



## Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

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May 2025

### Message from Our Executive Director and Senior Minister



This month, historian Thomas Plant stood beneath the ailing red maple tree not far from the Meetinghouse steps, and honored its life.

For 100 or 150 years, he calculated, the tree had fed the birds and shaded jazz concert-goers on our greenspace, and provided climbing places for squirrels.

A small gathering of neighbors stood near, beneath cloudy skies and the chance of rain, listening.

The tree, dying slowly, had begun dropping branches and needed to be cut down. But first, Thomas - an historian and public health advocate and member of the Urban Ministry board - honored its life.

It was a small thing, maybe - taking time to honor the life of a tree when daily we are assailed by bad news: broad assaults on the earth and so many people. But somehow, it mattered.

In upside-down times, we ground ourselves in the sacred and the holy around us. We build friendships. We strengthen community.

And we keep moving forward, together.

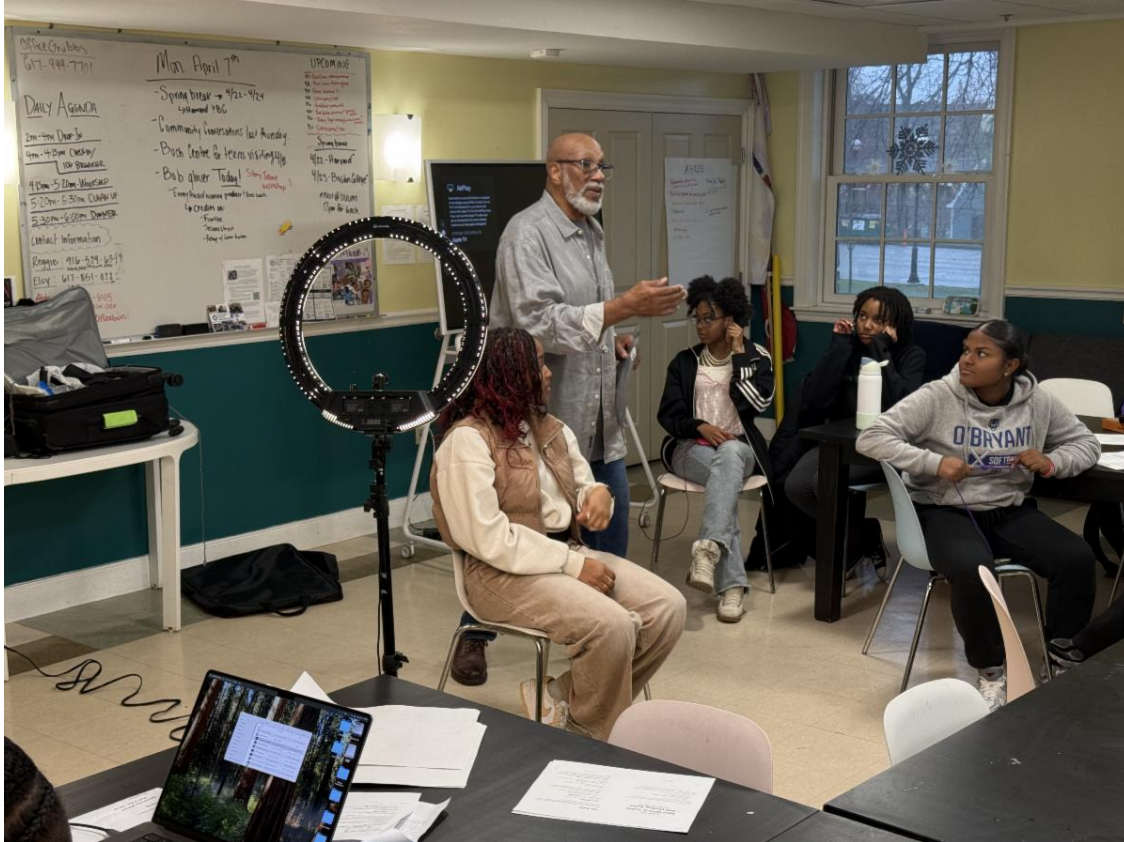
Onward, and in faith,

Mary Margaret

Make a Gift to the UU Urban Ministry

## Program Updates

### Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP)



*Artist and photographer Bob Glover leads a workshop with RYP students about multi-media storytelling*

### Finishing the Year Strong

The students of Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP), our afterschool program, have had a full schedule as the year comes to a close.

