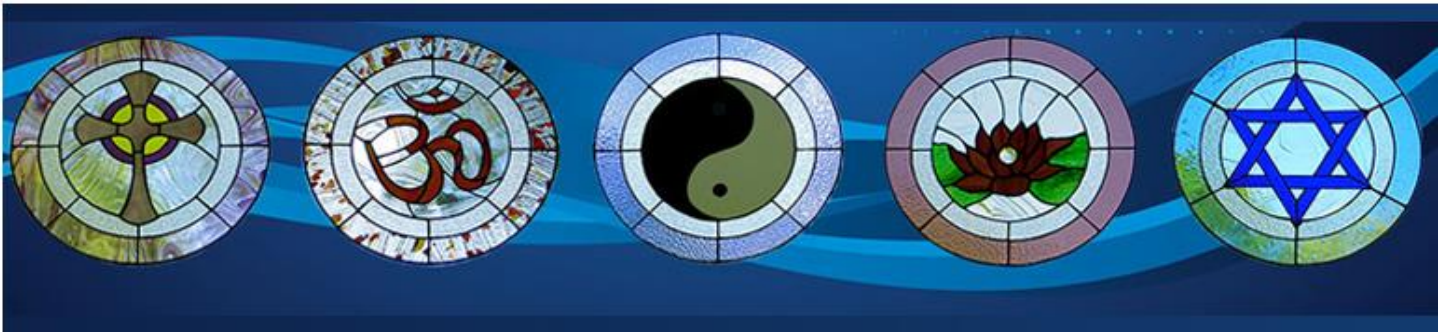


November 2020 Newsletter



Unitarian Universalist Church of Midland

WELCOMING diversity

EMPOWERING spiritual growth

FOSTERING the interdependent web

TRANSFORMING lives

Please visit our website at www.uumidland.org 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.

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November 2020 Newsletter

November 2020 Sermons at a Glance – Worship Theme: Gratitude

November 1

All Souls: Remembering with Gratitude

Rev. Julie Lombard



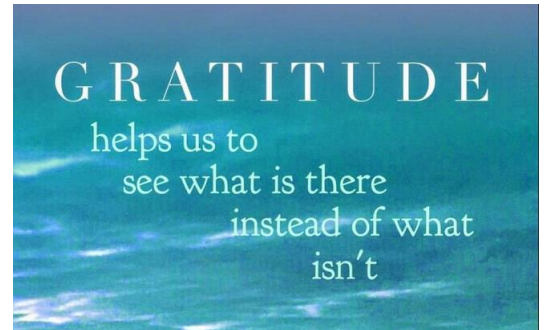
We set aside a special day to remember departed souls and this ritual of remembering is a spiritual practice. There are many customs that stem from a diversity of cultures that celebrate All Souls; some decorate graves, other light candles, and some bake cakes or breads. The sentiment is the same: to honor those in our lives that now lives on in our heart. Please bring something special to remember them with you and a candle to light in memory of them. All Souls are welcome to join this celebration of life.

November 8

A Culture of Gratitude

Rev. Julie Lombard

There's this internal gage that I hope you check this time of year- it's our internal gratitude gage. Did you know you had one? In this message I will explain that this gage isn't found in a particular place like a thermometer hanging outside a window. I believe checking this gage isn't something that we ought to do once a year like a church stewardship drive. This is holy business done year round -an ongoing spiritual practice of checking our gratitude. Join us for worship and together we will build a culture of gratitude.



November 15

Tirah Teachings

Rev. Julie Lombard



Our first Tihar was in 2009 with the Rai family. It's a five day celebration, the most celebrated holiday after Dashain [in Nepal]. This late autumn celebration ends in a special kind of sibling appreciation day. One of the stories behind Tirah is about Yama, the god of death, and his sister Yamuna. Yama had been staying

away from his sister for a long time and she wanted a visit. So, she sent animals to ask him to visit her. In the end, she went herself to see her brother. Nepali do everything possible to keep Yama happy during Tirah since they believe he will judge our vices and virtues after our death, and treats our souls accordingly. Hear how the Lombard family helped to resettle a Bhutanese family after living in a Napali Refugee Camp for twenty years.

November 22

Gather the Spirit

Rev. Julie Lombard

Let us be grateful for this Thanksgiving Multigenerational Worship Service, a spiritual homecoming for all ages. This service will delight all with deep reverence, uplifting music, and a joyous thanks for all that is our lives. Please join us for worship, invite a friend or a family member to share in this wondrous outpouring of love for this blessed church community.

