

Unitarian Universalist Network of Houston

www.uuhouston.org

January 2020



Unitarian Universalist Congregations of Greater Houston

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Unitarian Universalist Network of Houston

The UU Network of Houston is comprised of the eight UU Congregations and Fellowships in the Greater Houston Area. Representatives from each congregation meet monthly to share ideas and work together to promote communications between member societies and to collaborate on the accomplishment of mutual beneficial task in support of UU Values in the Greater Houston Galveston Area. The UU Network is funded by all of the area congregations at \$1 per member per congregation annually.

- We promote communication between and among network member congregations.
- We work in mutual supportive ways with the UUA Southern Region
- We organize and sponsor an annual workshop or seminar, in various formats, to promote sharing ideas for mutual enhancement.
- We sponsor an annual spring music festival for all Houston UUs and Friends.
- The Network provides scholarship assistance for members of network congregations to attend Leadership School as well as financial assistance for the first time attendees to the UUA General Assembly.

The UU Network meets monthly on the second Tuesday at 7 p.m. on video conference via Google Hangout.

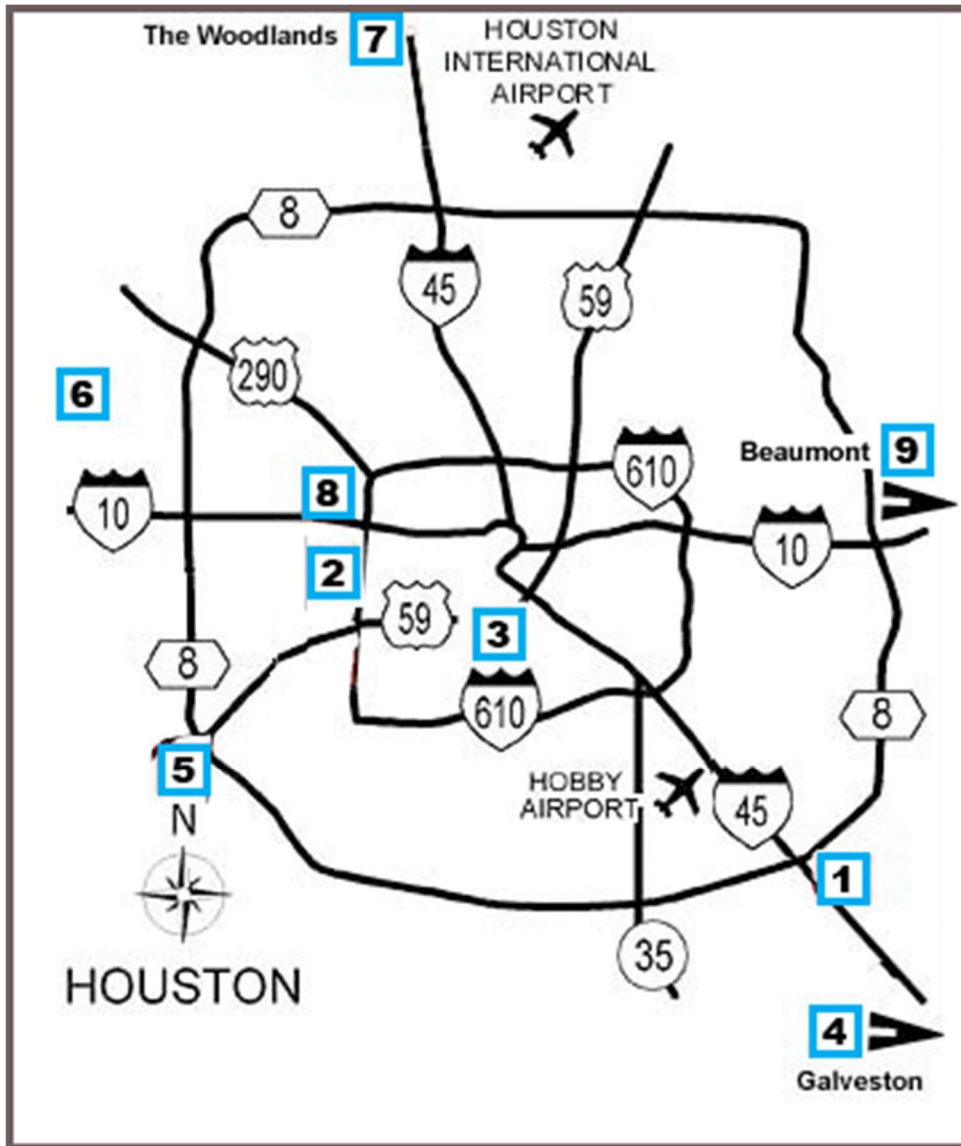
If you have an idea to share with the Houston Area UU community please pass it on to your congregational network representative for the UU Network or to our Secretary Mark Holt or our President Ron Hammons. Additionally if you would like to be a guest or make a presentation at our monthly meeting please contact