Recently, the students were visited by Bob Glover, a Boston-area videographer, who led a workshop on video-making and storytelling. He plans to return in September to help students create videos they can submit as part of their college applications.



RYP also welcomed Georgia Foote, a realtor and member of the Weston congregation, who gave students an inside look at the world of real estate. She walked them through the process of getting a real estate license, what the job entails, and the types of real estate

careers available. Georgia also guided students through the steps of buying a home and shared insight on what to look for when house-hunting in the future.



The youth also had the opportunity to participate in a woodworking class led by volunteer, Phil Nowers, a woodworker and member of Theodore Parker Church. The students learned how to measure, cut, and assemble pieces of wood to build their own trays or picture frames.



*During a recent tour of Boston College, RYP students take a group photo on the field of Alumni Stadium*

## College Tours

With college on the horizon for many of our young people, RYP has increased the number of college visits offered each year. This past month featured visits to the campuses of Harvard University and Boston College.

To whom it may Concern,

my children and I have been at Renewal House for the past year and a half, and we have grown so much since we first arrived.

Renewal house has taken me out of survival mode, giving me the opportunity to become my own person and learn independence.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation in this letter.

Renewal house has provided us with food and clothing, and welcomed us with open arms. Knowing we have a safe place to live allows us to focus on school and future goals.

I am now working towards moving into my new home. I feel confident about moving because of the support I received here. Thank you so much!

*A note recently written by a Renewal House resident.*

### **A Note from a Current Shelter Resident**

The nature of the work done at Renewal House, our emergency domestic violence shelter, requires that its location and the identities of the residents there are not shared.

This month, instead of sharing an update, the words will come directly from a current resident, who wrote the note pictured above.

Supporters of UUUM help make the important services that Renewal House offers possible, and it is greatly appreciated!

### UUUM's Arts Liaison



The UU Urban Ministry is committed to spotlighting the work of Black and Brown artists from Roxbury and Boston-area. A few months back, we welcomed Dayenne Walters to our team in the role of arts liaison.

Dayenne is a longtime Boston resident, where she has lived for over 30 years, just around the corner from the Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry campus. She is a creative professional with a background in both the visual and performing arts. She holds a BFA in Studio Arts from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and a certificate in Graphic Design/Marketing Communications from MassArt.

In her role, Dayenne focuses on building partnerships with arts and cultural institutions in Roxbury, with a commitment to social justice and supporting artists of color.

For those of you who have taken our "Public Art In and Near Nubian Square" walking tour, Dayenne is a familiar face. As arts liaison, she is identifying ways UUUM can work with local artists, community institutions, and member congregations to support and highlight local artists.

One of the upcoming projects she is working on is being done in conjunction with First Parish in Lexington - an art exhibit called, *Changing Hearts, Changing Minds*. The information for the exhibit is below, and we hope you can be a part of it.

### Changing Hearts, Changing Minds - Art Exhibit & Artist Talkback

MAY 18 - JUNE 15, 2025

EXHIBITION  
OPENING

MAY 18  
5:30 P

ARTIST  
TALKBACK

JUNE 1  
NOON-2 P

# CHANGING HEARTS CHANGING MINDS

FIRST PARISH IN LEXINGTON | 7 HARRINGTON RD | LEXINGTON, MA  
WWW.FPLEX.ORG

featuring the visual art of

JAYPIX BELMER  
L'MERCHIE FRAZIER  
KHALID KODI  
HAKIM RAQUIB

## Changing Hearts, Changing Minds - Art Exhibit

WHEN: May 18 - June 15, 2025

WHERE: First Parish in Lexington, 7 Harrington Rd., Lexington, MA

Dayenne Walters is partnering with our friends at First Parish in Lexington on an art exhibit featuring the work of Boston artists of color, and you're invited!

