



Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland

January 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 Erica Stoltz or Barbara Handley, Membership Chair, or a Board member.

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January 2024 Sermons at a Glance

January 7 “Hope for Humanity”

With the winter holidays in the rear view mirror and a brand new year stretched out before us, let's fortify our minds and spirits with some good news. We'll have stories from around the world that reflect the spirit of our 8 UU principles.

January 14 “More Ways to Cultivate Gratitude”

Although this message is a holdover from the Thanksgiving season, it is fitting to hear it as we begin a new year. The spiritual practice of gratitude goes beyond having a simple list of things we are thankful for. When we are truly grateful, we can better live up to our UU principles.

January 21 “Silence = Death”

Borrowing this slogan from the AIDS crisis seems appropriate. Rev. Lisa has spent a lot of time on the pulpit with uplifting and positive subjects and while this Sunday will have those elements, there will also be a sense of urgency. With all of the struggles we face right now, the world needs our UU message more than ever. We can no longer afford to sit back and hope people find our faith. We need to take our message to them.

January 28 “Famous & Not So Famous UUs”

Join us for a Sunday service where we focus on our UU history as well as UU leaders of today who can inspire us to spread the word about our faith.

Potluck Luncheon on Sunday, January 21st



Since the weather may be frightful,
bring a pot of soup or chili to share
OR bread, cheese, or dessert!



Please join us for our monthly potluck luncheon on Sunday,
January 21st following the service.

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 7** 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

Harry Nutter, President
Kyle Farmer, President-Elect
Alex Fields, Treasurer
Emmy Ulmschneider Secretary
David Allen, At Large Member
Chris Stoltz, At Large Member
Tom Parks, At Large Member

UUCOM STAFF

Lisa Jebson,
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,

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

One of the things that I love about our church is that we are pretty laid-back. Growing up at All Saints Lutheran Church in Worthington Ohio, I would have never DREAMED of “talking back” to Pastor Ullery on the pulpit. Which is a shame really, because if there’s a Lutheran pastor from those days who could take it, it was PU (our pet name for our beloved minister). Nevertheless, back then Sundays at ASLC was what we typically think of when we hear the word church: everyone sitting and listening to the minister, with some singing and reciting from the congregation when required.



But not at UUCOM!

There are many reasons for this - I think there are probably many UU churches out there with worship services that look more like my All Saints days versus what we share here. My point is that I love the community we have and the fact that we can “roll with” a massive influx of out of town visitors, like the ones we had on December 17.

In case you missed it, the service was even more lively than usual. It was incredibly joyful and meaningful for me to have so many of my family members on hand, including my mom, brother and his family plus two aunts and an uncle, all of whom traveled from all over the US to see me in *The Sound of Music*. Their presence at both events meant the world to me - some of these visitors were a complete surprise.

I’ll never forget sitting in our living room and taking in the group when Zach leaned over to ask if I was nervous about the show that night. While there was a bit of that, I was mostly excited. However, the nerves were definitely kicking in when I thought about them all coming to church the next day.

As blessed and lucky as I am to have a loving supportive family, we are the only Jebson branch of the tree that identifies as UU. I was uncertain and even scared of what they might think of the service. Turns out they were all very into it and the conversations that I had with my uncle and the rest of the group afterward, not to mention the long hugs I got from my sister in law who was clearly moved are all part of a long list of unforgettable memories from that weekend.

By the way, I am really proud of the sermon from that day! It’s about the spiritual journey I took while playing Mother Abbess. If you would like to read it, you can find it here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14dybfTpcDawF5iU54u6W4szOJKp5WRtG2vCgP6kLu0c/edit?usp=drive_link).

