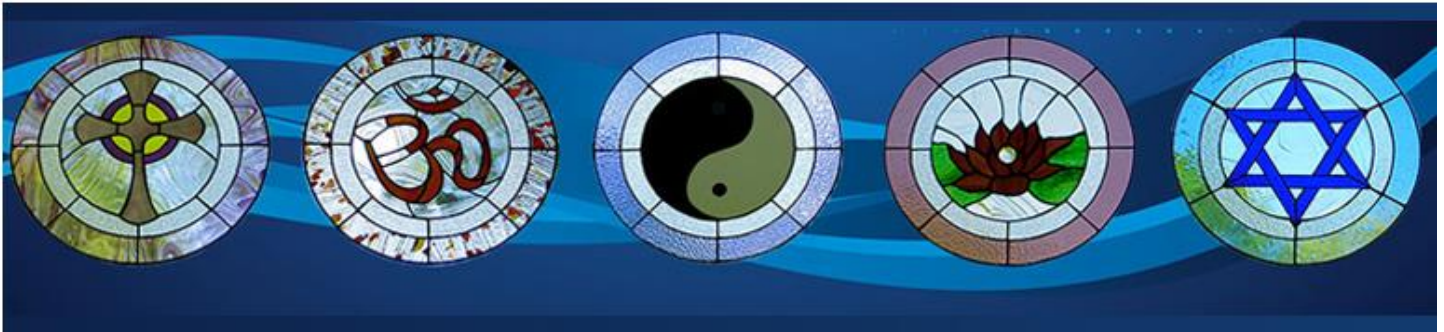


# December 2020 Newsletter



## Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland

WELCOMING diversity

EMPOWERING spiritual growth

FOSTERING the interdependent web

TRANSFORMING lives

Please visit our website at [www.uumidland.org](http://www.uumidland.org) for a listing of all current events.

### Membership Matters

Have you been getting to know the church and Unitarian Universalism? Do you feel that this congregation might be a spiritual home? Are you considering a deeper commitment to the church? Membership comes with great gifts and opportunities, as well as responsibilities to the church community. If you are considering membership, please check out our membership brochure in the foyer or see Carol Kullman, Membership Chair, a Board member, or Rev. Julie Lombard.

### *Table of Contents*

|   |      |
|---|------|
| <b>December Events</b>  | 2    |
| <b>December 2020 Sermons at a Glance</b>  | 3    |
| <b>Minister's Musings; Watcha Reading; Watcha Watching</b>  | 4-5  |
| <b>Sunday Morning</b>   | 6    |
| <b>What's Happening at UUCOM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mid-week events</li><li>• Events Starting in November</li><li>• Small Group Meetings</li><li>• Thoughts from the RE Corner</li></ul> | 7-10 |
| <b>Wider World</b>  | 11   |



**HANGING OF THE GREENS**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6TH FROM 2:00-3:00**

Due to Covid-19, the creation of ornaments for our feathered and furry friends will need to be done in our homes.

You may then bring these to the church to decorate our pine tree or oak tree in the front of the church. Some suggestions for edible ornaments: pine cones with shortening and bird seed, bread with shortening and bird seed, popcorn and cranberry strings.

These may also be brought to the church at your convenience.



**ALL CHURCH HOLIDAY PARTY**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20TH**  
**12:00-1:00 PM**

OUR ANNUAL ALL CHURCH HOLIDAY PARTY WILL BEGIN WITH A POTLUCK MEXICAN FOOD DURING OUR VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR TIME! BYOCSG--BRING YOUR OWN CHIPS, SALSA, AND GUACAMOLE! THE AFTERNOON WILL INCLUDE A GROUP SING-ALONG OF SOME HOLIDAY FAVORITES! PLEASE PLAN ON JOINING US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF FUN AND FELLOWSHIP!

