

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

# The Light

Vol. 66 Issue 12 December 2023



*Celebrate Diversity*   *Strive for Justice*   *Inspire Love*

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## How do we build Beloved Community?

From Your Board: President's Letter

Dear friends,

When President Abraham Lincoln wrote the Proclamation of Thanksgiving in 1864, the idea was to offer a space for the nation to remember the good while living in a sea of sorrow. At that time, the sorrow was death from the costly Civil War, but also personal losses that come to all of us at different

times of our lives. While Thanksgiving is a complicated holiday for people of conscience who know the history of this country, the idea itself is sound. As my Catholic upbringing taught me to say, "It is right and just to give thanks."

Despite enough tragic news to make me want to give up sometimes, instead I give thanks.

In this congregation, we've had a great flurry of activity since our last newsletter. What I'm thinking of now is the fantastic '80s Dance Party and our New Member Ceremony. How do they connect with the world events? Let me tell you.

Both events were almost back-to-back and were tremendously beautiful in their own ways. It's great to see new members joining, while also seeing longtime members getting together just to have fun.

The New Member Ceremony is always a terrific part of our services because it means we're growing as a congregation. Thinking back to all of us getting together and making that decision to join our



## DIRECTORY

See our website, [uupensacola.org](http://uupensacola.org), for updates and a complete list of teams

### Office Administrator

Laura Herbek  
(850) 475-9077, [uupensacola@gmail.com](mailto:uupensacola@gmail.com)

### Community Minister

Rev. Maggie Lovins

### Governing Board

President: Scott Satterwhite

President Elect: Joe Vinson

Past President: Laura Keith King

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Bradley Vinson ([treasurer@uupensacola.org](mailto:treasurer@uupensacola.org))

*Members at Large:*

Marianne DeGrado

Denise Gunn

Patti Underwood

Barbara Wright

### MINISTRY TEAMS

**Adult Exploration:** Trista Blouin

**Buildings & Grounds:** Ed King

**Caring:** Trista Blouin, Rev. Maggie Lovins, Marcy Moreland ([caring@uupensacola.org](mailto:caring@uupensacola.org))

**Children's Religious Education Coordinator:**

Teresa Latendress ([cre@uupensacola.org](mailto:cre@uupensacola.org))

**Communications:** Joe Vinson  
([communications@uupensacola.org](mailto:communications@uupensacola.org))

**Denominational Affairs:** Scott Satterwhite

**Finance:** Laurie Winterberg

**Fun and Fellowship:** Trista Blouin

**Leadership Development:** Laura Keith King

**Membership:** Lauren Anzaldo  
([membership@uupensacola.org](mailto:membership@uupensacola.org))

**Outreach:** Laura Keith King

**Safer Congregation:** Denise Gunn

**Social Justice:** Paula Montgomery & Scott Satterwhite

**Sunday Services:** Nancy Hagman

community, officially, it was a very special moment and a great way to show our love for our chosen family here at UUCP. Like those who welcomed our family, I want to welcome our new members. We can't wait to see how you will contribute to UUCP in the future.

Where the '80s Dance Party comes in is that during an especially challenging time in history, sometimes we need space to regroup. Personal heartaches colliding with global crises—from Palestine and Israel to Ukraine, not to mention the pains of just living, from work to the general issues with health and wellness—can make life unbearable at times. This is why we have community: to help us fight against the loneliness of the world and the pain that's always close by remembering that there is also joy in being alive. So why not dance or sing?

The 80s Dance Party that was organized by Trista Blouin was a lot of fun, with people dancing and singing karaoke, giving us all a moment of joy during a troubled time. No reason to neglect the world, or our own personal struggles, but I've found that a good way to maintain your sanity is to give yourself space so that the many problems out there won't consume you—and to continuously find something for which to be thankful.

By joining together in community, we resist the ever-present feeling that we are being dragged under by the world. By no means

should we forget the world or disengage from it, but sometimes we need a few hours to ourselves where we can dance and sing. Through this community, we have that space, and for that, I am thankful.

