



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF LITTLE ROCK

## Monthly News & Updates

June & July 2026 |  
VOL. 75 ISSUE 6

### Summer Worship Services

- June 7:** "On Bee-ing" - Rev. Paul
- June 14:** Juneteenth & Pride Service - Worship Arts
- June 21:** "Flourishing Together" - Rev. Paul
- June 28:** "On Willpower" - Rev. Paul
- July 5:** "The Conscience of John Quincy Adams" - Rev Paul
- July 12:** Rev. Paul is in the pulpit.
- July 19:** Rev. Paul is in the pulpit.
- July 26:** Rev. Paul is in the pulpit.



### 2025 Annual Meeting

UUCLR will host the congregational meeting on June 7th. Members will vote on the budget and the slate of officers for the next church year.



### Summer Forum Topics

- June 7:** Brainstorming for the next Church Year's topics
- June 14:** Share the Plate Guests - Queer Collective
- June 21:** To Be Announced
- June 28:** "What's on Your Mind?" with Clyde Bailey
- July 5:** REConnections & Forum Meet Together
- July 12:** Share the Plate Guest: Miracle League
- July 19:** Guest Speaker To Be Announced
- July 26:** "What's on Your Mind?" with Clyde Bailey

### PRIDE Month!

The Faith in Action & 8th Principle teams encourage you to get out and be support Pride events happening this month. We are also looking forward to hosting the Queer Collective as our 2nd Sunday Share the Plate recipient in June.

[CLICK HERE](#) for information about SOMA Pride - Saturday, June 13th.

[CLICK HERE](#) for information about Pride in the Park - Sunday, June 7th.

## Upcoming Events

**June 1 - Between the Lines Book Club (7pm)**

**June 5 - Game Night (Pehrson, 6-8pm)**

**June 7 - Annual Congregational Meeting**

**June 7 - Book Exchange & Recycling Sunday**

**June 9 - Young at Heart Lunch (Mehta, 11:45)**

**June 10 - Program Council Meeting (5:15pm)**

**June 16 - UUCLR Board Meeting (7pm)**

**June 16 - Meal Serving at Our House**

**June 23 - 8th Principle Team Mtg. (Pehrson, 5pm)**

**July 3 - Game Night (Pehrson, 6-8pm)**

**July 5 - Book Exchange & Recycle Sunday**

**July 6 - Between the Lines Book Club (7pm)**

**July 8 - Program Council Mtg. (5:15pm)**

**July 21 - UUCLR Board Meeting (7pm)**

**July 21 - Meal Serving at Our House**

**July 28 - 8th Principle Team Mtg. (Pehrson, 5pm)**

**NOTE: Some events are on break for the summer. This includes LUUnch Out!, Parent's Night Out, Young at Heart, the Short Stories Group (in person gatherings), and Small Group Dinners.**

View the online calendar to see times and locations of all the upcoming summer events.

**UUCLR Calendar**



## Young at Heart

Our final 2026 church year regularly scheduled lunch and program is set for 11:45 in Thomson Hall on Tuesday, June 9th. We expect fun and good food (donation \$10 to defray expenses), all prepared by our wonderful volunteers, Joanne Kriehn and her cooks, Jeanne Brown, and Cathey Simpson presenting the program. All are invited to a joyful day of celebration, and also to help if possible before and after the event to make things work smoothly.

Hope to see you there!

Selma Blackburn, Coordinator

### PLEASE NOTE:

In July and August we'll take a break.



Brett & Gina Pharis are our newest members - cause to celebrate!

## McDermott Food Pantry - Summer Hiatus

From September through April, each month we fed between **40 and 46 families**. Typically we had between 28 to 33 families each week because not everyone came each week. In all, we helped **82 families**, with 290 members. **166 of those were children**. We handled out 791 bags.

Because school is out for the summer, there will be no food pantry after May 15. The next pantry will be August 14, a Friday. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Sue McDonald to get your name on her list. We plan to continue to distribute food from 7 AM to 7:45 AM and from 3 PM to 4 PM each Friday when children are in school. Thursday mornings are for picking up food at the local grocery store, Potluck Food Rescue, and the Arkansas Foodbank. After unloading the cars, we set up the bags for the next day's distribution. The first couple of weeks in August we will be re-enrolling our families.