## December 2020 Newsletter

### December 2020 Sermons at a Glance – Worship Theme: Hope

**December 6** *Hope, Here and Now* by Rev. Julie Lombard  
December's worship theme is Hope. Have you ever felt stuck in a sense of hopelessness? The holidays are made more challenging when we know we are supposed to feel the joy of the season, but we don't and our internal flame deep within is not as bright as usual. We struggle to connect with the spirit of the season and we seek what will help us to go beyond hum-bug. Join us to rediscover hope, here and now.



**December 13** *When Hope Is Hard to Find* by Rev. Julie Lombard



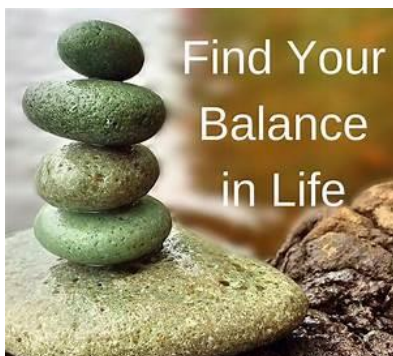
As many struggle to find the elusive hope they may need during the sugar laden holiday season and prefer to avoid the anxiety that is plentiful as holiday tunes on the radio, we look at how this season reminds us in the midst of uncertainty, life still goes on and that we can find comfort in community. Come rediscover ways to lift your spirit and how being a part of a church can help tremendously during challenging times such as these.

**December 20** *Holiday Music Sunday* Scott and Sonja Millichamp and Rev. Julie Lombard

You don't want to miss this special service which will include a variety of music, readings, and poetry. This is always the most uplifting service during our holiday season. This year we visit with Grace Greenwood, a popular 19<sup>th</sup> Century poet, children's scribe and journalist who was The New York Times' first female writer. She was a staunch abolitionist and champion of women's rights, and most importantly a Unitarian. Born Sara Jane Clarke on September 23, 1823, she attended the women's school the Greenwood Institute and later became well-known for her children's fiction, including stories like "The Drummer-Boy." Today, we will tell another one of her Christmas tales: "Little Carl's Christmas-Eve."



**December 27** *Finding Balance Over Your Years, Not Your Days* by David Cain



David Cain of Raptitude talks about finding long-term balance with the Optimal Living Daily podcast network. Cain is a writer and entrepreneur living in Winnipeg, Canada. On a particular boring day at his home office, he started Raptitude. His interest has always been human society and the internal human experience, and Raptitude his megaphone for his thoughts about those things. Come learn his tricks of the trade as we will all soon face another new year.

Featuring: Optimal Living Daily Episode 1807 from 11/21/2020 Find Balance Over Your Years, Not Your Day [oldpodcast.com]

## December 2020 Newsletter

### December Minister's Musings by Rev. Julie Lombard



Can you believe it's December? A season of hope and that's happens to be our worship theme this month. Whether we are ready or not, here it comes. To get a wee bit more in the mood, I've read Jeanette Winterson's 2016 book titled ***Christmas Days: Twelve Stories and Feasts for Twelve Days***.

One summary said this: *This book was an absolute joy to read. I enjoyed all twelve stories which ranged from the downright creepy to the fantastical and funny. My intention was to skip the recipes, but they are prefaced by charming thumbnail sketches of the author's friends and family: so I read those as well. Jeanette Winterson writes effortlessly well, is comfortable with any and every genre and conveys successfully what Christmas means to her without laying it on with a trowel. A must for the Season of Goodwill, or any other time of the year.* (★★★★★)

I have to admit that my favorite part came in the chapter titled: **"My Mulled Wine (or No More Fruit in Main Courses)."** Here the author reminds us that Christmas is a midwinter festival. Winterson continues that for most of human time on earth, the dead of winter has been the hardest time. It's also the most difficult time psychologically. The Days are short; the weather is harsh.