As we move into the Thanksgiving holiday, let us give thanks for the land, while remembering the indigenous (Muskogee Creek) people whose land we are on, but also the people that came before us at UUCP to give us the community we are living in today. At the same time, let us also give thanks to each other and be there for each other as we celebrate the lives we have and the community that we have freely joined and love.

♥,

*Scott*

Scott Satterwhite



## Sunday Services in December

### **December 3, 2023**

#### The Wholly Family Service

Families: Claire Helton and Helton family, Crys Brockway, Paula Montgomery and Bill Caplinger

This time of the year is often focused on the Christian concept of the Holy Family. Our Church Family is sacred to many of us in our congregation and binds us together in times of celebration and comfort. Today, we celebrate our families of birth, families of choice and families of fate.

Second Hour: Heathen Kinship meeting

The first Sunday of the month is always Manna Sunday! The collection basket will be in the lobby to drop off items. Most requested items from Manna Food Pantries include canned fruit in 100% juice, fruit cups (20 oz. or less), soups (low sodium), canned dinners (20 oz. or less), and canned tomatoes (16 oz. or less).

### **December 10, 2023**

Magical Program with All Ages

Presenters: CRE children and youth

Join our CRE youth, teachers, and parents for a magical program filled with joy and laughter! Watch and sing along as talented kids light up the stage with song, share the spirit of giving, and enjoy the excitement of a possible visit from Santa himself. It's a festive celebration you won't want to miss!

## **December 17, 2023**

### **Winter Solstice Celebration**

Presenter: Nancy Hagman, member of UUCP

Join in the honoring of the change of seasons in the Wheel of the Year. This event has been celebrated by various cultures throughout history, symbolizing themes such as rebirth, renewal, and the return of the light. As days start to grow longer again, it is often seen as a time of hope and new beginnings.

Second Hour: Heathen Kinship meeting

## **December 24, 2023**

### **No morning service; Christmas Eve Service at 5:00 PM**

Presenter: Joe Vinson

Bring family, friends, and guests for a special service of carols and readings for all ages, concluding with a traditional candle lighting ritual. A Special Offering will be taken to benefit our Members Assistance fund which is used throughout the year to help our church families in need.

The offering at the Christmas Eve Family service every year goes to replenish the Members Assistance fund at UUCP. If you are not able to attend the Christmas Eve service, but would like to contribute to the fund, you may indicate that when you make the donation.

## **December 31, 2023**

### **Let the Good Times Roll in 2024**

Presenter: Thom Botsford

Our New Year's Eve music service will feature singer-pianist Burt Kimberl and his musical friends. Join in celebrating the New Year together.

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## December at UUCP

### **Announcing to the Membership, A New Ministry Team: “Outreach”**

Most of us agree that for our church to thrive (or even survive), we need a continuing influx of new members. The Board has decided to start an “Outreach” team to raise our public profile in the community and bring new people into the church, with the ultimate goal of building membership so that our church can grow and thrive. Many local people have never heard of us or don’t know that a church like ours exists, so they aren’t looking for a “church.” We want to raise our public image, and the board has created a specialized team to focus on that.

The team’s activities would be directed outside the church, although there will be some overlap with the activities of the Fun and Fellowship Team. The team will do things like organize events involving the outside community, maintain the Rainbow-Welcome Feather Banner and other signs or decorations in front of the church, create and distribute church fliers or handouts, and connect to people at places at locations for liberal thought, like UWF and The League of Women Voters, and do other things that will raise awareness of our existence. Over the years, many individuals have bought literature, decorative items, run advertising, etc., but there is no specific team to organize these activities or budget for expenses. The team will have a budget and will also brainstorm other ways to shine our beacon into the community and look for other groups to reach out to, or partner with, in projects.

Laura Keith King is the team leader for this new group; we already have some members, and we’d love your participation. If you are interested or have ideas, please contact Laura King.