## REFLECTIONS FROM REV. PAUL

*As shared in the 2026 Annual Report*

2025-2026 has been a year of celebration as we marked our congregation's 75th "diamond" anniversary, with many inspiring events of celebration and reflection. It has also been a year of challenges, especially in matters of social justice. Again we are responding collaboratively and creatively, with heightened awareness, best practices to ensure everyone's safety, and lots of love. Perhaps our most significant experiences have come from participating in "No Kings" events and in Singing Resistance, the Minneapolis-born national network of local groups dedicated to keeping public witness non-violent and loving through song. This report offers a summary of my work during this church year as well as plans shaping up for the coming one.



### Meeting Our Priority Challenges Through Shared Ministries

The progress we have made on the three priority challenges for UUCLR identified before I arrived three years ago...

- ▣ Attract young families and young adults
- ▣ Develop hybrid programming capacity
- ▣ Attract a more racially/culturally diverse membership

...have well and truly become challenges. As more young families have come to feel at home at UUCLR, becoming members and leaders, we need more and more volunteers to support our religious education and exploration ministry to our children. Last year we launched our first children's summer program since COVID; the program returns this month, thanks to the generous gifts of time and talent so many of you in the past few weeks have signed up to contribute. Our Lay Ministry Team (listening and spiritual support) and Caring Team (practical help and support) provide excellent care of members and friends, as our members generally do through informal ministries of friendship among us.

Our church is growing because we keep inviting our friends, warmly welcoming all newcomers, working visibly for love and justice in the wider community, and making ourselves more accessible through both combined in-person and remote/online programming and the investments we have made in equipment and organizational capacity. In the coming year, as we invest in our capacity to keep all of us safe in these politically contentious times, the Board welcomes your observations and feedback, especially on our experiment of hiring a security officer for Sunday mornings and some special events. Our proposed 2026-2027 budget includes funding to hire an off-duty LRPD officer for 6 months. In late 2026 and/or early 2027 we will assess this experiment and discern together our way forward to a responsibly safe UUCLR community.

Our subscription to Soul Matters - materials for small group ministry, RE, and worship – continues to enrich our covenant groups, RE programs, and Sunday services. A new UUA resource, called MOSAIC, promises support toward meeting our challenge to attract a more racially/culturally diverse membership. It has several components: a philosophical "platform;" a lifespan anti-racism curriculum (comparable in scope to the UUA's Our Whole Lives sexuality curriculum); a certification program for congregations engaged in anti-racist, multicultural transformation; learning and practice communities; an anti-racism resource library; and created a guide for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) UUs to find support, connection, and Unitarian Universalist community. I encourage you to explore it at: <https://www.uua.org/mosaic>.

Our partnership with neighboring McDermott Elementary School, the new home of our food pantry ministry, has gone very well this year, with UUCLR members not only volunteering for the pantry but also attending McDermott's community events. Along with our ongoing commitments at Our House, The Van, and other partners, this closer connection with UUCLR's neighborhood puts us in direct contact with our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color) neighbors, and in a position to understand more deeply the social justice issues explored in the MOSAIC platform as they are manifest locally, and to make a meaningful and desired difference.

Rev. Paul Beedle  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock

## How Can You Help a Child?

Our neighborhood school, McDermott, wants you! Tutors and mentors can make a tremendous difference in the lives of the children. Sky Brower, the community school coordinator, shared that this happened with one child this past year who moved from "retention" to "promotion", meaning that the child would not be held back in 3rd grade. If you have the time to work one-on-one with a child who is struggling, you will be a hero in the eyes of that child and their teacher. Qualifications include a background check and training by ViPS (Volunteers in Public Schools) and the commitment to devote the time each week.



Contact Nell Matthews, [uucrlnell@gmail.com](mailto:uucrlnell@gmail.com), if you are interested.



## A Note from Fellowship...

Well summer is nipping at our heels now and for the Fellowship Team that means a bit of a breather. However the Annual Meeting on June 7 is still to come. There will be a light lunch (sandwiches) served to make sure that no one is hungry while we make important decisions for the church.

The rest of the summer has nothing on the calendar yet but I am thinking we'll have a couple "Ice Cream Socials" after church service. Start your lunch with dessert! If you have any fun ideas for these, speak to me anytime or shoot me an email. It has been pointed out that our new bowls (think Fellowship Dinner) are the right size for banana splits!