Mark Holt or Ron Hammons

uuhouston@gmail.com

Map of Unitarian Universalist Houston Area

Churches and Congregations



Unitarian Universalist Congregations of Greater Houston

1 Bay Area Unitarian Universalist Church

17503 El Camino Real, Houston, TX 77058
(281) 488-2001 www.bauuc.org

2 Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church

1900 Bering Drive, Houston, TX 77057
(713) 782-8250 www.emersonhouston.org

3 First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston Museum District Campus

5200 Fannin Street (at Southmore Blvd), Houston, TX 77004
(713) 526-5200 www.firstuu.org

4 Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Galveston

502 Church St., Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 765-8330 www.uugalveston.org

5 First Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston Thoreau Campus in Richmond

3515 Clayhead Road Richmond, Texas 77406
(713) 526-5200 www.firstuu.org/thoreau/

6 Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston

Services Are Held in the
Congregation Jewish Community North Sanctuary
5400 Fellowship Ln., Spring, TX 77379
(281) 301-7999 <https://uutapestry.org/>

7 Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Church

1370 N. Millbend Drive
The Woodlands, TX 77380
(281) 298-2780 www.northwoodsuu.org

8 Unitarian Fellowship of Houston

1504 Wirt Road Houston, TX 77055
(713) 686-5876 www.ufoh.org

9 Spindletop Unitarian Church

1575 Spindletop Road, Beaumont, TX 77705
(409) 833-6883 www.spindletopchurch.org

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**About
UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST NETWORK
of
GREATER HOUSTON**

The UU Network was formed In 1986 as a lay organization to:
**Promote communication between member societies,
to strengthen the commitment to Unitarian Universalism
in the Greater Houston Area, and
to promote, coordinate activities which can be better
accomplished by mutual effort.**

The Network was the successor to the All Church Council, formed before 1975 by Andrew Ladner of First Unitarian Church of Houston and Leonora Montgomery of Emerson Unitarian Church.

+ + + NETWORK ACTIVITIES + + +

UNION SERVICES The Network has sponsored three Union Services beginning in 1995 when Reverend John Buehrens, President of Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) gave a sermon, "Salted with Fire". This was followed in 1996 with a Union Service by Reverend Terry Sweetser, "Exaltation Takes Practice".

In 2002 Reverend Bill Sinkford, President of UUA, spoke at the Union Service with five participating area UU ministers. This service included a church banner parade and banner display. The collection was donated to the Chalice Lighters Program.

BEFRIENDERS PROGRAM The Network sponsored Susan Madison to present an initial workshop on the Befrienders Program in 1995. In 1996 the UU Network sponsored a training course for the program, 30+ UU's from three churches were trained to be Befrienders.

WORKSHOPS The Network has sponsored and/or helped coordinate twenty-two workshops since 1995. Over half of the workshops have been President's or Leadership luncheons designed to have ministerial and lay church leaders meet and discuss best practices and concerns. Post workshop comments strongly favored continuing these workshops.

Other workshops featured keynote speakers: Susan Madison for Befrienders; Dr. Richard Lewis, a sociologist; Rev. Terry Sweetser; Rev. Marjorie Montgomery; Rev. Bob Hill, District Director; Rev. Weldon Gaddy; Rev. Jonalu Johnstone; Rev. Fred Campbell; Rev. Michael Durrell; Rev. Dr. Thandeka; Gini Courter, UUA Moderator; and Rev. Don Southworth, Director of UUMA.

The 2012 President's Luncheon focused on area UU congregations Social Justice activities and was the genesis of the Unitarian Universalist Voice For Justice. The 2013 President's Luncheon was a roll out of the Unitarian Voice For Justice Program.

DWIGHT BROWN LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE In 1996 the UU Network initiated scholarships for the Dwight Brown Leadership Experience Training. Four scholarships of \$150 each were given to area UUs. Subsequently the number of scholarships was increased to eight, at \$200 each. They are available to all area UU congregations. The UU Network has also provided scholarships for area UUs to attend the UUA General Assembly.

PRIDE PARADE Beginning in 1999 the UU Network has paid the entrance fee for the UU float in Pride Parade. In some years the UU Network has paid for more than one float. Since 2013 the UU Network has purchased Rainbow “Welcoming Congregation” UU Wristbands for distribution at the parade.

UU SPRING MusicFest The music festival began in 2003, it is organized and produced by Mark Holt of Emerson UU Church. It is a Spring event held on the grounds of the Unitarian Fellowship of Houston. UUs enjoy an afternoon and evening of music in two venues: inside their Sanctuary and outside on a raised platform partially donated by the UU Network.