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### **Save the Date: Upcoming Holiday Plans at UUCP**

- Stars Decorations Added to Christmas Tree: December 3rd after service
  - Holiday Crafters Fair and Sunday Sweets: December 10th after service
  - Holiday Party (adults' and children's): December 17<sup>th</sup>
-



**HOLIDAY CRAFTERS FAIR**  
 UUCP CONFERENCE ROOM  
 SUNDAY 10TH DECEMBER  
 11AM - 12PM

Calling all UUCP artisans and small business owners!!!  
 Would you like to be a part of bringing back an oldie but goodie- the UUCP Holiday Sale? If you are a friend or member and in one of those categories, and you would like to take part as a vendor or volunteer, please contact Rev. Maggie via email, text, or phone before November 27 to get on the list. The Holiday Sale will be December 10 after service when we will have the opportunity to shop while having our Sunday Sweets so mark your calendars and come ready for some “retail therapy”!

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## Coffee and Conversation 2.0. Neighborhood Pilot Project Report and Expansion

For two months, 7 to 8 UUCP folks have met once a month in a volunteer's home for 2 hours for a wonderfully received fellowship time. Nothing structured—neighbors connecting and sharing.

If there's interest in expanding these neighborhood-esque groups, and there's a host, let's do it. Get in touch with Laurie Winterberg to explore.

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## Gerald "Gerry" A. Donnelly Obituary

Published by Legacy Remembers on Nov. 6, 2023

Gerald A. "Gerry" Donnelly, Jr., 81, of Oak Lawn, Illinois, passed away peacefully on October 16, 2023. He was born on September 18, 1942, in New York, New York. Gerry served in the Army from 1962 to 1964.

He is survived by his loving wife, Marylee; daughters Jennifer Donnelly, Stacy (Ryan) Riordan; grandchildren Keira Donnelly, Mae Riordan; and brother Desmond. Gerry was preceded in death by his mother, Jane, and father, Gerald.

He enjoyed a long career in retail management with JCPenney and later managing the Village Mall in Danville, Illinois. His passions included swimming, sailing and all things White Sox related (you should see his hat and t-shirt collection!). He enjoyed traveling and exploring cultures and was very proud of his Irish heritage. Gerry also loved a good, spirited debate, so much so that you could sometimes find him arguing both sides of the same debate! And, of course no interaction with him ended without much laughter.



Gerry and Marylee were members of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola, Florida for many years before relocating to be near family in Oak Lawn, Illinois. Once in Oak Lawn, Gerry & Marylee joined the Beverly Unitarian Church and quickly looked for ways to integrate themselves into their new community.

A remembrance service will be held on December 9, 2023, 1:00 pm at Beverly Unitarian Church, 10244 S. Longwood Drive, Chicago, IL 60643. Please bring your stories and memories to share or ears to listen. In lieu of flowers, a donation can be made to the Beverly Unitarian Church c/o migrant support (address provided above).

Gerry will be deeply missed by his family, friends, and all who knew him.

Sláinte!

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## LUUnch BUUnch for 12/13? Yes or No

Greetings for the end of 2023 and what I call the "Eating Season." If we were to have a Lunch Bunch in December, it would be on the 2nd Wednesday, the 13th. I say "IF" for several reasons, firstly since its that time of year when our waist lines are coming more into view (for some). But secondly, as you can read below for a report on the LB/Founaris' event of 8 November, I wasn't paying good attention to "the signs."

The first sign for 8 Nov.'s LB was that Michael told me he would be unable to make it, being obligated for work for and attend the 95th BIRTHDAY party of Tanta Hannelori Musial. Michael has always been very steady in his attendance to LB events, sometimes the only other beside me, so I should have taken his notice as more far-reaching.

So, on Wed. the 8th, I found myself eating alone at Founaris, with only the company of their very good, flaky crust and lots of cheese, mushroom and spinach pizza. I should have also read the signs of no emails and no phone calls or LB encounters at UUCP. Yes, I had time to back out, but the pizza was calling me to be there and partake.

