



Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland

December 2022

Unitarian Universalist Church
of Midland

WELCOMING diversity

EMPOWERING spiritual growth

FOSTERING the interdependent web

TRANSFORMING lives

Please visit our website at 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 Erica Stoltz or Barbara Handley, Membership Chair, or a Board member.

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Wider World

December 2022 Sermons at a Glance

December 4 "What Holds Us Together"

In Unitarian Universalism, we have freedom of belief, draw from many sources, and have an array of spiritualities. In such an eclectic tradition, what holds us together? Rev. Dr. Steven Gaines will respond to that question from some work being done by the Unitarian Universalist Association. Rev. Steven is Professor of Communication at Midland College and Minister of the UU Fellowship of Fayetteville, Arkansas.

December 11 "The How & Why of Prayer"

Whether you choose to use the word "prayer" or "meditation" or some other synonym, as UUs we use this practice as a way "to connect with That Which Is Larger Than Us." That description from Rev. Erika Hewitt, the UUA's Minister of Worship Arts, can describe prayers in many forms. During this interactive service, we will explore some of those ways.

December 18 "A Very UU Holiday Service"

A Very UU Holiday Service - please join us for a holiday service with music and stories from members about their own holiday traditions.

December 25 & January 1

UUCOM will host a social hour during our normal workshop time on these Sundays. If you would like to bring a dish to share.

HOLIDAY POTLUCK LUNCHEON

Please join us for our annual Holiday Potluck Luncheon on Sunday, December 18th following church service. Our theme is Mexican food. We will have some holiday cheer and rumor has it that there may be a special visitor from the North Pole!

The sign-up sheet is available on the guest table in the foyer.



Spirit Play meets in person from 10:00-10:45. This class meets in person and has no Zoom option. Interested in RE, see the RE Corner on page 6 for details.

Sunday Mornings

Sunday services remain in a hybrid format both in-person and virtually. The board and the COVID Team gave much thought to the rules which we must all abide by as a way to properly care for each other and reduce the possibility of spreading the virus. Please read them carefully and be prepared to follow them.

We will also continue to broadcast our services over Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/2750827327>). services so that people who cannot attend in person will be able to join us online.

Sunday services are currently hybrid both in person and online, using Zoom

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 below 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

UUCOM BOARD

Barbara Handley, President
Harry Nutter, President-Elect
Jane Hellinghausen, Treasurer
Alex Fields, Secretary
Eli Hilbert, At Large Member
Chris Stoltz, At Large Member
Rebecca Dodge At Large Member

UUCOM STAFF

Lisa Jebsen,
Lay Minister

Office Hours:

Tuesday, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 Wednesday, 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
 Thursday, 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM
 Email: minister@uumidland.org

Jessica Stewart,
Office Administrator

(432) 694-4308

Office Hours:

Wednesday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
 Email: office@uumidland.org

Sonja and Scott Millichamp,
Music Directors

Email:

[music-
directors@uumidland.org](mailto:music-directors@uumidland.org),

Visit our website:

www.uumidland.org

Like us on Facebook:

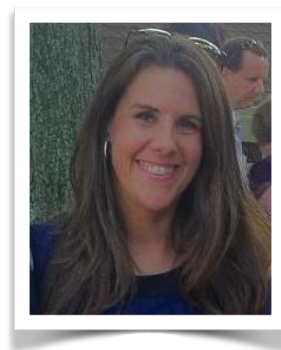
Unitarian Universalist
 Church of Midland TX
[https://www.facebook.com/
UUMidland](https://www.facebook.com/UUMidland)

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 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.

Minister's Musings

No matter how you choose to celebrate, or not celebrate the holiday season, many can find this to be a stressful time of year. I want to make space for those feelings and let you know that during a time of parties and holidays, to struggle with feelings of depression and loneliness is completely normal. For some it might just be for one year, for others it may be an annual experience. The feelings may stem from difficult memories of past holidays, estrangement from friends and/or family, being forced to interact with those friends and family with whom we have a strained relationship, mourning the loss of loved ones, etc.