This exhibit features the work of four distinguished visual artists from Greater Boston's Black artistic and cultural communities:

- **Jaypix Belmer**, Photography
- **L'Merchie Frazier**, Textiles
- **Khalid Kodi**, Mixed Media
- **Hakim Raquib**, Digital Media All proceeds from sales will go directly to the artists.

## View the Exhibit and an Artist Talkback

On Sunday, June 1st from 12:00 to 2:00 pm at First Parish Lexington, there will be an Artist Talkback featuring the artists whose work are part of the *Changing Hearts, Changing Minds* exhibit.



Admission for the Artist Talkback is free.

## Program Spotlight and Open House



We are so thankful for those who attended the Open House on May 1st!

Our staff enjoyed the opportunity to share updates from their programs, and the young people from RYP did a great job leading folks on a tour throughout the space. The students like the opportunity to tell guests about themselves and their experiences in the afterschool program.

The evening ended with a beautiful musical performance in our Meetinghouse that was organized by Marshall Hughes. It was wonderful evening of community, and we are grateful to all who joined us.

## Walking the Walk: Theodore Parker Church



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Inspired by one of our Community Conversations earlier this year, members of Theodore Parker Church in West Roxbury, one of UUUM's member congregations, organized a local trip with Collin Knight's [Live Like a Local Tours](#).

The group explored the heart of Roxbury and learn more about the history, culture, food, and community that makes the neighborhood so vibrant.

We love to see our supporters visit Nubian Square and spend money at local businesses, and appreciate the folks from Theodore Parker making this happen!

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**Seeing Me in the World - Dates Are Now Available!**



We believe history is not just something you read about. It is something you experience. It shapes the way we see ourselves in the world. [Seeing Me In the World](#) was created by students, for students, to bring history to life in a way that feels real and relevant.

This is more than a history lesson - it is a chance to engage, reflect, and learn to take action. Participants will:

- Explore the rich and real history of Roxbury, the First Church in Roxbury, and the role the UU Urban Ministry has played in the community
- Gain a deeper understanding of Roxbury's people and culture
- Walk away with knowledge and tools to become agents of change in their own communities

If you are interested in bringing a youth group this spring - fall, email UUUM Congregational and Volunteer Coordinator Robert Jones: [rjones@uum.org](mailto:rjones@uum.org).

*Seeing Me in the World is supported by the Veatch Program, the philanthropic program of the UU Congregation at Shelter Rock. This support has enabled our program to grow and welcome UU youth from around the country.*

## Congregational & Volunteer Updates

### Volunteer of the Month - Janice Rudolf



*Janice Rudolf from First Parish in Wayland, with her sculpture, Kiki and Kimani, located at the Franklin Park Zoo.*

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We're proud to recognize **Janice Corkin Rudolf** as our May **Volunteer of the Month**.

We are grateful to have Janice as an active member of the UU Urban Ministry community, and her impact continues to grow. Most recently, she led a four-week sculpting workshop for our RYP teens, bringing her creative spirit into every session. The teens not only learned new techniques, they also walked away feeling proud of what they created and connected to the person guiding them.

When we asked the teens and RYP staff to reflect on their experience with Janice, they described her as attentive, honest, humble, and thoughtful in her actions. They also shared how funny, patient, and unafraid to be herself she was. That mix made it easy to relax, try new things, and stay engaged.

Janice brings a calm, encouraging presence that meets each student where they are. She is both dynamic and helpful, always offering support while giving young people the space to explore and express themselves. Her care and authenticity create an environment where creativity can thrive.

