



## Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry

John Eliot Square • 10 Putnam St. • Roxbury, MA 02119  
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July 2025

### Message from Our Executive Director and Senior Minister



The students began the tour in the Meetinghouse - telling the stories of the Puritans who gathered here in the 1630s, and of the history of enslavement we are unearthing. From there, they went past the Dillaway Thomas House - Roxbury's museum - and to the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, where they attend high school. Poised and grounded in thorough research, they spoke of the school's namesake and reflected on being students there.



Through this youth-led tour, nearly 20 of us listened and learned more about the Roxbury neighborhood UUUM serves - and we learned through the stories of Roxbury Youth Program guides.

For nearly 10 years, thanks to the steadfast support of our donors, the UU Urban Ministry has provided robust training for young people to become tour guides and ambassadors for their community. In the past few years, the youth have begun developing their own tours - leading Seeing Me in the World tours for youth visiting from around the country - and historic tours for anyone wanting to learn more about Roxbury. We know Boston's rich history extends far beyond the Freedom Trail.

Thank you for continuing to invest in our longstanding afterschool and summer programming - and in innovative projects that ensure young people shine bright.

With gratitude,

Mary Margaret

[Make a Gift to the UU Urban Ministry](#)

## Program Updates

### Roxbury Youth Programs (RYP)



### Exploring and Enjoying Boston

The students in our summer youth program recently enjoyed a field trip to Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA).

They spent the morning exploring the current exhibits, before taking a boat ride across the harbor to the ICA's Watershed Museum.

The day was an opportunity for our



students to have fun, and to explore and experience resources in our city.



## Résumé Building and Job Readiness

RYP students are using time this summer to learn job readiness. Recently, they created their résumés and learned tips about job interviews - including best practices before, during, and after the job interview.



*Above: UUUM Director of Facilities Shamika Harrison is interviewed by RYP students during last week's mock interviews*

## Welcome to UUUM's Career Exploration Internship

This summer, we are welcomed three students to our Career Exploration Internship at UUUM. This internship was launched over three years ago in order to create more opportunities within UUUM for local high school students.

We are pleased to welcome Mary, Laphton, and Francisco - all of whom will be starting their senior year of high school





*Click the above image to view a recent video - created by our interns - that features young people sharing their reasons for returning to RYP this summer*

in the fall - to our team as Career Exploration Interns. They will be working with the Development team and learning about communications. The interns will create content for UUUM's website and social media pages, and help us to share our work in more compelling ways.

Their enthusiasm, ideas, and voices are welcomed additions to our team!

## Local Legacies: A Tour Created and Led by RYP Youth



### Local Legacies: Student Developed and Led Walking Tour

**Next Date:** Sunday, July 27, 2025 - 10:00am - 11:30am

The teens of the Roxbury Youth Program invite you to join them for *Local Legacies*, a youth-led walking tour that brings the history, culture, and community of Roxbury to life.



Our youth guides connect the historical landmarks to their own lived experiences. You will hear firsthand what these places mean to the youth of Roxbury today and how they see themselves reflected in the stories of this neighborhood.

The result is a powerful walking tour through Nubian Square that offers fresh insight into the people, places, and legacies that shape this community. With a focus on equity, culture, and lasting impact, this tour is both educational and deeply personal.

Check out the [Tours schedule](#) and join us to support the voices of Roxbury's next generation of leaders.

## Exploring Our History

### Black and Indigenous Legacies at First Church in Roxbury



### JOIN US for a Presentation of Our New Report on the History of Enslavement at First Church Roxbury

On Tuesday September 9, the UU Urban Ministry, in partnership with the Roxbury Historical Society, will offer a public presentation on our new report into the history of enslavement at First Church Roxbury.

***Please mark your calendars.***

For the past year, through a grant from the Harvard Reparative Partnership program, two graduate students advanced the work UUUM and RHS began several years ago. The student researchers were MIT Master of City Planning student Mica Caine and Boston University American Studies doctoral student Mary Snyder.