I found the article "Thanksgiving's Hard for Many: Here Are Some Reasons Why" by Karen Gross, a trauma educator and author, very fitting for this time of year. While her thoughts focus on the November holiday, I think her words are quite fitting as we move into December.

So, to all of you celebrating with family and friends, remember that in addition to giving thanks for one's abundance and freedom and shelter and family ties and profound friendships, there are folks out there who struggle mightily to navigate Thanksgiving. They aren't asking for pity or handouts. They are not snowflakes. It is just that this holiday, perhaps this year only or every year, is hard.

One more thing: people struggling don't all wear signs. They don't always "look" or "act" unhappy. They don't appear to be troubled. But, they could be traumatized or hollowed out on the inside, as the above image portrays. That's worth all of us remembering.

Civility, decency, respect, awareness, kindness: they all have a role at the Thanksgiving table and thereafter. And we can extend those qualities to those with whom we engage -- those whom we know and those whom we encounter casually in lines, in stores, on a bus or train or plane or at a restaurant or corner bodega. We can remember those serving our nation near and far for whom there is no real holiday --- at least not as we picture it.

For those who celebrate this time of year, I wish you much joy and happiness. For those who struggle, I hope you know that you are seen, you are valued and you are loved.



December Share the Plate

We will share ½ of all cash donations with this **December's** Share the Plate recipient. The Board has chosen the following 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.

Christmas Sunday Coffee

Please join your UUCOM friends for a Christmas Coffee on Sunday, December 25th at 11:00. In lieu of church services, we will have an opportunity to share in conversation with members of our beloved church community.



New Year's Brunch

Please join your UUCOM family for a New Year's Brunch on January 1, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. The brunch will be in lieu of our regular Sunday service. A sign-up sheet is available on the guest table in the foyer.

RE Corner

Spirit Play 10:00-10:45

This is a time for chalice lighting, story, check-in and fun! We are using a modified Spirit Play format. This month we will pay tribute to the indigenous peoples of North America. A special thank you to the anonymous donor of several of the books that we are using this month!!

December 4: “**The Mitten Tree.**” This story explores the spiritual practice of generosity.

December 11: “**The Story of St. Nicholas.**” We will explore the generosity of giving by St. Nicholas in this sources story.

December 18: “**Hanukah.**” Children will learn about the story behind the Festival of Lights.

December 25: **Christmas Sunday. No Spirit Play so that families may spend this time together.**

January 1: **New Year’s Day. No Spirit Play.**

Mitten Tree

Beginning on Sunday, December 4th, we will accept donations for hats, mittens, scarves and socks. 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.



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>.

What's Happening at UUCOM

Permian Basin Buddhists

The Tuesday night Buddhist class has expanded to include a 30 minute meditation session to begin at 6:15 PM.

The Permian Basin Buddhists continue to meet here at UUCOM on Tuesday nights, 7:00—8:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome, whether you are new to Buddhism or have been practicing the Middle Way for some time. For regular updates about the group, join the [Permian Basin Meetup Group](#).

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](#).

Interested in Becoming a Member?

Interested in officially joining our church community? Reach out to Lisa Jebson, 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!

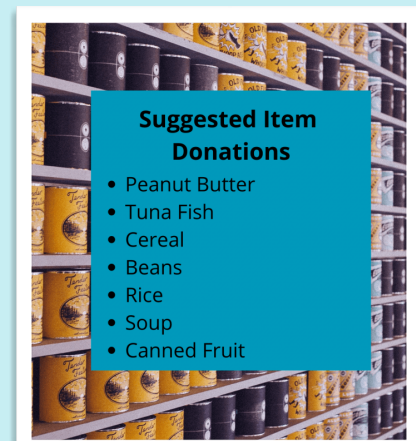
Care Team for Church Members and Friends

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!

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!)