Be sure that your calendar has on it our annual Labor Day Picnic. We'll cook something on the grill and y'all will bring the sides.

What other ideas might you have for summer fun and community?

*Submitted by Kater Reynolds, Fellowship Chair*

## A Note from the 8th Principle Team...

Please join us at Pride in the Park on Sunday, June 7th. This event is organized by LR Black Pride and will take place at MacArthur Park in the afternoon.



There will be a Juneteenth 11am service at UUCLR on June 14th coordinated by our 8th Principle Team.

Also, we encourage you to engage in these neat opportunities:

...Take the tour of the Haven of Rest cemetery on 12th Street which is a special African American cemetery. The tour includes a map with directions and biographies of people buried there.

...Register for Juneteenth in Da Rock Summit, taking place Friday, June 19, 2026, at the Robinson Center from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. This will be one of the largest Juneteenth celebrations in the region! The Summit will serve as a premier cultural convening dedicated to economic mobility, workforce development, and meaningful community advancement. [REGISTER HERE](#)

...Visit a new exhibit focusing on Black Arkansans who have contributed both locally and nationally to our history: Arkansas Black Voices: Shaping a Nation at 250, will open to the public on May 28 and run through August 29, 2026 at the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center.

Contact Margot Cameron for more information about these 8th Principle happenings.

## What is the 8th Principle?

*"We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote: journeying toward spiritual wholeness by working to build a diverse multicultural Beloved Community by our actions that accountably dismantle racism and other oppressions in ourselves and our institutions."*

# Annual Memorial Day Weekend Buffalo Trip

After two years of heavy rains and high waters,  
attendees were grateful for a float and a full weekend of fellowship!



Thank you to Zenyth and James for your many efforts in coordinating this year's trip!

If you are interested in attending next year - as an overnight camper or day guest - look for an RSVP later this summer. For those wishing to stay in a cabin, be sure to make the call and get your spot reserved ASAP! Look for a stand-alone email with more specific information about this annual event.

## UUA Music Ministries Opportunity

This summer, UU musicians, songleaders, choir members, worship band instrumentalists, ministers, and music lovers from across the country will gather for the **Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries Annual Conference & Songleaders Convergence** and we'd love for you and your congregation to be part of it!

Whether you're considering traveling to Milwaukee or joining virtually, this gathering offers a meaningful opportunity to reconnect with music, worship, creativity, and community.

This conference isn't just for professional musicians. It's designed for the whole ecosystem of UU worship and music — music directors, ministers, choir members, worship band instrumentalists, songleaders, and anyone who loves music.

**July 29 – August 2, 2026**  
**First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee**  
[You can learn more and register here!](#)

### Convocation & 40th Anniversary Gathering

COVENANT  
OF  
UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
PAGANS



**July 24-26, 2026**

First Church in Salem, MA

**Registration  
Open NOW!**

**INFO & REGISTRATION**

### Spring Has Sprung & It is Time to Celebrate 40 Years of CUUPS!

Some of you have asked, "What is this Convocation thing?" Well...Convocation is a gathering that CUUPS has had in the past. In the early years, there was one every year that moved to various regions of the country. Then, due to a lack of volunteers, it came to a halt and started again in 2016. So, to celebrate all that it has taken our volunteers and the difference CUUPS has made in the UUA and the broader Pagan community, we are having a big party and a UU Pagan gathering that all are welcome to!

Mark your calendars for July 24-26, 2026, at First Church in Salem, Massachusetts! This city turns 400 years old the weekend after Convocation, and First Church turns 397. It seems a fitting place to honor our place in UUism to celebrate in the church whose congregants were at the epicenter of the Salem Witch Trials. Blessed Be,

**Rev. Jerrie Hildebrand**

CUUPS President & Communications Liaison



## Board President's Message

Happy Summer! As we enter the last month of our church's fiscal year and celebrate the wonderful people who have stepped up to lead us in the new year, I want to say thank you! I am so deeply grateful to our beloved congregation for the community that we continue to create together year after year. Our sacred space holds each of our unique personalities, beliefs, dreams, and aspirations. We share our hearts and minds with each other, and we are blessed by this love and trust. We have consciously chosen to weave our lives together. What a tremendous gift. We are building on a community that began 75 years ago, and we continue the work of caretaking and nurturing and strengthening this congregation for each other and for those who will come after us. This is how we can make a difference. This is how we change the world – keeping love at the center.