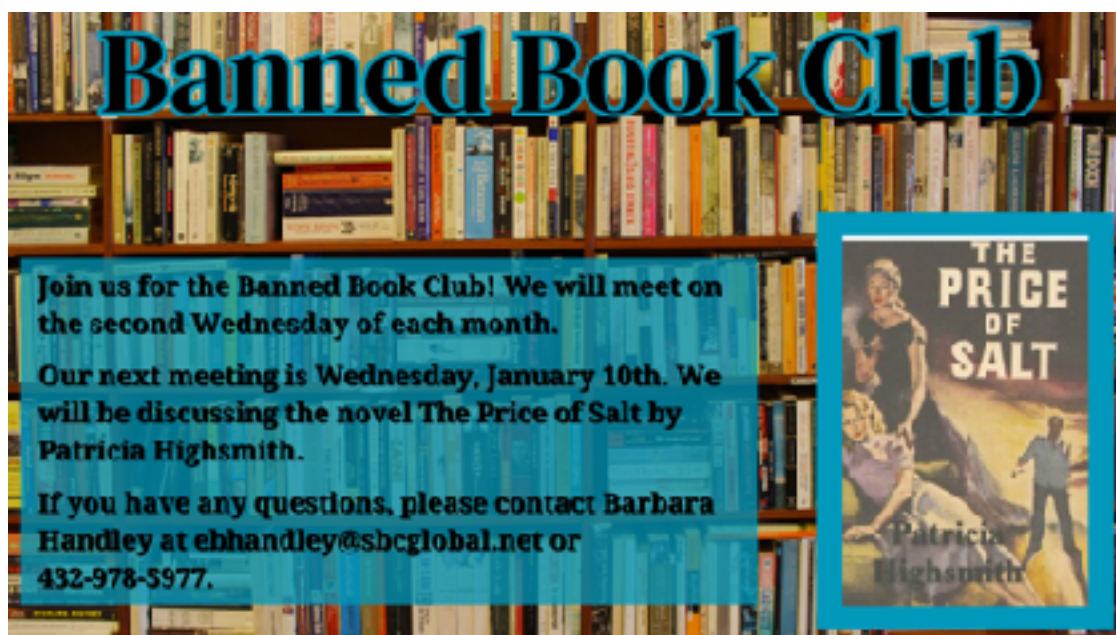
At the conclusion of my sermon, I aspire to keep the dual natured spirit of Reverend Mother alive in me. So far, I have a well established track record for keeping things positive. However, in 2024 I’m going to challenge myself to embrace the taskmaster side of Mother Superior. One of the pondering questions she asks in the show is, “How does God want you to spend your love?”

The spiritual journey I took with that role has helped me discover my own answer. To put it another way, in future Sundays, I intend to use the pulpit versus merely filling it.

Stay tuned and Happy New Year!

Banned Book Club

The Banned Book Club meets the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 at the church. Our next meeting is Wednesday, January 10th. We will be discussing the book *The Price of Salt* by Patricia Highsmith. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Handley at ebhandley@sbcglobal.net or 432-978-5977.



January Share the Plate

We will share ½ of all cash donations with this January's Share the Plate recipient. The Board has chosen the following recipient, **the West Texas UU Reproductive Alliance**.

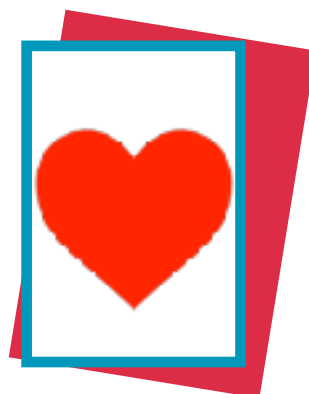
Cards of Love

As UUs, we support a woman's right to reproductive health care

Unfortunately, those rights are under attack and many Texas women are being forced to flee to places like Planned Parenthood in Las Cruces, NM.

As part of the West Texas Reproductive Alliance, members of UUCOM are invited to sign "cards of love" that will be given to women there after receiving abortion care. These cards will be available every Sunday in December during worship service if you would like to take part.

It is easy to feel helpless in the face of relentless attacks - this is a small action we can take in support of reproductive rights!



UUCOM 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.

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.

If you are in need of immediate service please reach out to pflagmidlandodessatexas@gmail.com.



PFLAG also has a subgroup of LGBTQN+ community members in our Parents of Gender Diverse Children (POGDC). Our POGDC group consists of parents and grandparents of gender diverse children. Our meetings provide support, education and resources for parents who are navigating their children's journey. The children of these families get to meet together and socialize among themselves with a dedicated volunteer while the parents meet separately for confidential and affirming conversations.



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

January 7: “**Blue Promise Story: “Change Sings!”** This is Amanda Gorman’s new children’s book about change!

January 14: “**A Lesson for Martin Luther King, Jr.**”

January 21: “**Life Doesn’t Frighten Me.**” This is a poem by Maya Angelou and the illustrations are paintings by Jean-Michel Basquiat. A special thanks to Alex Fields for gifting this book to our Spirit Play children!!

January 28: “**Snowflake Bentley.**” This true story is about Bentley who dedicated his life to capturing images of snowflakes.

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 volunteer to substitute when Barbara is not available for class. Please contact Barbara Handley at dre@uumidland.org or 432-978-5977.

Body Prayer

It is important is to take time to be quiet, to be still,
so we can be in touch with the deepest and best part of ourselves—our inner voice—often called prayer or meditation.

I invite you to join in a body prayer.

We begin with our hands in front of us in the prayer pose: “I am still”

We place our hands over our hearts: “I am loved.”

We place our hands cupped in front of us: “I can receive.”

We extend our hands out in front of us: “I can give.”

We lift our hands high over our heads: “I am open to the Spirit of Life.”

We bring our hands cupped in front of us again: “I receive these gifts.”

And returning to our stillness,

we bring our hands together again in the prayer pose: “I am still.”

[repeat three times and end with a slow bow as a closing.]

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

TXUUJM

Reflections shared by TXUUJM.