Mary's research advanced the foundational work by Harvard doctoral student Aahbid Allibhai, *Race & Slavery* at the First Church in Roxbury published in 2023. Mica's focus was on tracing history in the opposite direction – from present to past – by engaging young people in





history - their own history, and tracing and sharing history.

*Research fellows Mary Snyder (left) and Mica Caine (right) stand with Aabid Allibhai (center) in the Meetinghouse*

Both these bodies of work will be shared in person beginning at 5:30 pm on the UU Urban Ministry campus. Space will be limited Please RSVP [HERE](#).

## Activating the Peace Garden



Come spend some time in the Peace Garden with our Arts Liaison, D Walters, as we kick off the summer season of first-time events! From art and music to community gatherings, there's something special planned for anyone who wants to participated.

Be sure to keep an eye out for our upcoming Peace Garden events—you won't want to miss any of these

[Writers Restorative](#): Pages in the Peace Garden, an open-format retreat for recharging your writer's spirit

[Reclaiming Enough](#): A 2-Part Somatic Awareness and Self-Care Workshop for People of Color (RSVP required)

[Transformative Rhythms](#): A hands-on exploration of African Rhythms, From Africa to America (RSVP required)



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





*A group from the Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady with Seeing Me tour guide (and RYP alum), Sofia*

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@uuum.org](mailto:rjones@uuum.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

### Delegate of the Month - Davalene Cooper, Old Ship Church



*Davalene Cooper, UUUM Delegate from Old Ship Church in Hingham*

We are pleased to recognize Davalene Cooper from Old Ship Church in Hingham as July's Delegate of the Month.

Davalene is the consummate ambassador for the UU Urban Ministry. As a delegate from Old Ship, she actively builds bridges between Old Ship and the work of UUUM. Thanks to her, our presence is felt and seen in meaningful ways. Every year, she helps to ensure that UUUM Executive Director Rev. Mary Margaret Earl is invited to preach in Hingham, and that Director of Development Vinnie Myles is given a few minutes to share news about Roxbury Youth Programs or Renewal House.

Davalene also gives so generously of her time and her thoughtfulness. She is an active member of the Congregational Engagement Task Force, where she helps us think through how we grow relationships, communicate with care, and stay connected to the people who support this work. She was also one of the key people who helped bring Bridges of Understanding, our race and bias workshop, to life this past spring. She worked closely with a small group to shape something that reflects our values and vision.



What stands out most about Davalene is not just her commitment, but her openness. She listens with curiosity, shows up with intention, and engages with a willingness to learn, stretch, and grow. She is someone who leads not with flash, but with deep, steady care.

Davalene, we are incredibly grateful for your partnership, your voice, and your spirit. Thank you for all the ways you continue to lift up this work and help carry it forward.

## Upcoming UUUM Events

### UUUM Walking Tours: New Season & New Tours



*UUUM Arts Liaison Dayenne Walters leads a public art walking tour of Roxbury*

### Revolutionary Public Art Tours

Our Art Liaison Dayenne Walters leads two upcoming walking tours that look at the beautiful and revolutionary public art in Roxbury. These are unique opportunities to look at this artwork with the benefit of the insights of a local artist.

