



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ARLINGTON VIRGINIA

A Place to Connect, Grow and Serve

October 31, 2018 – Connections Newsletter

Safety @UUCA

By Tamara Srader, Chief Administrative Officer, tsrader@uucava.org

I write this article with saddened awareness after two more senseless shootings in Pennsylvania and Kentucky. I specifically want to address concerns about building safety at UUCA and inform you about security plans, as we have had numerous questions in the past few days. Security has been an ongoing discussion with many parties involved.

Annie Parker, administrative event and facilities coordinator, and Paul Kearney, facilities manager, have been holding ongoing building safety training for volunteers. These training events address overall safety—location of fire extinguishers and defibrillators, use of extension cords and fire safety, etc. We will be asking all volunteer teams to attend one of these sessions. Now more than ever everyone needs a refresher.

Recently we made the decision to keep the downstairs doors locked after the preschool has left for the day. Please know that this decision had everything to do with building safety. We have a large campus with many entry and exit points. We take safety seriously and thank everyone for their patience as we change the process for securing our building. In the near future we will have cameras mounted on all main entrances and exits.

We are asking that everyone be aware of their surroundings. If you see something suspicious please be empowered to call 9-1-1 and notify law enforcement. Suspicious is a broad term and depending on the lens that you are looking through, could mean different things. Use your best judgement and keep a note of things such as license plate numbers, color of car, etc. Our local police should be the first line of communication prior to notifying a staff or lay leader. Many times people are here with no staff on site, especially after 4 p.m. on weekdays. We have an ongoing relationship with the Arlington County Police Department and have met with them several times discussing building safety and security.

Please read Connections for ongoing updates and the next scheduled safety training. We will offer more sessions in the next few months. Anyone in a leadership role or who attends activities on campus should consider attending. If you have been involved in this community for many years – it is a good idea to have a refresher. Let's work in beloved community and support one another in the goal of being a safe space.

Lastly, [here is a link to the FEMA document](#) on emergency operation plans for faith communities. I encourage everyone to take a look at this. If you feel called to lead a UUCA Safety and Security Team, please reach out to me at tsrader@uucava.org. We will form this team in the next few months.

Thank you all for supporting safety at UUCA.