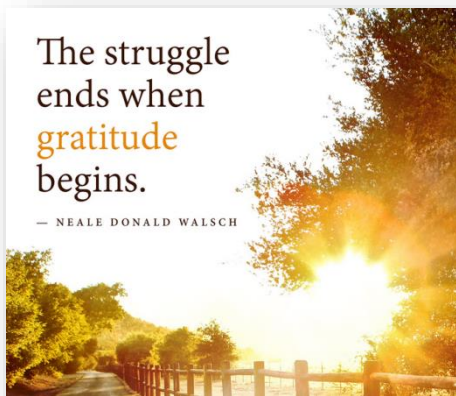


November 29

Worship Committee Offering

November 2020 Newsletter

November Minister's Musings by Rev. Julie Lombard



Years ago, a young mother took her life by standing in front of a truck on Interstate 95 in Lincoln, ME. What deeply saddened me was that she was holding her 2 year old son when she was hit. Enoch, the toddler, survived and recovered in a hospital in Bangor, ME.

Their story truly rocked me to my core. These two souls were not alone in life; they were part of a family. Enoch has an older brother, Ethan, and a father, Daniel. There are grandparents, aunts and uncles, and many friends that were left brokenhearted by the accident. We understand that Enoch's mother, Heidi, is no longer suffering from the depression she struggled with, but how can we comprehend a toddler healing in a body cast.

When does gratitude begin? It must start immediately. Gratitude was found in Enoch surviving, in the first responders being a nurse, an EMT, and an ambulance that just happened to be driving by. I find gratitude in Enoch's family being so kind towards the innocent driver that hit them and to all those who have helped since the accident. This family's outpouring of love lives on.

Gratitude is no cure-all for suffering. It cannot stop a mother from taking her life, yet it did bring some comfort to her family. They were thankful that only one life was lost that day. They praise the kindness and generosity that came after the accident. They were grateful for their faith which they leaned on. It's said that Enoch's healing also healed the hearts of his family members. Their faith gave them the gift of gratitude to look for what hope they might find in a terrible situation. They didn't have all the answers or knew when to tell the boys that their mother died, but they did have a purpose in life- to care for Enoch and to give thanks that he survived.

The holiday season invites us to take inventory of our gratitude. These days, I find comfort in the simplest of gifts- for my family's health, for the warmth of my home, and being in a loving church community that is so caring and thoughtful. I am most grateful for this precious life and for the lives that share the universe with me. Sadness and suffering are inescapable, but gratitude can bring relief.

Peace, Rev. Julie

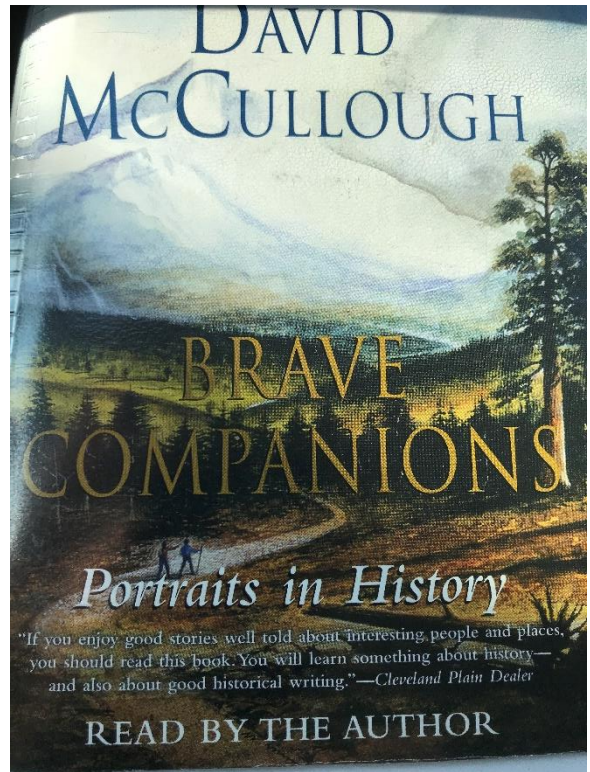
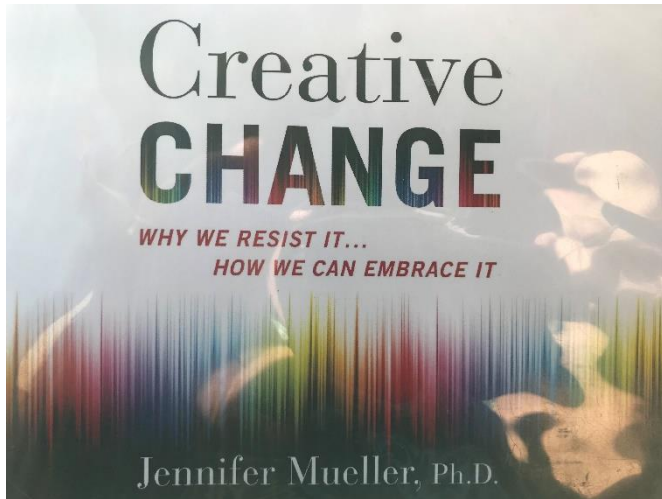
November 2020 Newsletter