#### [The Roxbury Ramble: A public art, historical, and cultural exploration of Roxbury's Hill Neighborhoods](#)

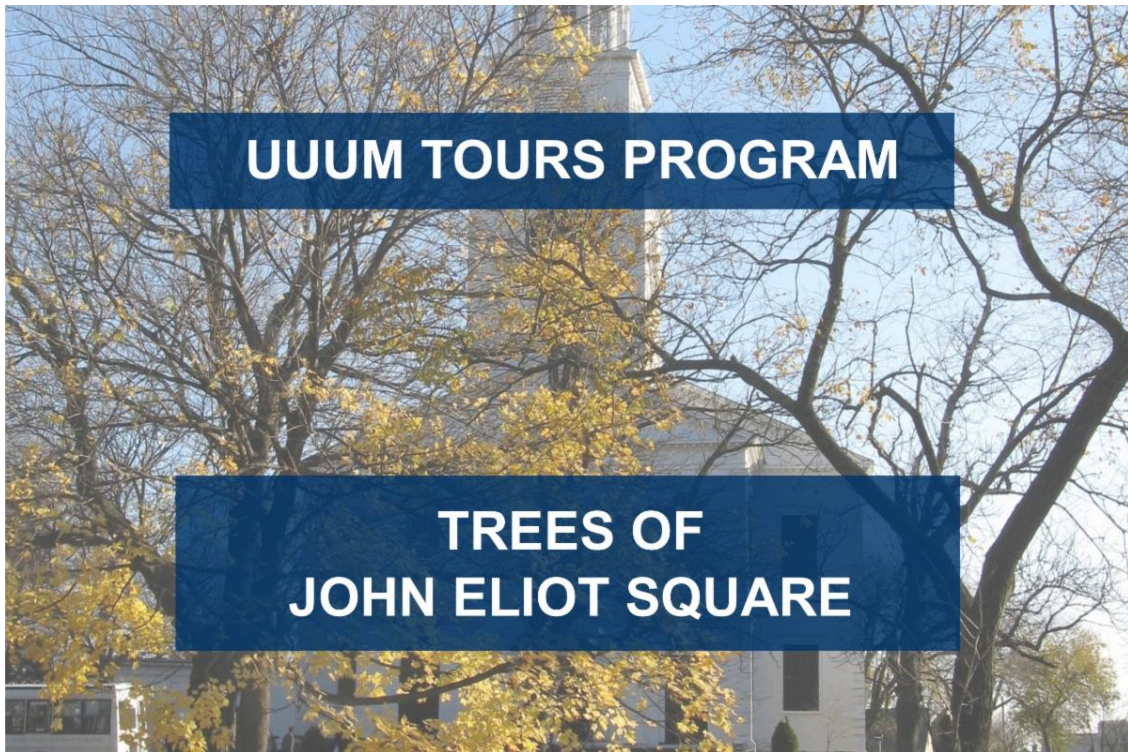
WHEN: Saturday, August 16, 2025, 10:00am - 11:30am

Wear your walking shoes and plan to make it a day in The 'Bury! This expanded tour explores public art and points of interest in the Sugar Hill and Fort Hill areas of Roxbury that border Jamaica Plain and Dorchester.

We'll end back at the Urban Ministry, where you're invited to pull up a chair or spread a blanket and enjoy the festive jazz sounds of [The Makanda Project](#), performing that afternoon.

If one of these tours speaks to you, secure your spot now! Check out the [Tours schedule](#) and join us.





**[The Trees of John Eliot Square: A Historical Perspective Walking Tour](#)**

**Date and Time:** July 26, 2025, 10:00am - 11:30am

Join historian Thomas Plant to enjoy a stroll around the neighborhood focused on Roxbury's agriculture and horticulture and how these shaped the neighborhood over the years.

If you have any questions, email: [development@uum.org](mailto:development@uum.org)

All tours begin promptly at their start time in front of First Church in Roxbury.

**Writer's Restorative Retreat (in the UUUM Peace Garden)**

**Writer's Restorative**

WHEN: August 11, 2025 | 8:30am - 10:00am

WHERE: 10 Putnam St., Roxbury, MA

**Is your muse missing, or just in need of some quality time?**

Would you welcome a space that simply nurtures your writer's spirit?

Maybe your practice needs a break from the everyday noise. Maybe you just need a spark to get things moving again. Or maybe you just need a bit of imposed structure to finish that poem, scene, or chapter you keep putting off.

Join us this summer for a monthly writer's



retreat. Every 2nd Monday, July through September (weather permitting), we'll gather in creative community despite what can be a deeply solitary passion: the writer's burning need to tell their story.

Bring something you want to keep working on or get a prompt to start writing that morning. Towards the end of each session, participants may volunteer to share something they've written with the group.

Write in community or in quiet solitude—we get it. Just write.

Coffee and donuts provided.

Download the flyer [HERE](#).

