable of deep feeling) and sapient (capable of complex thinking). Come join UU Ministry for Earth for an Earth Day worship ritual that celebrates the sentience (and sapience) that surrounds us, in loving memory of Dr. Jane Goodall.

Join UU Ministry for Earth and other partners to honor Earth Day and celebrate this international day of protest and praise, as we use our love for Earth and all beings to ignite our passion for protecting and preserving our planetary home, for the sake of all beings and future generations.

## April brought a Pink Moon

Gather on April 5th - Join UU Ministry for Earth to ground, re-center, and sustain ourselves for the work of climate justice. There are readings, a short reflection, time for individual contemplation, and sharing in small groups.

We meet on the Sunday evening closest to each full moon at 7pm (CST).

[Register to Attend](#)



WEEKLY DROP-IN

climate grief  
support group



Are you concerned about the state of our world, worry about how current events are intersecting with climate disturbance, are a parent or grandparent concerned about the coming generations, or a young adult with anxiety about the future of our living world? This Climate Grief Support Group will provide a space for you to process your experiences with others in a ritualized, trauma-informed, and mindful way.

Every Friday from  
noon-1pm over Zoom.

Zoom

link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86786124962?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86786124962?pwd=2Q4YaPUfRjKxUFwZj1iN5Jj5y2Hi5I.1)

[pwd=2Q4YaPUfRjKxUFwZj1iN5Jj5y2Hi5I.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86786124962?pwd=2Q4YaPUfRjKxUFwZj1iN5Jj5y2Hi5I.1)

Passcode: support

We recommend you bring a stone or similar grounding object for our time together.



# SIDE WITH LOVE ACTION CENTER

[Visit our Website](#)

## Hubs of Resilience

On April 13, Side With Love's The Gathering will focus on how we can turn our congregations and communities into Hubs of Resilience. Amid extreme weather and climate disruption, our congregations and communities can be powerful hubs of care, connection, and critical infrastructure.

Join Rachel Myslivy, Side With Love's Climate Justice Strategist, at 7pm (CST) to learn more.

### CHURCH ADDRESS:

1818 Reservoir Road  
Little Rock, AR 72227

### WEBSITE:

[www.uuclr.org](http://www.uuclr.org)

### OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday-Friday, 8am-1pm

### OFFICE CONTACT:

Rebecca Roetzel  
Church Administrator  
(501) 225-1503  
[uuchurchlr@gmail.com](mailto:uuchurchlr@gmail.com)



### MINISTER:

Rev. Paul Beedle  
Contact for appointment.  
(504) 458-2254  
[revpaulbeedle@gmail.com](mailto:revpaulbeedle@gmail.com)

### DIRECTOR OF RE:

Stephanie "Fin" Judkins  
[dre@uuclr.org](mailto:dre@uuclr.org)

### MUSIC DIRECTOR:

Kendi Jensen-Loving

### AV DIRECTOR:

Chad Loucks

### WORSHIP ARTS TEAM LEADS:

Margot Cameron & Laurie Smith Prud'homme

### FACILITIES TEAM LEAD:

Michael Roetzel

### GROUNDS TEAM LEAD:

Joanne Kriehn

### MEMORIAL WOODLANDS:

Margaret McLellan

### CARING TEAM LEAD:

Sue McDonald

### FELLOWSHIP TEAM LEAD:

Kater Reynolds

### MEMBERSHIP LEAD:

Lisa Brents

### FORUM COORDINATOR:

Jan Bowen

### RE-QUESTORS COORDINATOR:

Joe Meehan

### RECONNECTIONS COORDINATOR:

Zenyth Propst

### CUUPS COORDINATOR:

Stephanie Webb

### COMMUNICATIONS & RENTALS:

Rebecca Roetzel

### HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM LEADS:

Phil Peters & Sherman James

### TECHNOLOGY TEAM LEAD:

Scott Lee

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