Whatcha Reading

I like to listen to books while on long drives & this is what I've been reading...

I found them at the Midland County Library or in the Plaistow Town Library. Let me know if you've read them & you'd like to discuss them.

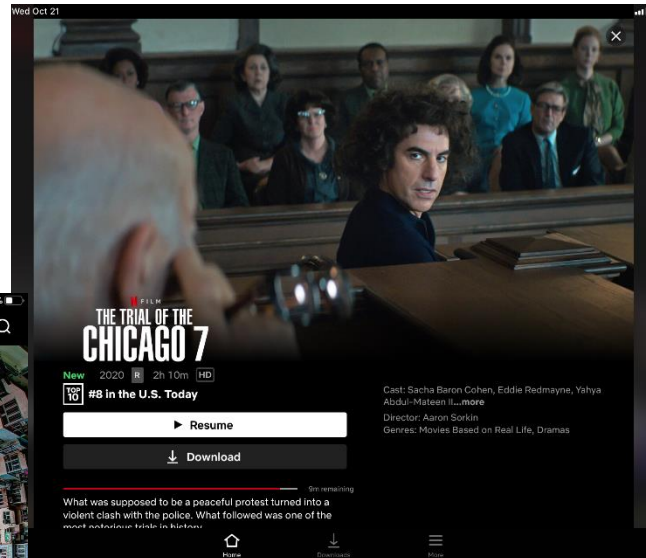
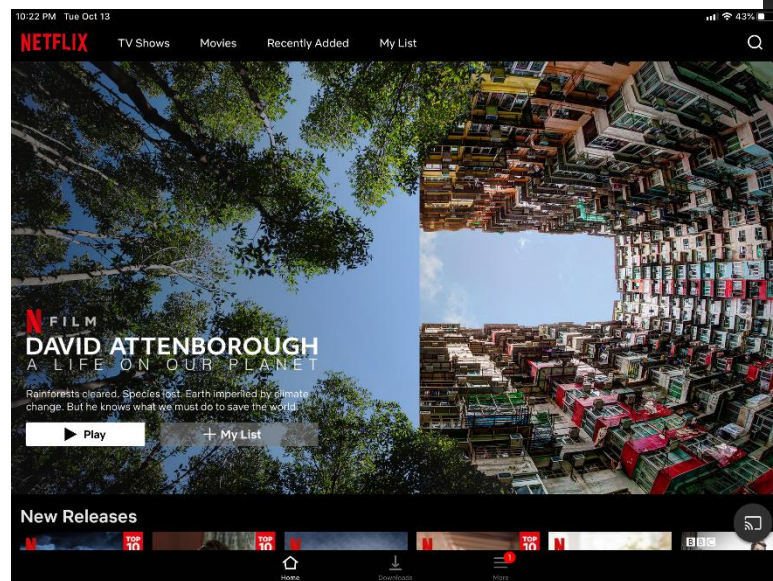
Peace, Julie



Whatcha Watching

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

Peace, Julie



November 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 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
(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

Barbara Handley,
Director of Religious Education
Email: dre@uumidland.org
Phone: 432-978-5977

Sonja and Scott Millichamp,
Music Directors
Email: skassal811@yahoo.com
scott@bruenor.org,

