



Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland

December 2024

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 Barbara Handley, Membership Chair, or a Board member.

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December 2024 Sermons at a Glance

December 3 "The Ripple Effect of Acts of Kindness" with Barbara Handley

Barbara Handley will lead this service that examines the JOY both given and received by sharing kindness with others.

December 8 "Real Joy: More than a Mood" with Rev. Stevie

Joy might seem to elude us in hard times, but it's more than a passing mood. How can real joy empower us to thrive?

December 15 "Stories that Move Us" with Rev Stevie

Holidays are full of rituals, actions that we do to remember important stories. In those actions, we live the events and their meanings again and again. This service will explore a few of the stories that move humanity most powerfully.

December 22 A Christmas Music Celebration with Sonja Millichamp and the Lone Star Brass

Join us for a special Christmas service loosely modeled after the Lessons and Carols tradition but very UU in spirit! There will be lots of Christmas carols, music by the Lone Star Brass, and readings that invite us to reflect upon the Christmas story and the meanings of the season. The brass will begin their prelude around 10:45, so you may want to arrive early!

December 29 (Almost) New Year's Brunch

On Sunday, December 29th, in lieu of church service, we will have a (Almost) New Year's Brunch. Please bring your favorite brunch food to share with our church community! We will share the joys that we are looking forward to in 2025!

POTLUCK LUNCHEON, DECEMBER 15, 2024

Please join UU's for our monthly potluck luncheon on Sunday, December 15th following the church service. During this potluck, all will have the opportunity to participate in our Joy Wall! You will be able to draw or write about what brings you JOY!! Please feel free to invite friends!!



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. For in person services, masks are optional and available on the guest table. 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.

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
SERVING BY MEANS OF FAITH

UUCOM BOARD

Kyle Farmer, President
Barbara Handley, President-Elect
A.C. Fields, Treasurer
Emmy Ulmschneider Secretary
Jane Hellinghausen, At Large
 Member

UUCOM STAFF

Rev. Dr. Stevie Gaines

Office Hours: By appointment
 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,

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.

December Share the Plate

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



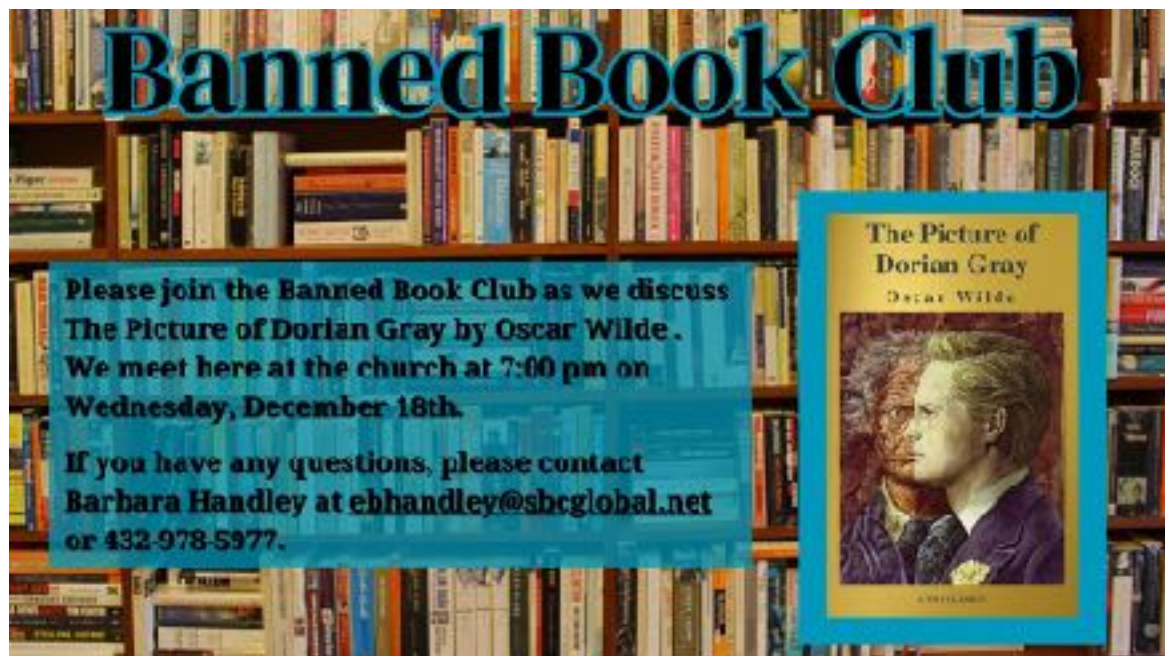
Christmas In Action is a 501(c)3 non-profit agency that, in partnership with the community, repairs homes of low-income elderly and/or disabled homeowners by putting Christian values and principles into action.

The seeds for Christmas In Action were planted in 1972 in Midland, Texas. Bobby Trimble was teaching his young men's Sunday school class at Alamo Heights Baptist Church from James 2:14-17. The lesson encouraged the class to step outside the church walls and work on homes of women without husbands in the community. At first the repairs were small, such as repairing gates, furnaces, evaporative coolers, etc. This developed into larger projects.

For more information please visit <http://www.christmasinaction.org/>.

Banned Book Club

Please join the Banned Book Club as we discuss *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky. We meet here at the church at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, December 13th. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Handley at ebhandley@sbcglobal.net or 432-978-5977.



A graphic for a 'Mitten Tree' event. It features a teal background with a white snowbank at the bottom. On the left, two brown mittens with white snowflake patterns are shown. In the center, a green Christmas tree stands on the snow, decorated with a red star on top, a string of red lights, and two colorful mittens. The text 'Mitten Tree' is written in large, bold, orange letters.