We're grateful for the time, energy, and heart Janice continues to share with our youth and our broader community. Thank you, Janice...you make a difference.

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## UUUM Annual Meeting



### [UU Urban Ministry's 190th Annual Meeting](#)

WHEN: Thursday, May 22, 2025

TIME: 5:30pm - 7:00pm

WHERE: Zoom

Join us to hear about the work of our programs from the UUUM Team, an update on our programs, and more!

## UUUM Walking Tours: New Season & New Tours



## Revolutionary Tours

[Click here for the 2025 Tours schedule](#)

The 2025 schedule for our walking Tours program has been released, and the first of these is coming up on Saturday, May 31st.

This year is the 250th anniversary of the start of the American Revolution, and we are incorporating that theme of "revolution" into this year's tours.

Whether it be looking at revolutionary artists and the themes of their work, or the history of Roxbury and its legacy, our tours will examine and celebrate the revolutionary line that runs through all of them. So if you joined us for our Public Arts or History tours in the past, this year's offerings will be new to you as well!

Also, we are excited to be offering a new tour of our historic Meetinghouse (First Church Roxbury). Historian Thomas Plant will be leading these tours of the church, and they are a great opportunity to see the restored building in a way you never have before.

Check out the [Tours schedule](#) and join us!

## Get Involved

### Peace Garden Clean-Up



*Peace Garden volunteers (left to right): Robert Jones, Kevan Hartshorn, Alta Hodges, Amy Meyer, Cindy Soule, and Sandrine Queva with Rev. Mary Margaret Earl*

A big thank you to everyone who spent a beautiful spring day helping with the Peace Garden cleanup! We made great progress getting the space ready for new native plants.

There will be more opportunities to get your hands in the dirt of our peace garden soon. If you're interested in lending a hand this season, reach out to Congregational and Volunteer Coordinator Robert Jones at [rjones@uuum.org](mailto:rjones@uuum.org).

*Thanks to Liberty Mutual we have funds to add native plants - essential to biodiversity and climate resiliency.*

### Volunteer Networking Opportunities

#### Join us for a Monthly Volunteer Networking

Our Congregational Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator Robert Jones hosts a virtual volunteer support session on the third Wednesday of each month.

The aim of these virtual sessions is to offer volunteers a chance to share their experiences, to learn from and support each other, and to share information. Any who have volunteered in the past or present, or who are interested in getting involved are welcome to join us.



*Robert Jones (above), Congregational and Volunteer Coordinator*

The next session will be on Wednesday, **May 21, 2025 at 7pm via Zoom**. If you would like to join us, email Robert for details and link: [rjones@uum.org](mailto:rjones@uum.org).

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### **Interested in Volunteering at UUUM?**

Check out the current volunteer opportunities at the Urban Ministry and at our partner organizations on the [Volunteer Opportunities](#) page of our website.

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## **In The Community**

### **Celebrating Roxbury Patriots' Day**



*Rev. Mary Margaret Earl and historian Thomas Plant speaking to the crowd gathered in Putnam Hall during Roxbury Patriots' Day*

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On April 21st, we celebrated Roxbury Patriots' Day together at the Urban Ministry. The Roxbury Collaborative organizes this event each year on our campus, and it is a tradition we cherish.

The event offered a meaningful opportunity to honor local heroes and shine a light on the often overlooked history of Roxbury. We are grateful to everyone who joined us for this day of reflection, celebration, and community connections.



## Juneteenth Banner Making

# JUNETEENTH BANNER MAKING



## Juneteenth Banner Making

WHEN: Monday, May 12, 2025, 2:00pm - 7:00pm

WHERE: Roxbury Public Library, 149 Dudley Street, Roxbury, MA 02119

Join the Roxbury branch staff and the Boston Juneteenth Committee to prepare for the upcoming holiday. Come help decorate the banners that will be used in the 15th Annual Boston Juneteenth Emancipation and Observance Program, being held on June 19th.