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

November 2020 Newsletter

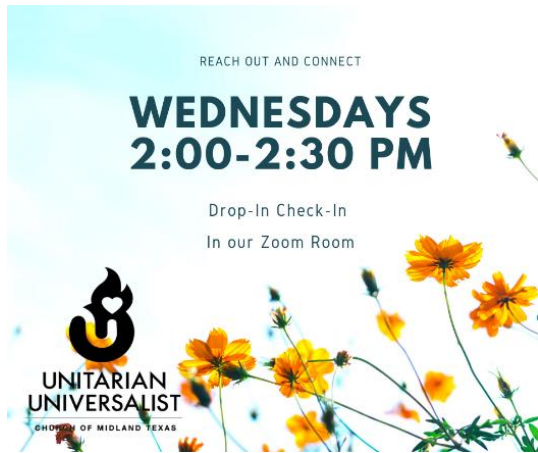
What's Happening at UUCOM

November Calendar

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

November 6-7		Out in West Texas Symposium
November 10	8:00 p.m.	Parent's Night Out
November 14	10:00 a.m.	UUA Southern Region Virtual Assembly
November 15	12:00 p.m.	Fall Congregational Meeting
November 15	2:30 p.m.	Stitching Circle - online
November 22	12:15 p.m.	Small Group Ministry Drop-In Meeting

Mid-Week Event: Online Drop-In Space:

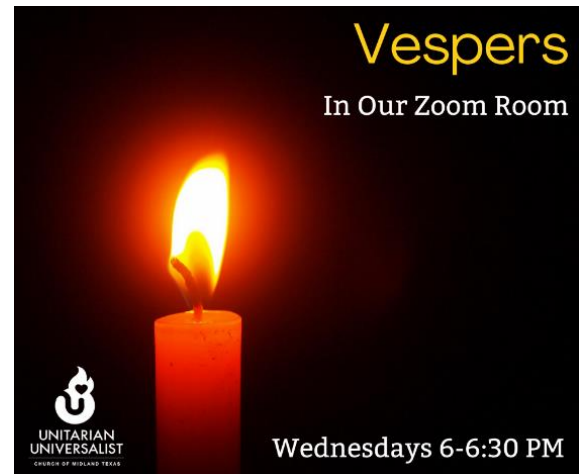


Wednesdays 2 –2:30 PM

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.



November Share the Plate

We will share ½ of all cash donations with this November's Share the Plate recipient: Midland Meals on Wheels.

Did you know...across the nation, 1 in 6 seniors struggles with hunger? Each weekday, Senior Life volunteer drivers take one of 38 routes to deliver an average of 500 hot, healthy meals to the frail and home-bound throughout Midland. For many of our clients, the daily human interaction is the most significant aspect of this service. The visual contact and communication we have when delivering a meal allows us to keep an eye out for any issues or situations that may need attention, often engaging help from our other homebound service teams and programs. We work to solve issues before they become a bigger problem.

Learn more at <http://seniorlifemidland.org/homebound-services/>.



November 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: 11/22, 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 or reach out to your minister, Rev. Julie Lombard: minister@uumidland.org.

November 2020 Newsletter

Parent's Night Out continues, Tuesday November 10th

Join us for a virtual UU parent's meetup via Zoom.

Let's meet up for an online visit so that we can check in with each other and see how everyone is doing. Join us on November 10th from 8-9pm from the comfort of your own home. Bring your favorite evening beverage or snack. Email Franny to receive a link to our Zoom meetup: starrymoon@gmail.com.

Fall Congregational Meeting, November 15, 2020

Please plan to join your Board on November 15, 2020 for the Fall Congregational Meeting following the service. The past six months have seen us shift to virtual services, hire a new minister, and install a new board. We have weathered political and social unrest, isolation, and economic upheaval. We need *your* input as we move forward to continue nurturing the spiritual growth and connection that makes this church so beloved by many of us. Please plan to be part of our congregational business as we take stock and plan for the remainder of the spiritual year.

The meeting will take place virtually after the Zoom service. To attend the service at 11:00am and/or the meeting at 12:00pm on November 15:

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

Meeting ID: **275 082 7327**

Dial-in number: **929-205-6099**

Spring Congregational Meeting Agenda

- Updates from our COVID Care Team
- Treasurer's report on our current finances
- Membership vote on this year's Nominating Committee
- Membership vote on revisions to our bylaws
 - Access the revisions made by the ad hoc Bylaws Revision Committee at <http://www.uumidland.org/about-us/bylaws-policies/>, or request a paper copy from Board Secretary April Graham by calling or texting 817-996-6794.

These congregational meetings are one very important way for you to be engaged and connected at UUCOM. The Board hopes you will be present virtually on November 15, 2020 following the service.

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 November 15th** from 2:30-4:30pm for our next meetup.

Please email Franny at starrymoon@gmail.com for our meeting link.

November 2020 Newsletter

Thoughts from the RE Corner

Children's Space 10:15-10:45

This is a time for chalice lighting, story, check-in and fun! We are using a modified Spirit Play format. Our theme is: Super Heroes!!