Imagine no electricity, poor roads, the daily toil to keep the fire and cooking stoves going, damp clothes, damp beds, numbing cold, none of that changes until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Imagine the joy of the twelve days of feasting, warmth, relaxation, cheer, contemplation, singing, charity, kindness as some kind of point to life. She adds that religious faith can protect the mind from depression and despair not least because of the story Christmas tells of hope and new beginnings but because communities are essential for mental health. The loneliness that so many people experience this time of year is a consequence of our loss of community including the community provided by belonging to a church and faith. Thank goodness we don't have to worry about that, right? We belong to this church and we have each other.

She then reminds us that at a time when religious extremism hasn't been so deadly since the Crusades or the Spanish Inquisition, it's difficult to think about faith as hope or belief as a kindness to others. She suggests that we need this season of hope because it is a time of giving, these festivals, and the sharing of food and our new kind of virtual fellowship could be a lifesaving act and it might just cheer us up.

I'm not sure I've changed my mind about being ready or not for December, but I may like to try a few of her recipes. Happy Holidays!

Peace, Rev. Julie

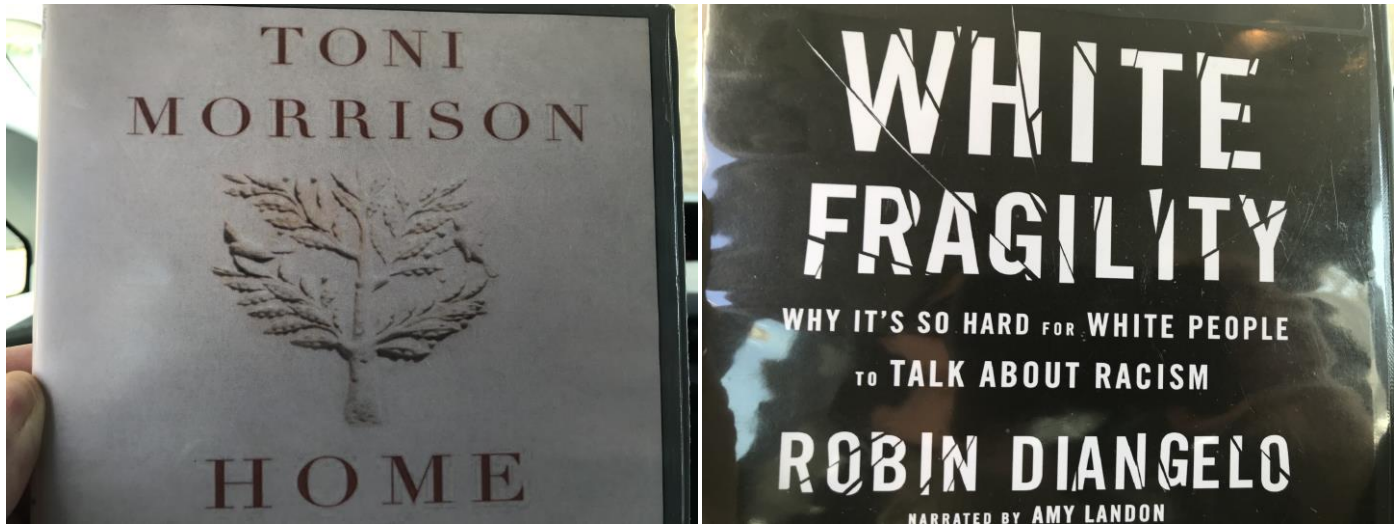


# December 2020 Newsletter

## Whatcha Reading

I like to listen to books while on long drives & this is what I've been reading...  
Let me know if you've read them & you'd like to discuss them.