Mitten Tree

Beginning on Sunday, December 1st, 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 Casa De Amigos to help keep them warm during our chilly winter.

A graphic for '(Almost) New Year's Brunch'. It has a green background with wavy lines and a string of red and white star-shaped lights across the top. In the bottom left corner, there are illustrations of green and red fireworks.

(ALMOST) NEW YEAR'S BRUNCH

On Sunday, December 29th, in lieu of church service, we will have a (Almost) New Year's Brunch. Please bring your favorite brunch food to share with our church community! We will share the joys that we are looking forward to in 2025!

RE Corner

Spirit Play 10:00-10:45

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

December 1 — The Mitten Tree — This story explores the spiritual practice of generosity.

December 8 — Three Wise Women — A variation on the birth of Jesus story.

December 15 — Winter Solstice.

December 22 — Meditation on Rudolph.

December 29 — Hanukah Story.

Mitten Tree

Beginning on Sunday, December 1st, 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 Casa De Amigos 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>.

Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice to celebrate Unitarian (cup left hand to make a U) Universalism (cup right hand to make a U).

We are the church of the open minds (fingertips touch the forehead and swing open like a door).

We are the church of the helping hands (hands outstretched palms up).

We are the church of the loving hearts (hands crossed over heart).

Religious Education Volunteers

If you are interested in helping with our children's religious education, there are many ways that you can participate. You may suggest a story for Spirit Play. You may help to create Spirit Play stories. You may be a substitute teacher for the times that Barbara is away on adventures!

Please contact Barbara Handley at 432-978-5977.

What's Happening at UUCOM

PFLAG Midland/Odessa

We are thrilled to work with PFLAG Midland/Odessa to provide a home for their regular monthly meetings that support our local LGBTQ+ community and everyone who loves them.

Circle Suppers

If you are interested in attending or hosting a Circle Supper contact the office at office@uumidland.org or 432-694-4308. A sign up sheet may also be on the foyer table.

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 Jebesen, 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!

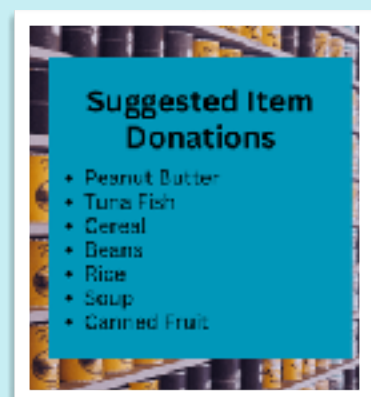
Care Team for Church Members and Friends

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

TxUUJM

We are so excited to be joined by special guest: Gordy Carmona (they/them), Community Engagement and Advocacy Strategist, [Equality Texas DFW](#) TOMORROW Thursday, November 21, 2024 7 PM-8 PM CT

[Register Here](#)

As we move toward the end of the year and prepare for study leave, we are excited for these last few opportunities to share virtual space with you!

[TXUUJM Events List](#)

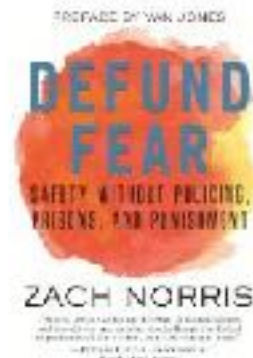
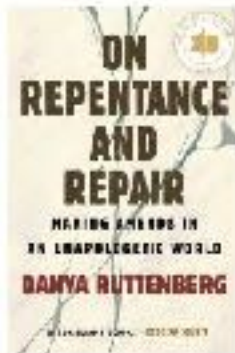
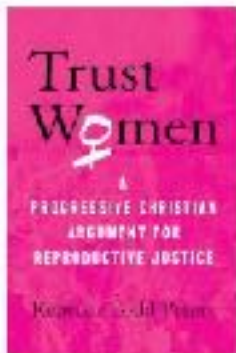
SAVE THE DATE: TXUUJM Legislative Action Day at the Capital, March 17, 2025! Fill out our interest form and share how you would like to show up!

[3/17/25: Legislative Day Interest Form](#)

We Cry Justice Theological Reflection Group (Virtual)

Fourth Thursdays, 6:00 pm CST, January-June and
September-November*

We will be engaging with the following Beacon Press Books:



*dates will vary in April, October, and November, to accommodate Jewish holidays and Thanksgiving

Wider World

UUMFE

Greetings! Wherever you are, we hope that you are being held and supported within your community and by your loved ones. The recent political developments have aroused a spectrum of reactions and emotions. Please continue to care for yourself and each other, and know that you are a part of this community of care. [...]

[UUMFE Letter from Rev. Kelly Dignan, Executive Director, Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth](#)

UUA Newsletter

The heart of my job is ensuring that congregations are faithful employers – faithful to the law and to our values. We have many resources that help congregational leaders understand the legal aspects of being an employer. On the values side, to start, what does it mean to put love at the center of the employment relationship? Reflecting on love as the power that holds us together, [...]

[UUA Newsletter from Jan Gartner is Associate Director of the UUA's Office of Church Staff Finances.](#)

2025 UU Common Read

The UUA Common Read for 2024-2025 is [Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families](#) (Skinner House, 2023). This Common Read offers two, parallel discussion tracks: one for a UU group with any or mixed gender identities, and one for UU participants with a trans or nonbinary identity. Each discussion guide consists of four 90-minute sessions that religious professionals or lay leaders may facilitate in-person or online. Coming in fall 2024: workshops for youth and families.

[Join the Common Read.](#)