○○○  
WELCOME TO THE  
PEACE GARDEN ACTIVATION

  
UU URBAN MINISTRY  
10 PUTNAM STREET  
ROXBURY, MA

# WRITERS' RESTORATIVE

July 14<sup>th</sup>, Aug 11<sup>th</sup> and Sep 8<sup>th</sup>  
MONDAYS - 8:30 - 10AM

**IS YOUR MUSE MISSING—  
OR JUST IN NEED OF  
SOME QUALITY TIME?**

Every 2nd Monday, we'll gather in creative community around what can be a deeply solitary passion: the writer's burning need to tell their stories!

In our newly replanted Peace Garden, you're welcome to write in community or in quiet solitude—we get it. Just write.

**Coffee and donuts provided**

**LED BY D WALTERS, UUUM ART LIAISON**

D Walters is a playwright and actor. Her work has been produced with Road Theatre, SomArts, and The Huntington Theatre's ACW program. She is a former Boston Foundation Live Arts grant recipient. Her latest work is a 3-act play based on the life and journals of Charlotte Forten.

[WWW.UUUM.ORG/PEACE-GARDEN-EVENTS](http://WWW.UUUM.ORG/PEACE-GARDEN-EVENTS)



**WORKSHOP HELD  
IN THE QUIET OF  
THE PEACE GARDEN**

## Transformative Rhythms

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WELCOME TO THE  
PEACE GARDEN ACTIVATION

  
UU URBAN MINISTRY  
10 PUTNAM STREET  
ROXBURY, MA

# Transformative Rhythms

WEDNESDAY  
Aug 13<sup>th</sup> and Aug 20<sup>th</sup>  
11am - 1pm

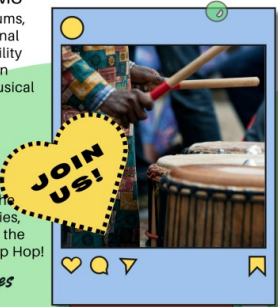
**A HANDS-ON EXPLORATION  
OF AFRICAN RHYTHMS**

Through playing dunun drums, attendees will learn traditional rhythms, experience the ability to transfer this and their own culture of rhythms into a musical dialogue, and be immersed in the power and energy of West African drumming.

Learn the history of West African rhythms and their foundational influence on the music of Haiti, the West Indies, and contemporary music in the Americas, culminating in Hip Hop!

**Led by Akili Jamal Haynes  
aka Chibuzo Dunun**

Akili Jamal Haynes has taught at The Hartt School African-American Studies Department and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has held the position of Roxbury Tenants of Harvard Music Chair, and instructed at Seaport Campus for Children, August Scholars, and the Community Music Center of Boston.



**WORKSHOP HELD  
IN THE QUIET OF  
THE PEACE GARDEN**

## Transformative Rhythms

WHEN: August 13, 2025 | 11:00am - 1:00pm

WHERE: 10 Putnam Street, Roxbury, MA 02119

Through playing dunun drums, attendees will learn traditional rhythms, experience the ability to transfer this and their own culture of rhythms into a musical dialogue, and be immersed in the power and energy of West African drumming.

Learn the history of West African rhythms and their foundational influence on the music of Haiti, the West Indies, and contemporary music in the Americas, culminating in Hip Hop!

Registration required due to limited number of participants.

Download the flyer [HERE](#).

## The Makanada Project





## World-Class Jazz Returns to the UUUM Greenspace

Thank you to everybody who attended the first Makanda Project concert this past weekend! It was great seeing the community come together to enjoy music for an afternoon.

Come join us again this summer to listen to sophisticated jazz on the UUUM greenspace. Bring your blanket or lawn chair and we'll see you there.

### Concerts dates:

1. Saturday, August 16, 2025: 1:00pm - 4:00pm
2. Saturday, September 13, 2025: 1:00pm - 4:00pm

All concerts are free to the public. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

## Get Involved!

### Peace Garden Planting Day

WHEN: July 31, 2025 at 10:30am  
WHERE: UUUM; 10 Putnam St., Roxbury

Join Us for our final peace garden planting day of the summer!