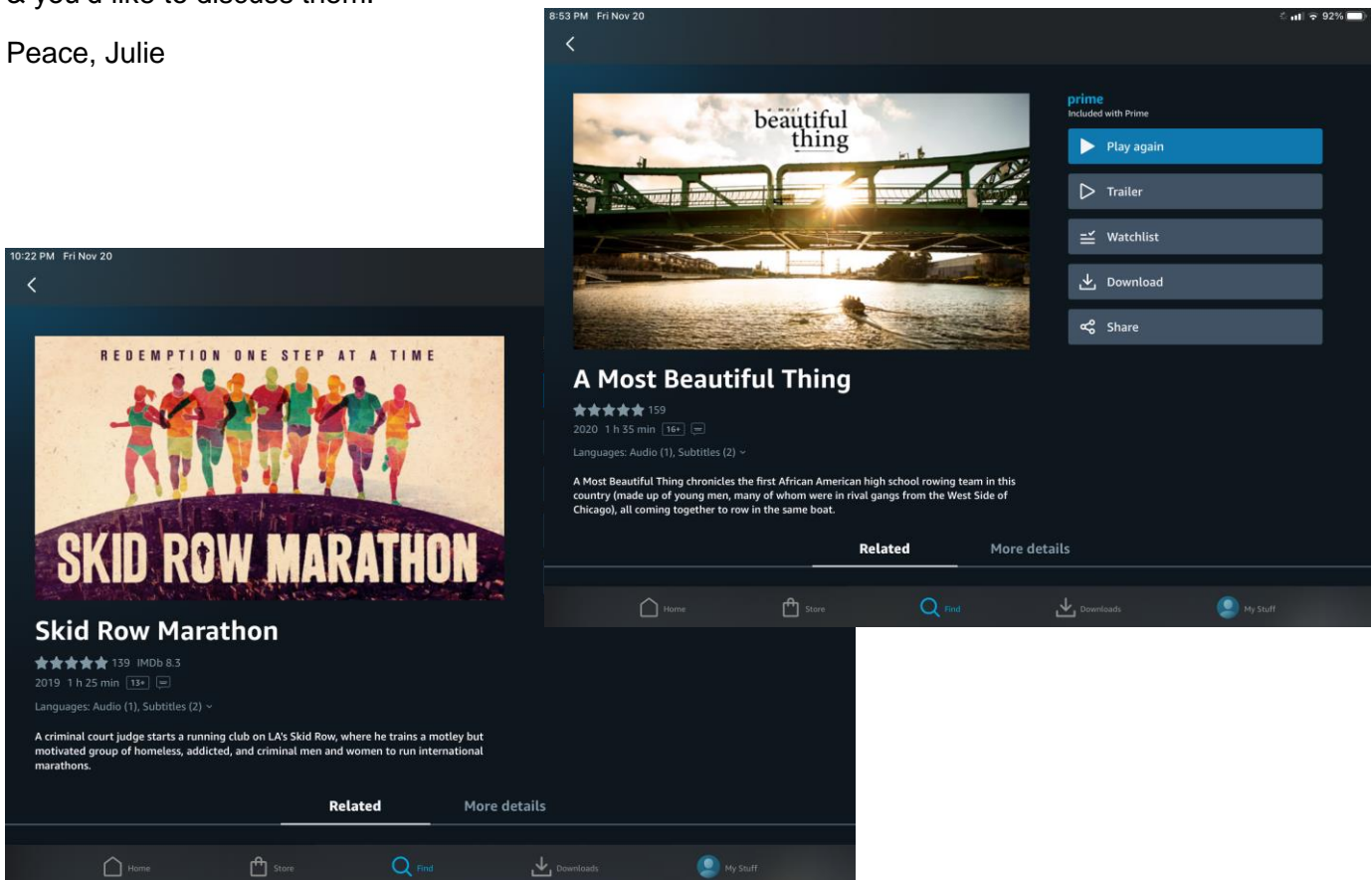
Peace, Julie



## Whatcha Watching

I don't have cable, but I do like to stream & this is what I've been watching. Let me know if you've seen them & you'd like to discuss them.