November 1: Orange Promises Story: One Smile. This story looks at how something as simple as a smile can help to transform lives (at least for a while)!

November 8: Green Promise Story: Grandmother Fish. April Graham will share this story of evolution.

November 15: Blue Promise Story: Paper Bag Princess. This is a story of a princess with "super" powers!!

November 22: We Are Grateful—Otsaliheliga. This is a Sources Story of Gratitude from the Cherokee people.

November 29: Indigo Promise Story: I Dissent. Ruth Bader Ginsberg teaches us how to disagree without being disagreeable!

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 during the time of Covid, there are many ways that you can participate. You could read or tell a story during Children's Zoom Space. You may suggest a story for our Children's Space. Our theme is: Super Heroes!! You may help to create Spirit Play stories for when we get to meet in person!! Please contact Barbara Handley at dre@uumidland.org or 432-978-5977.

October Thank You's

For the month of October, the board would like to thank the following people:

- Maureena Benavides and the Care Team for taking care of Venus in her time of need;
- The by-laws crew for exploring the upgrade needed, especially for working toward our new Welcoming Congregation status;
- Jessica Stewart, for leading the Zoom upgrade, for ordering Board retreat books, for new business cards, and for researching closed caption options and working with the UUA on that problem;
- The Worship team – to David Allen for leading worship on 9/27 and to Janine Deckard for supporting David and Barbara Handley;
- The COVID care team – Barbara Handley, Jessica Stewart, and David Allen as they continue to work with Rev. Julie to pull together policy recommendations for the Board, for monthly updates and for investigating what another church is doing. To Jessica for keeping the Board up to date with the current COVID rate monthly.

November 2020 Newsletter

Board President Update

The church is a place of sanctuary, respite, care, and nurturing. And those become more needed and challenging in a global pandemic. Our church Board has worked hard to take the guidance of the Covid Care Team and move us into the next phase of safely operating our church. We will be at phase 3, allowing for members to attend outside our church in the courtyard/open air, with social distancing practices in place. We have already heard positive feedback from members and friends saying it helps for them to be "close" to each other. Our congregational meeting will be a very important one. We need all of you there to help us know what direction to move in to offer support to our members, friends, and community. We also have some important positions to fill and need your vote/nominations for the nominating committee who will then be charged with creating a slate of potential folks for us to vote on at our spring congregational meeting. Of course we are still doing our mission work with Out in West Texas, and hope you will register to attend the symposium Nov. 6th and 7th. <https://fs29.formsite.com/OutinWestTexas/ef9u3bstri/index.html>

We are still here, bound together in a common goal of justice and offering support to each other.

In Peace,

Maureena Benavides, M.A., LPC

pronouns: she/her/hers

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.

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.

November 2020 Newsletter

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 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".

4th Out in West Texas Symposium – Presentation Submissions

The **4th Out in West Texas Symposium—Intersections**, will be held virtually November 6th & 7th, 2020, and is open to all participants! Our organization is seeking presentations from professionals in all fields with a primary focus on transgender issues at the intersection of race, ethnicity, ableness, religion/spirituality, on topics such as: transgender affirming practices, the needs of transgender clients/patients, and barriers to transgender care. The format for these virtual session presentations is a 45-minute presentation, workshop, or panel that is able to be presented on a virtual platform.

Visit our website at www.outinwesttexas.org to learn more about our work.

For questions about your proposal or the symposium, contact us at directors@outinwesttexas.org. Proposals must be received by November 31st to be considered.

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.

November 2020 Newsletter

Wider World

This IS the Time to Harvest Our Power--Countdown to Nov 3 & Beyond



*Gather the spirit, harvest the power.
Our separate fires will kindle one flame.*

1) Our [UU the Vote Harvest the Power Week of Action](#) Oct. 21-Oct. 27th has begun!

It includes:

- national and congregational hosted phone banks to key states throughout the week
- an Arizona phonebank this evening to support their ground-breaking ballot initiative on Investing in Education
- a UU the Vote worship service on Sunday
- a Vote Love, Defeat Hate rally on Monday
- and a Tuesday phone bank to Florida to end the week.

If you or your congregation haven't signed up yet to be part of it - now is the time - help us reach our goal of contacting 2 million voters! [Sign up here.](#)

2) Let's Get Out the Vote

On November 2nd we have two national phone banks lined up to [Get Out the Vote in FL](#) with New Florida Majority and in WI with [Wisconsin Voices](#).