Thank you, my beloved friends.

With deep love and boundless gratitude,  
Laurie Smith Prud'homme

## May Board Meeting Summary

Following approval of the minutes, the board heard reports from Rev Paul, Finance Committee, Program Council, Site Operations Council, and the Executive Committee. In old business, the Executive Committee reported on the April Health & Safety Team meeting which the Exec Comm was invited to join to discuss the ongoing process of hiring a security officer. Marci presented the Finance Committee's revised 2026-27 budget to the board. The board voted unanimously to approve the revised 2026-27 budget which will be presented to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting.

In new business, the board discussed the process for inducting members into the Cornerstone Society with the possibility of forming an ad hoc committee to clarify the process. The board reviewed the Cornerstone Society nomination for DeAnn Shields- Marley, written by Nell Matthews, and the board unanimously approved DeAnn's induction. The board discussed the agenda for the UUCLR Annual Meeting on June 7, 2026, immediately following the morning worship service.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, June 16th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Smith Prud'homme, President



### Welcome Colleen Davis!

We are excited to announce that Colleen Davis has joined the staff as a part time bookkeeper. Currently she is keeping hours starting at 10am on Wednesdays and Fridays. Her first day was May 8th. Mihomy's last day will be June 30th.

[Colleen's Email Contact](#)

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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

## June Birthdays

|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Ann Owen.....               | 1  |
| Ginny Slothour-Hudnall..... | 1  |
| Catherine Miller.....       | 4  |
| Sue McDonald.....           | 7  |
| Jessi Jo Johnson.....       | 9  |
| Isaac Pirkle-Thomson.....   | 10 |
| Lauren Lusk.....            | 11 |
| Dan Danielson.....          | 13 |
| Scott Lee.....              | 14 |
| Liz Mackenzie.....          | 14 |
| John Adams.....             | 15 |
| Marnie Golden.....          | 20 |
| John Hill.....              | 21 |
| Kim Godfrey.....            | 26 |
| Anna Kyle.....              | 29 |
| Amy Milam.....              | 29 |

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

## July Birthdays

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Marci Riggs.....             | 1  |
| Aaron Bean.....              | 2  |
| Fox Durham.....              | 2  |
| Marilyn Lewis.....           | 3  |
| Barrett Goodwin.....         | 6  |
| Trudy Lusk.....              | 6  |
| Sarah Schreiber.....         | 6  |
| Rick Owen.....               | 8  |
| Miriam Thompson.....         | 8  |
| Rudy Rieple.....             | 12 |
| Marlena Grunewald.....       | 16 |
| Gary Jolicoeur.....          | 17 |
| Martha Nixon.....            | 17 |
| Elaine Gimblet.....          | 18 |
| Lance Scott.....             | 23 |
| Anneliese Maus.....          | 24 |
| Margo Pirkle.....            | 25 |
| Tom Rimmer.....              | 25 |
| Laurie Smith Prud'homme..... | 25 |
| Martha Rimmer.....           | 27 |
| Stephanie Webb.....          | 29 |

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[uuchurchlr@gmail.com](mailto:uuchurchlr@gmail.com)

Rebecca Roetzel  
Church Administrator  
Colleen Davis  
Bookkeeper

### WORSHIP ARTS TEAM LEADS:

Margot Cameron & Laurie Smith Prud'homme

### FACILITIES TEAM LEAD:

Mike Roetzel



### 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

### FORUM COORDINATOR:

Jan Bowen

### RE-QUESTORS COORDINATOR:

Joe Meehan

**GROUND'S TEAM LEAD:**  
Joanne Kriehn

**MEMORIAL WOODLANDS:**  
Margaret McLellan

**CARING TEAM:**  
Sue McDonald

**FELLOWSHIP TEAM LEAD:**  
Kater Reynolds

**MEMBERSHIP LEADS:**  
Lisa Brents

**RECONNECTIONS COORDINATOR:**  
Zenyth Propst

**CUUPS COORDINATOR:**  
Stephanie Webb

**COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR:**  
Rebecca Roetzel

**HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM LEADS:**  
Phil Peters & Sherman James

**TECHNOLOGY TEAM LEAD:**  
Scott Lee



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