Peace, Julie



## December 2020 Newsletter

### Sunday Mornings

Interested in RE, see the **RE Corner** on page 9 for details.  
Sunday services are currently online, using Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/2750827327>

It will ask you to download an app to your computer. Just follow the steps. You might need to find "Zoom.pkg" in your downloads and double-click it to install the application. On your smartphone, download the Zoom app, and then join a meeting with the meeting ID: **275 082 7327**

For a low-tech option, you can call in with any phone to this number: 929-205-6099. When it asks for your Meeting ID, enter the above number.



11:00 AM SUNDAYS

**All are Welcome!**  
**Online Service**

Zoom Meeting ID  
**275 082 7327**

Or check our home page  
for the link or call-in #

10:15 - 10:45 AM  
Children's Space

UNITARIAN  
UNIVERSALIST  
CHURCH OF MIDLAND TEXAS

### Online Giving

While we are mostly meeting online, remember that there are still ways to give to our weekly offering and submit your pledge. You can text: "Give" to 432-271-4921 Or you can go to our website: [uumidland.org](http://uumidland.org) and scroll down to the yellow PayPal Donate button. You can also mail a check to our office, or have your bank send a check.

**Children's Space:** Every Sunday from 10:15-10:45 AM, in that same Zoom room, our staff hosts "time for all ages," show-and-tell, joys and sorrows, and casual conversation.

### UUCOM Board

**Maureena Benavides**, President  
**Janine Deckard**, President-Elect  
**Alex Fields**, Treasurer  
**April Graham**, Secretary  
**David Allen**, At Large Member  
**Lisa Jebson**, At Large Member  
**Beverly Wise**, At Large Member

### UUCOM Staff

**Rev. Julie Lombard**, Minister  
Email: [minister@uumidland.org](mailto:minister@uumidland.org)  
(432) 694-4308 office  
(603) 724-0978 Cell

**Minister's office hours are by appointment.**

**Jessica Stewart**,  
**Office Administrator**  
(432) 694-4308  
Office Hours:  
Monday 9-12  
Wednesday 9-1  
Friday 9-12

Email: [office@uumidland.org](mailto:office@uumidland.org)

**Barbara Handley**,  
**Director of Religious Education**  
Email: [dre@uumidland.org](mailto:dre@uumidland.org)  
Phone: 432-978-5977

**Sonja and Scott Millichamp**,  
**Music Directors**  
Email: [skassal811@yahoo.com](mailto:skassal811@yahoo.com)  
[scott@bruenor.org](mailto:scott@bruenor.org),

**Visit our website:**  
[www.uumidland.org](http://www.uumidland.org)  
**Like us on Facebook:**  
Unitarian Universalist Church of  
Midland TX  
<https://www.facebook.com/UUMidland>

# December 2020 Newsletter

## What's Happening at UUCOM

---

### December Calendar

---

Check online (<http://www.uumidland.org/calendar>) for the most up to date calendar.

|             |            |                                      |
|-------------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| December 6  | 2:00 p.m.  | Hanging of the Greens                |
| December 20 | 12:00 p.m. | Holiday Party                        |
| December 20 | 12:15 p.m. | Small Group Ministry Drop-In Meeting |
| January 17  | 2:30 p.m.  | Stitching Circle - online            |

### Mid-Week Event: Online Drop-In Space:

---

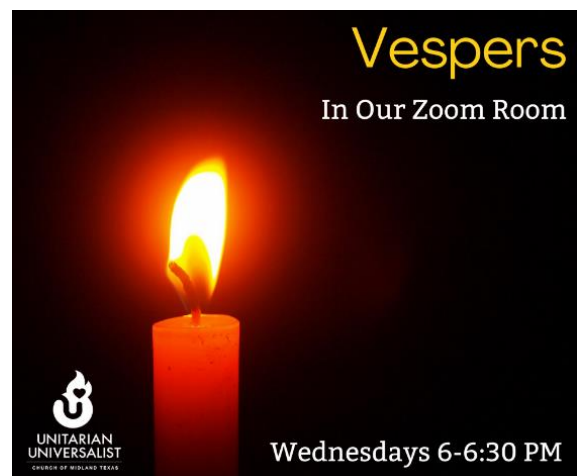


#### Wednesdays 2 –2:30 PM

Rev. Julie will open our Zoom room ([same link as above](#)) for a casual space to check-in and connect. We will start with a brief reading and meditation at 2:05, and then invite people to check-in and chat. Children are welcome. Come anytime between 2-2:30, and stay the whole hour or just for a bit.