Roxbury Branch - Boston Public Library

## Upcoming Events

The Roxbury Branch of the Boston Public Library is a great resource for the neighborhood. In addition to books and information, they have a full schedule of community events, including:

- [Hands-on Drumming Beats](#) (Kids in grade 4-6) - June 3, 10 & 17
- [A Conversation with Dr. Jessica Harris](#) (Author of *High on the Hog* book and prominently featured in the Netflix series)
- [Roxbury Concert Series featuring Yagmur Soydemir Quartet](#) - June 7

For more information visit [bpl.org](http://bpl.org).

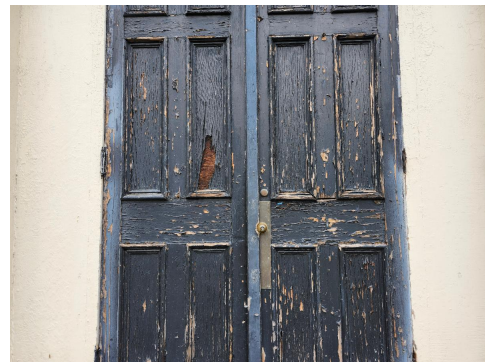
## Restoring Roxbury's Meetinghouse

### Final Touches



One part of the Meetinghouse restoration project focused on the building's front entranceway.

As you can see, the three new front doors are now hanging, the granite stairs have been repaired, and there are new handrails. We included a photo of what the doors looked like prior to the restoration so you can see the difference.



### In Case You Missed It

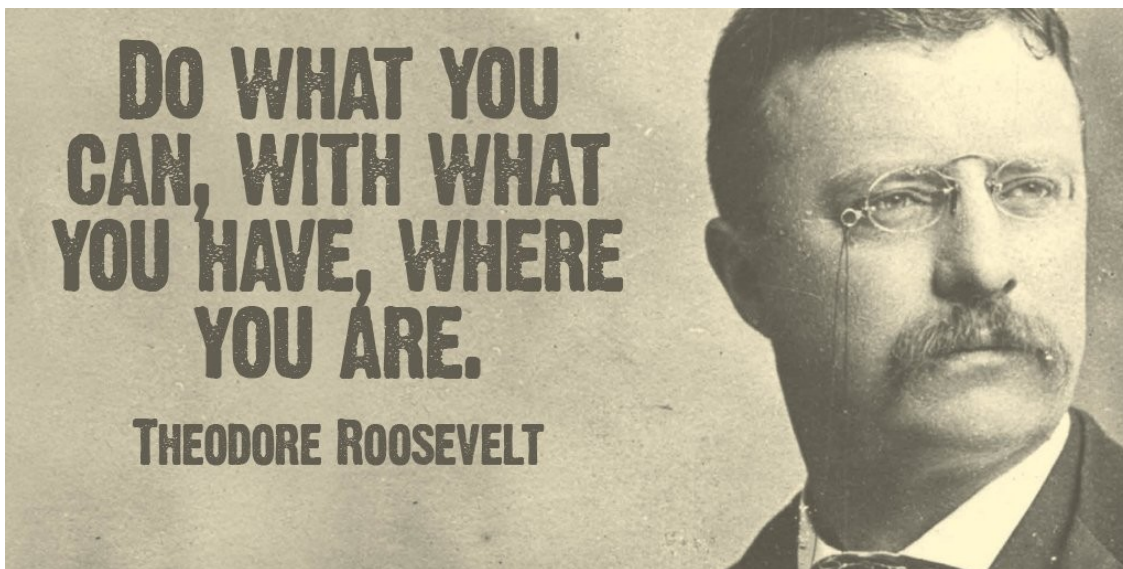


## Online UUUM Video Library

Thanks to all who were in attendance for this year's season of Community Conversations!

Don't worry if you missed any of the events! The recording of the conversations are posted on the [Video Library](#) of the UUUM website. Check it (and many other videos) out there.

## Words for your consideration...



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