- [Board chair Bruce Harris](#) wrote about some of TXUUJM's **big wins of the year!**
- [Intern Minister Sarah Berel-Harrop](#) shared exciting program news, **"save the dates,"** and more for **2024.**
- [Congregational & Justice Organizer Michelle Venegas-Matula](#) reflected on her first year in the role and our **shared labor of love.**
- TXUUJM [Advisory Council member Robyn Stout](#) talked about **turning "frustration into determination."**
- Board treasurers and [Action Hour volunteers Jan Realini and Dale Story](#) shared their call to support staff, **"save democracy and promote justice."**
- [Tim Gibson, part of TXUUJM's new fundraising committee,](#) reflected on monthly **giving as a spiritual practice.**
- [Dana Fisher Ashrawi of Advisory Council](#) talked about her dreams and **faith rooted in love.**

[Read the full email from Rev. Erin Walter here.](#)

Fund Texas Choice

Have you been keeping up with Fund Texas Choice in the news?

Take a moment to read these recent media articles featuring interviews and direct quotes from our team:

- [Inside the nationwide web of activists helping Texans get abortions](#)
- [Activist groups create Texas Abortion Advocacy Network to restore, expand reproductive rights](#)
- [Anti-abortion lawyer wants names of people who donated to 9 Texas abortion funds](#)

UUtheVote

We are excited to announce Nora Rasman as the new Democracy Strategist who will support our UU the Vote 2024 program and year-round work to resist authoritarianism and build a multi-racial democracy.

[Read the full post including a note from Nora Rasman.](#)

Wider World

UUMFE

- [January Musings](#)
- Each month, you and/or your congregation will receive a collection of materials focused on a different theme and filled with ways to help with your EMBODIMENT, EMPOWERMENT, & ENGAGEMENT in the face of environmental injustice. We hope you use these resources for worship, contemplative practice, and religious exploration in your congregation.
[You can find past issues here.](#)

UUJEC

- **UUJEC News & Views Winter 2024**
[Read and share it from here.](#)

SWUUWCon24

February 9-11, 2024 - "Nurturing Creative Spirit"

[Registration is open!](#)

Join us for the SouthWest UU Women annual conference in Navasota, TX.

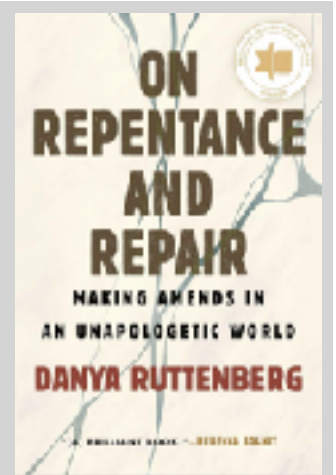
The conference begins with an opening on Friday and continues through Sunday. Your registration and Camp Allen lodging choice include access to all the workshops and vendors, dinner on Friday, three meals on Saturday including the Gala dinner Saturday night and Sunday breakfast and lunch. Single day registration without lodging is also available.

Learn more [here](#).

2024 UU Common Read

The UUA Common Read for 2023-2024 is [On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World](#) by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg (Beacon Press, 2022). This Common Read offers a glimpse into one of our faith's foundational sources, Judaism. Readers explore our own call to be accountable in these modern times as we follow Rabbi Ruttenberg into a framework for making amends offered by the 12th century Jewish physician and scholar, Maimonides.

[Join the Common Read.](#)



Wider World

Side with Love

Save the date for 30 Days of Love 2024: January 15 - February 14, 2024

sidewithlove.org/30daysoflove2023

- “Not Just Cop City” webinar series in collaboration with the American Friends Service Committee:
 - Session 3: January 11, 8-9pm ET: Police Foundations & Policing

[Read more from Side with Love.](#)

Skill Up Series: Summoning Courage

Skill Ups are our monthly training series on various organizing skills to help strengthen our congregational and community justice teams. These trainings incorporate spiritual fun and hands-on exercises to help deepen the lesson.

Skill Ups occur every 3rd Sunday for 90 minutes, starting at 4 ET / 3 CT / 2 MT / 1 PT.

- Jan 21: [Community Safety and Security](#)
- Check out the collection of past Skill Ups [here](#).

Monthly Mixers

Following the success of our virtual and in-person mixers for General Assembly, we're thrilled to announce our virtual monthly Side With Love Mixer.

This mixer will be held the 2nd Monday of every month at 5pm PT / 8pm ET.

Come connect with one another, build community across issues, and have some facetime with our staff. Register now!

- [January 8](#)

Faithful Gathering

Join our Side with Love Fun & Spiritual Nourishment Squad for an hour of spiritual sustenance and grounding with others organizing on the side of love. Show up as you are, with whatever is in your heart, and have your camera on or off as you need. Come drink in the music, meditation, play, and prayer. We end with a Connection Cafe for those who wish to talk together.

This gathering happens monthly on the 4th Thursday of the month at 4:30 PT / 5:30 MT / 6:30 CT / 7:30 ET. Register Now:

- [January 25](#)
- [February 22](#)
- [March 28](#)
- [April 25](#)