#### Wednesdays 6-6:30 PM

Rev. Julie will open our Zoom room. This midweek evening service called Vespers, is held on Wednesdays at 6 pm, a quiet half-hour of music, prayer readings, and silence. A simple figurative breaking of bread follows the service - a brief check-in.



### December Share the Plate

---

We will share ½ of all cash donations with this December's Share the Plate recipient the **Minister's Discretionary Fund**. This month, half of all cash donations go to the Minister's Discretionary Fund, which is used to support people in need - both church members and those beyond our church - who have fallen on hard times.

### Monthly Stitching Circle

---

*UU Stitching group continues! Join us for a virtual stitching meetup via Zoom during our regular time.* We welcome all stitchers: knitters, crocheters, embroidery or hand sewing! Bring your projects to visit or to get and share advice & tips. **Join us on January 17<sup>th</sup>** from 2:30-4:30pm for our next meetup. Please email Franny at [starrymoon@gmail.com](mailto:starrymoon@gmail.com) for our meeting link.\

## December 2020 Newsletter

### Starting in November 2020

---

#### Brown Bag Series - Small Group Ministry with Rev. Julie Lombard



When: Wednesdays at noon- check the church calendar to confirm it is happening & not cancelled!

Where: the south courtyard

What to bring: BYO lunch, drink, lawn chair, & masks.

Get ready to join in on a rich small group ministry discussion facilitated by your minister. Topics will vary & TBD. Group size will be limited to 10, join in person or by zoom1. Call to make your reservation. For more info: 603 724-0978.

#### The Beacon Series - Small Group Ministry with Rev. Julie Lombard

When: Mondays at 6pm- check the church calendar to confirm it is happening & not cancelled!

Where: the south courtyard

What to bring: BYO marshmallows to roast, roasting stick, drink, lawn chair, & masks.

Get ready to join in on a rich small group ministry discussion facilitated by your minister. Topics will vary & TBD. Group size will be limited to 10, join in person or zoom1. Call to make your reservation. For more info: 603 724-0978.



### 2020-21 Drop-ins: Small Group Ministry

---

Small Group Ministry is a vital part of many Unitarian Universalist (UU) congregations across America. In other churches they are called Chalice Circle or Covenant Groups. Groups of 8-10 people meet regularly, usually monthly, to reflect on and discuss significant life topics.

Small groups are great places to get to know other people and to get to know your better, too. Over time, participants build deep connections with one another, with the congregation and with the sacred.

Discussion topics are provided. The ones we'll use for Drop-ins will reflect our UU Principles and Purposes. The conversations we'll have will be respectful and caring and they'll lead to greater understanding of our UU values. In each session, facilitated by our minister, all participants have opportunity to share their perspectives, tell their stories, and listen deeply. The time together is structured: groups begin with a chalice lighting, centering readings, and some questions before the sharing begins.

*Are Drop-ins for you?* If you are not already in another Small Group Ministry at UUCOM, yes, please come. Maybe you just signed the membership book or did that long ago, or not at all- come and try it on and see how small group ministry fits for you. If you would like to join a new small group that goes beyond the drop-in basics, please contact our office to let them know.

**When and Where:** We'll meet at UUCOM at <https://zoom.us/j/2113237997> on Sundays from 12:15-1:00 PM on the following dates: **12/20** and it will continue to meet monthly in the New Year.