Wider World

Side with Love

November 20, 2022

This evening, we are still processing the mass murder at Club Q in Colorado Springs overnight even as we commemorate all the trans beloveds whose lives have been stolen on this Trans Day of Remembrance. Tonight, we are reminded yet again of the violence that lies at the core of white Christian nationalism, whether in the form of guns aimed at our queer and trans beloveds, or legislation designed to criminalize our very existence. We at Side With Love will continue to fight for a world in which all bodies are treated as sacred; to join our UPLIFT Action campaign for LGBTQ+, Gender & Reproductive Justice, [click here](#).

To our beloved trans and queer family,

If your heart is broken, we weep with you.

May you sense how fiercely you are held in love.

If your fists are frozen in rage, we scream our fury alongside you.

May you be warmed by the white-hot heat of our righteous solidarity.

If your stomach drops with terror, we tremble with you.

May you feel the strength of the safety we wrap around one another.

If your bones are weary, we sink down next to you.

May deep rest be the companion of your grief.

And, beloveds, remember:

All of us—

the high femmes, the faeries, the twinkles, the gender transgressors, the panromantics,

the dykes, the bears, the studs, the butches, the homos, the androgynes,

the aces, the demibois, the zaddies, the graysexuals, the baby queers –

all the delicious, unexpected, gorgeously beloved incarnations of us –

we are made from stardust and and leather and honey

and Love.

Even on the todays,

the mornings when mourning our dead and fearing for our lives

is the metallic aftertaste on our tongues:

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Wider World

Side with Love

We still dance because the surging electric life force
that loved us into being and that pulses through our veins
is too powerful to stay inert and unmoving.
How could we be still?

We still sing because the defiant hymns of our ancestors
reverberate in the tiniest interstices between our cells.
How can we keep from singing?

We still congregate because like root systems and constellations and watersheds,
the molecules of our being only make sense
when we are intertwined and inseparable
and powerfully free in our interdependence.
How could we do other than to claim and choose each other, every day?

We dance our resistance.
We sing our belovedness.
We gather each other up
and we do not let go.

As is our vow, today and all days:
we will mourn the dead and fight like hell for the living.

And all the while, we will repeat this truth
Til it is lodged in our bones and
And undisputed anywhere:
We were meant for life, for abundance, for freedom.
We were made for joy.
In faith and solidarity,

Rev. Ashley Horan
Side With Love Organizing Strategy Director

Wider World

TXUUJM

Registration is LIVE for [TXUUJM's 10th Anniversary event](#) on Jan. 21st! Please [REGISTER NOW](#) and put it on your calendar to join us!

TXUUJM is HIRING & Seeking Board

Members: Our state action network, Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry, has posted a **job opening** for a community organizer. [Click for the job posting and latest TXUUJM news.](#) The justice ministry is also seeking new board members and has opened [registration for the 10th Anniversary event](#) on **Jan. 21, 2023**. Stay update to date: [click here to sign up](#) to receive [TXUUJM](#) news directly.

UUJEC

Debt Beyond Reason with Bruce Knotts
Thursday, December 8, 5 PM PDT, 6 PM
MDT, 7 PM CDT & 8 PM EDT

To register to join our Zoom event, [click here](#), tinyurl.com/2p6v3sb9.

[Learn more here.](#)

The Mountain

Join us at The Mountain Retreat and Learning Center, a Magical Place and Experience

- [Music Week](#) – April 23-28 2023. Surround yourself with music and enjoy opportunities for music appreciation, concerts, group and individual participation and instruction in songwriting, guitar, voice, ukulele and more.

Personal Retreat -- for individuals or groups

We look forward to hosting you at The Mountain soon!

For more information: themountainrlc.org or 828.526.5838.

General Assembly

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging:
Let's Start The Conversation**

Join us June 21 - 25, 2023 online or in-person in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Most GA events will take place at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, 1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd, Pittsburgh, PA.

2022 UU Common Read

Learn how to make our communities safer by participating in the 2022 UU Common Read: *Defund Fear: Safety Without Policing, Prisons, and Punishment* by Zach Norris. With an array of multimedia resources including a discussion guide and ideas for taking action, the UU Common Read offers community learning opportunities on some of the most impactful issues of our time.