Come lend a hand and help us close out a beautiful season in the peace garden. And thanks to a Liberty Mutual Climate Resiliency grant, we were able to convert almost all of the garden to native plants since the spring. It's a beautiful spot, made only better with the company of friends.



Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just curious, all are welcome. We'll wrap up the morning with a light lunch and a chance to celebrate the progress we've made.

## 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, August 20th, 2025 at 7pm via Zoom**. If you would like to join us, email Robert for details and link: [rjones@uuum.org](mailto:rjones@uuum.org).

Join here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88958176185pwd=q84bnxfcsn5tpc0AXCjHGNfdJXNWRv.1>

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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

### Event to Support Our Friends at Paige Academy





Paige Academy will be hosting another series of Ahmed's Table, their farm-to-table pop up kitchen, for the next four Fridays (beginning on July 18th). This is a great opportunity to get a delicious dinner, commune with the neighborhood, and support Paige Academy!

This Friday's menu includes fried chicken or fish, collard greens, brown rice, lentils, and cornbread. Cake available by the slice. Portions are generous and each plate is \$20. Proceeds to support Paige Academy.

## Louis D. Brown Peace Institute Community Event

### 10th Annual Peace B'Que

WHEN: August 9, 2025 at 2:00pm - 5:00pm  
WHERE: Town Field Park, 1565 Dorchester Ave, Boston, MA

Join the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute for an unforgettable afternoon at the 10th Annual



Peace B'Que. This free summer event is all about food, music, games, and building community. Open to all, it is a celebration of peace, joy, and connection.

RSVP now at [peacebque.com](https://peacebque.com).



**10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PEACE B'QUE**  
FOOD | GAMES | DANCING



**3 YEARS**  **AUGUST 9, 2025**  
RAIN DATE: AUGUST 10  
Town Field Park  
1565 Dorchester Ave  
Dorchester, MA 02122



PEACEBQUE.COM

**SAVE THE DATE**   
**NUBIAN SQUARE BLOCK PARTY**  
SATURDAY 7.26.2025  
12:00PM - 8:00PM



**RSVP**  
**STAY TUNED: ANNOUNCING LIVE ACTS SOON**



**THE BEAT OF ROXBURY**

### Nubian Square Block Party

WHEN: July 26, 2025 at 12:00pm - 8:00pm

WHERE: Nubian Square, Roxbury

Come join the local community for a fun family friendly event! Filled with live performances, local vendors, art, and food! The block party is all about bringing neighbors together and celebration of Black culture and community.

Attendance is free to all those who attend.

**JOBE**  
*a story of unwavering faith*  
**THE CONCERT SERIES**  
**Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025 3 P.M.**  
Massachusetts College of Art & Design



### Experience the Power of Jobe: A Concert of Soul and Spirit

WHEN: Sunday, July 20th at 3 00pm

WHERE: Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Tower Auditorium

Dive into a moving blend of music, storytelling, and faith with Jobe the Concert, a multimedia performance inspired by Milton Wright's acclaimed Jobe the Musical. With



powerful vocals and immersive visuals, this one-day-only event captures the soulful journey of resilience and hope drawn from the Book of Job.

Featuring a dynamic cast including Wright himself, Ashley Villard, Toussaint the Liberator, and more, this preview concert sets the stage for a full production in spring 2026. Tickets are just \$10, and children under 12 are admitted free.

Reserve your spot today at [bit.ly/JobeTheMusical](https://bit.ly/JobeTheMusical)

## Restoring Roxbury's Meetinghouse

### Final Touches



*An original pew from the Fifth Meetinghouse, preserved during the renovations.*



As we work toward bringing new life to the Meetinghouse and making it a welcoming space for our community, we also recognize the importance of preserving its history. The photo above shows one of the pews, preserved with the original upholstery, steel armrest, and cushions that once adorned every pew in the church.

## 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...

**"YOU DON'T MAKE  
PROGRESS BY STANDING  
ON THE SIDELINES,  
WHIMPERING AND  
COMPLAINING. YOU  
MAKE PROGRESS BY  
IMPLEMENTING IDEAS."**

Shirley Chisholm





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[UUUM on Bluesky](#)

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