If this sounds like something you'd be interested in please sign up in the church office by web at <https://forms.gle/jiWnXxmj3uNWQoiW7>, Phone: (432) 694-4308, Email: [office@uumidland.org](mailto:office@uumidland.org) or reach out to your minister, Rev. Julie Lombard: [minister@uumidland.org](mailto:minister@uumidland.org).



# December 2020 Newsletter

## Thoughts from the RE Corner

---

### Spirit Play

Spirit Play is a UU curriculum based on Montessori teaching principles for children in Kindergarten through sixth grade.

**December 6—The Mitten Tree:** Our children will learn a story about the generosity of giving.

**December 13— Hanukkah.** Our children will learn the story behind this Jewish holiday. Janine Deckard will lead the story.

**December 20—Three Wise Women.** This story of Christmas explores the lasting gifts of three women.

**December 27—Violet Promise Story: We are Water Protectors.** This story is inspired by the many Indigenous-led movements across North America to safeguard Earth's water.



**Mitten Tree—Beginning on Sunday, December 6th,** we will accept donations for hats, mittens, scarves and socks from 2:00-3:00. In order to practice social distancing, we will move the Mitten Tree outside to allow people to decorate the Mitten Tree with their contributions. Masks will be required and social distancing practiced! We will have some special guests from the North Pole to greet our children. They have promised to mask up!! At the end of the holiday season, all contributions will be donated to children at Lamar Elementary School to help keep them warm during our chilly winter. You may also drop off your donations at Barbara Handley's home (4209 Arroyo) by placing them in her mailbox. Please text her at 432-978-5977 to let her know about delivery.

**Hanging of the Greens—Sunday, December 6th from 2:00-3:00 PM.** Due to Covid-19, the creation of ornaments for our feathered and furry friends will need to be done in our homes. You may then bring these to the church to decorate our pine tree or oak tree in the front of the church. Some suggestions for edible ornaments: pine cones with shortening and bird seed, bread with shortening and bird seed, popcorn and cranberry strings. These may also be brought to the church at your convenience.

**All Church Holiday Party—Sunday, December 20th from 12:00-1:00 PM.** Our annual All Church Holiday Party will begin with a potluck Mexican food during our virtual coffee hour time! BYOCSG--bring your own chips, salsa, and guacamole! The afternoon will include a group sing-along of some holiday favorites! Please plan on joining us for an afternoon of fun and fellowship!

### Advent Calendars

If you would like a "traditional" advent calendar that reveals historical UU contributions to the holiday, go to <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/images/uu-advent-calendar>.

### Beware of email or text scams

Nationwide, ministers and churches have been the target of a series of email and text phishing scams. If you receive an email or text purportedly from the minister or another staff member asking for an unusual donation or a gift card, please do not respond and mark it as spam.

## December 2020 Newsletter

### **Interested in Becoming a Member?**

Interested in officially joining our church community? Reach out to Rev. Julie, Carol Kullman, Jane Hellinghausen, or Barbara Handley; or check out our Path to Membership brochure in the foyer or info online. The process consists of committing to attend a Newcomers' Drop-In Circle or class; making a pledge of time, talent, &/or treasure; and signing the membership book. We welcome you!

### **Care Team for Church Members and Friends**

We invite you to share any needs you may have or concerns about church members/friends with the care team. When others in our church family approach you about a difficult situation in their life please ask them if it is ok to share that information with the care team. You may share requests and concerns with Jane Hellinghausen ([413-4612](tel:413-4612)), or by calling the church office ([694-4308](tel:694-4308)).

Thank you for helping to make our church an even more supportive and caring community!

### **Sermons**

Please find Rev. Julie's September sermons in the sermon blog at [www.uumidland.org/blog](http://www.uumidland.org/blog).

### **Garden and Grow, Continues**

We will be continuing work in the Garden on the first Saturday of every month. Time varies depending on weather. Please contact Mike Vidrine for updates.

### **Food donations for people and pets!**

Each Sunday during our offering, we collect donations of nonperishable food for local food pantries, and pet food for Lone Star Sanctuary for Animals. Make a special note to remember your food donations for our monthly Intergenerational Services, as the children love to collect the food and bring it forward. (You can check our calendar online to see when those are!)