3) Defend the Elections

We've teamed up with Elections Defenders--a joint effort of the Movement for Black Lives Electoral Justice Project and the Working Families Party--to provide training for volunteers to support voters and de-escalate threats at polling places. [Sign up here.](#)

4) Stay Rested & Centered--Monday Movement Moment

Take a break and get yourself restored and ready for action at [Monday Movement Moment](#), on **Mondays now through November 9th, 12:30pm - 1:15pm ET**. With so much happening in the landscape ahead of the November 3rd elections, this live roundtable will discuss how people of faith and conscience can respond while grounding in our collective desire for liberation. Bring your snack and beverage, and join Everette Thompson--Side with Love Campaign Manager, Dr. Charlene Sinclair of BlackPAC, and Ana Maria de la Rosa--UUSC Senior Grassroots Organizer for forty-five minutes of laughter, spiritual fortification, education, and invitation for action.

November 2020 Newsletter

5) Prepare for a Contested Election

We need to be ready and resilient, flexible in our tactics if we enter a period of a contested election potentially from Nov. 4th through January 20th.

Join our Ready & Resilient Group Planning Session led by Rev. Ashley Horan, UUA Organizing Strategy Director:

- This [Friday, Oct. 23rd](#) at 12 pm ET/9 am PT
- OR
- Next [Friday, Oct. 30th](#) at 12 pm ET/9 am PT

View our Ready & Resilient Video and start planning with our *Congregational Asset Mapping tool*. You'll find it all here, including the Election Defense trainings, on our [Defend Our Elections resource page](#).

6) Nov 5th Post-Election Vigil & Community Gathering, 8 pm ET/5 pm PT

Join UU the Vote, Side with Love, and UUA President Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray for a [post-election vigil and gathering](#). Whatever the results--including no clear results--of the elections, we know that we will want to gather in community.

7) [Harvest the Power](#) in 2020

We've been planting seeds for justice for weeks, months, years, generations. In this season of pandemic, elections, uprising, and reckoning--this is the time to Harvest the Power of our values, our organizing, our shared imagining of a more just and loving world. Join with UU Ministry for Earth, Side with Love and UUs across the country for these opportunities to deepen our relationships, draw on the sources of wholeness and strength in which we are rooted, and move together in powerful ways for justice.

SAVE THE DATES!

- November 19-22 [Virtual Justice Convergence & Decolonization Teach-In](#)
- November 26 Plymouth Day of Mourning 50th Anniversary Virtual Observance (hosted on Side with Love and UUA Facebook page)

Our UU people, our congregations, our [state action networks](#), our justice organizations, our national campaigns and our national, state and local partners have created a tremendous interdependent web of relationships, capacity, and beloved community. Let's Harvest Our Power in 2020 together.

Susan Leslie

Congregational Advocacy & Witness Director
UUA Organizing Strategy Team

November 2020 Newsletter

Turn, Turn, Turn: UUA Southern Region Virtual Assembly, November 14th

Join your Southern Region staff team and sibling Unitarian Universalist congregations in the Southern Region for a day of collaboration and learning! UUA President Rev. Dr. Susan Frederick-Gray will be our keynote speaker in the morning. Afternoon workshop include:

- Where Do We Go From Here? Widening the Circle of Concern - with Rev. Ashley Horan, Kathy McGowan, and Rev. Nato Hollister
- What's Next? The Changing Congregational Landscape - with Natalie Briscoe and Connie Goodbread
- A Time to Build Up, Small Group Ministry and Membership Paths - with Cameron Young and Lillian Drab-Braddick.

Registration fee: **\$20 per person.**

Learn more and register here: <https://uua.wufoo.com/forms/turn-turn-turn/>. Download a printable/sharable flyer [here](#).

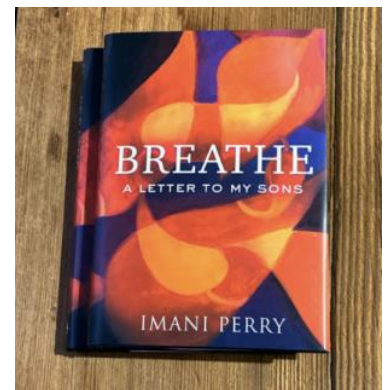
Please share information about this event with your congregation's lay leaders, staff, members, and friends! We hope to see you at one, or both, of these events! Please let us know if you need any additional information.

Thank you all for all you do for your congregations and wider communities.

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.