Musicians, choirs, and bands from the eight area UU churches participate indoors and outdoors in this family friendly event. UUs listen to fellow UU's play classical, country and rock & roll. It's a picnic with UUs on lawn chairs and blankets rubbing elbows with fellow UUs. Vendors sell everything from tie dye and jewelry to vegan wine. Yes, vegan wine!

Drinks and food are available with the donations benefiting area UU Network congregation's college scholarship programs. The Spring Music Festival is the largest annual gathering of UUs in the Houston area. Since 2015 the Music Festival has been co-produced with the Houston Peace and Justice Center.

UU COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS Valerie Tolman of First Unitarian Universalist Church, Thoreau Campus started a college scholarship program for high school graduates. School counselors recommended the scholarship recipients be those who meet the criteria of being the first one in their family to attend college.

UU COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS con't

This program was subsequently adopted by Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church (Groppe Scholarships) and the Unitarian Fellowship of Houston.

The UU Network of Houston has helped raise money for these scholarships by collecting donations at the annual UU Music Fest.

PUBLICITY - INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL Beginning in 1998 the UU Network periodically, compiled and distributed a Directory of the eight UU Network congregation's Officers, Board Members, and Committee Chairs to facilitate communication and interaction. This information is now available at UU Network website via live links to all congregations websites.

UU Network assisted David May of Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church in collecting money for "UU Radio Drive Time Ads" on the Public Broadcasting Station, KUHF. For several years the UU Network coordinated "UU Sunday on KUHF" during their fund raising drive by assisting with their phone bank.

In 2000 the UU Network worked with the area UU ministers on an newspaper article on the "100th anniversary of UUism in Houston". The UU Network coordinated a UU Youth "Cancer Relay for Life".

During the 2004-2005 Media campaign UU Network worked with Tracy Robinson-Harris and Valerie Holton of the Unitarian Universalist Association to help plan the campaign.

PUBLICITY - INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL con't

With their assistance media tracking data was collected and distributed to area UU Congregations.

The UU Network helped coordinate the media campaign kickoff with Rev. Bill Sinkford, president of the UUA, in January of 2005. The UU Network purchased 700 bumper stickers for distribution to UU congregations. In 2009 the UU Network ran twelve weeks of ads in the "Belief Section" of the Houston Chronicle. In August 2013 the UU Network ran two weeks of UU ads during the AM and PM drive time, on KUHF Radio.

Out of the 2013 UU Network Luncheon, the desire to form a network of UUs committed to public witness for justice in the Greater Houston Area had its genesis. The Unitarian Universalist Voice For Justice (UUV4J) was formed in 2014 as a "RESPONSE NETWORK". It is a "CALLED TO ACTION" when an incident occurs in the Houston area calling for a loving religious witness.

UUHOUSTON.ORG The network website (www.uuhouston.org) was established in the mid-1990s to give internet visitors information about the eight Houston area UU congregations. The present website was revamped by Andy Savidge in November of 2008. This allowed the UU Network to track the number of monthly visitors to the website. Initially the website had 106 unique monthly visitors. Currently the website averages about 1200 unique visitors a month with some seasonal variability.

UUHOUSTON.ORG con't

Uuhouston.org website is the host for the UU Voice For Justice (UUV4J) response network. The website contains UUV4J: ACTION ALERTS, which gives the purpose and details of each CALL TO ACTION. The UU Network funds the TEXT System used to communicate ACTION ALERTS.

Additionally the UUV4J post web pages on:

- UUV4J Talking Points
- UUV4J Past Events
- UUV4J History on Women's Health & Reproductive Rights
- UUV4J History on Marriage Equality for LGBT People
- UUV4J History on Non-Discrimination of LGBT People

All area UU congregation's websites are linked and accessible via the UU Network website.

UU Network of Houston Social Media

UU Network of Houston Website: www.uuhouston.org

Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/Houston-Unitarian-Universalist-Meetup/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Unitarian-Universalist-Voice-for-Justice-of-Greater-Houston-639096082831756/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/uuHouston>

Acknowledgements

The UU Network of Houston thanks Reverend Leonora Montgomery and Andrew Ladner for their vision.

The UU Network of Houston thanks Bob and Barbara Hopkins of First Unitarian Universalist Church, Museum District Campus for remembering and recording the early history of the UU Network.

UU NETWORK OF GREATER HOUSTON – 2020 Leadership

President

Ron Hammons First UU Church/Thoreau Campus in Richmond

Secretary

Mark Holt Emerson UU Church

Treasurer

Harold Rud Unitarian Fellowship of Houston

Website Contact

Andy Savidge Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston

Pride Parade UU Network Coordinator

+ + + To Be Named + + +

Social Media Coordinator

Lori Reeder Emerson UU Church



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Please send corrections and additions for future editions to

uuhouston@gmail.com

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