### **Tree of Life**

The modern Pagan movement provides a means for people to connect with the daily, monthly, and yearly cycles that continue to affect us physically and emotionally. Through classes and rituals, the Tree of Life Open Circle explores this connection in an ongoing effort to foster growth and community for kindred spirits of the earth.

For updates and further information about Tree of Life, please check out their Facebook page [here](#).

### **Free Yoga Class – Online**

Patricia (Patty) George, the Yoga teacher has been doing virtual classes though Zoom. If anyone would like to join them - it's still free – just send an email to Patty George at, [georgepat31@gmail.com](mailto:georgepat31@gmail.com) so she can send an email that will include a Login ID and Password which will be new each session. You do not need to join Zoom, they'll just need to Google Zoom and then hit the tab "Join A Class".

## December 2020 Newsletter

### Wider World

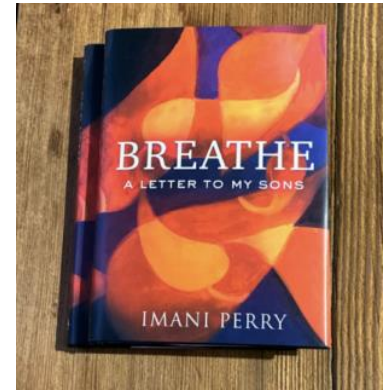
---

#### Common Read 2020-21: *Breathe* by Imani Perry

---

The UUA is pleased to announce that [Breathe: A Letter to My Sons](#) by Imani Perry (Beacon Press, 2019) is the new Common Read.

Emotionally raw and deeply reflective, Imani Perry issues a challenge to society to see Black children as deserving of humanity. She admits fear and frustration for her African American sons in a society that is increasingly racist and at times seems irredeemable. However, as a mother, feminist, writer, and intellectual, Perry offers an unfettered expression of love—finding beauty and possibility in life—and she exhorts her children and their peers to find the courage to chart their own paths and find steady footing and inspiration in Black tradition. The New York Times calls *Breathe* “an elixir of history, ancestry and compassion, which, together, become instruction...a parent’s unflinching demand, born of inherited trauma and love, for her children’s right simply to be possible.”



*Breathe* offers a broader meditation on race, gender, and the meaning of a life well lived and is also an unforgettable lesson in Black resistance and resilience.

At this moment in time, we are in the midst of a historic national reckoning with what it means to live as a Black or Brown American and systems of institutional racism that have been operating to control, traumatize, and oppress people of color since our country’s founding. As our President, Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray, has written, “It matters that we support the uprisings whose goal is the liberation of Black people and communities who for too long have been crushed by white supremacy, militarism, and capitalism. We must find the sources within ourselves to give us courage in this moment.” In choosing *Breathe* as the 2020-2021 Common Read, our hope is that it nurtures this necessary courage.

Congregations, groups, and individuals may purchase this book from [inSpirit: The UU Book and Gift Shop](#); group discount available. The e-book and audio book are available from [Bookshop.org](#). Discussion materials for UU congregations, groups, and individuals will be available online, at no charge, in late fall 2020.

### The Gathering Room: Rowe at Home

---

For now, you cannot come to us, but we can now come to you! Here in the Gathering Room, you will find free, paid, short and long term web programming to help you flourish in your life and get you through this ongoing crisis. You can also view for free recorded webinars that were held live and are still relevant and beneficial to your wellbeing.

Check back often, as we are adding new programming frequently.

All FREE programs will have recordings under “Recorded Programs”. If you’re waiting on a recording for a recent FREE program, please be patient, as it will take a few days following the program to appear on the website.

If you are registered for a PAID program, you will receive recording(s). Recordings for PAID programs are ONLY available to those registered.

Find webinars to keep you sane in November and December [here](#).