So, unless I hear from you, and you, about December 13th, with your own suggestion as to where, we'll (all) go back to Founaris, 1:00 PM as usual. But I won't be there if at least two others besides Michael let me know by Sunday the 10th. ...Otherwise, Happy Thanksgiving and Bon Noel.

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### Message from Dolly Berthelot

Dolly Berthelot, UUCP MEMBER SINCE 1984, is in a long recovery from major surgery October 25 and unable to do the newcomer profile this issue. Look for an article on Honor Bell in the next issue. Dolly appreciates the loving support of her UUCP community.

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### Longtime Member Bio

By Charlotte Crane

Jay and Lynne Butcher

Jay Butcher was apprehensive about leaving northern Virginia when his father's civil service job with the Navy was relocated to NAS Pensacola, "but it didn't take me long to fall in love with the Florida



Gulf Coast,” says Jay. “With the beautiful beaches and like-minded people I met in school, it didn’t take me long to call Pensacola home.”

Here too there was Lynne Carmichael—a student at Woodham High School, where the two high-schoolers met in 1972, the year of Jay’s arrival. Both graduated high school in 1974, Lynne from Woodham and Jay from Gulf Breeze where his parents had settled.



Lynne, like Jay, was a migrant to Florida, but for her, “I have lived here my whole life. I was born in Boston, Massachusetts. My family moved to Pensacola when I was a year old”—a move also a military transfer.

For the partnering young newcomers, 1978 was the culmination year for happenings in their pace toward college education and family union. Reported Jay, “We were married in 1978 at my parents’ home in Gulf Breeze.”

But for both, education preceded a wedding. Jay received an Associate of Science degree in Industrial Electrical Technology from PJC in 1978, and studied electrical engineering at UWF. Lynne graduated from the University of West Florida with a bachelor’s degree in

education, recalling, “I attended the graduation ceremony on Saturday, June 10, and married Jay on Sunday, June 11, 1978.”

Careers followed. Jay worked for 34 years as Plant Engineer for Plastic Coated Papers, a local manufacturer. “I have always liked working with and maintaining electrical and mechanical equipment,” said Jay. “This job provided me with the opportunity to use and develop my skills to upgrade old equipment to the latest technology and keep the newly installed equipment running at peak performance. This job was always challenging and rewarding.”

“My career has been in the field of education,” says Lynne. “Working as a Student Services Specialist for Pensacola State College, for the last 25 years I have served thousands of middle school students in the PSC Talent Search program that serves low-income, first-generation, potential college-bound students. I am so proud of seeing my students receive great scholarships, knowing

that former students are now nurses at Sacred Heart Hospital and hearing from former students—this makes me so proud of PSC and our program.”

Meanwhile, the couple also has provided next-generation family: “We have two beautiful daughters, Camron (born 1983) and Kadee (born 1985),” says Jay. “We have one grandson, Carson, age 9, from Camron and her husband Josh Gregory.” Camron, with a degree from FSU, lives in Destin and is assistant to a county commissioner. Kadee, who has a degree in nursing, lives in Prattville, Alabama.

Move to Pensacola by the couple’s parents also brought numerous other family members to northwest Florida. Lynne came from a large family: six brothers and two sisters, with six of those now in Pensacola. Jay’s sister, Bonnie Brandon, lives in Gulf Breeze; his sister Beverly Wilson lives in Burnsville, North Carolina.

The mothers of both Jay and Lynne played important roles in the couple’s now 34-year membership in UUCP. Jay’s mother Vivian Butcher, says Lynne, “introduced us and our daughters to the UU church in Pensacola, back in 1988 when it was called Pensacola Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (PUUF). Shortly thereafter, we became members. My mother, Carol Lynne Carmichael, taught in the UU Religious Education area with the youth at that time.” Lynne and Jay joined UUCP in 1989.

Of his UU affinity, said Jay, “I like the idea of freedom of religious expression. Whether you believe in a ‘God’ or not should be your own choice.”

For both Lynne and Jay, the Methodist Church also has been influential, from their childhoods. Said Jay, “I was raised Methodist until I was around 12 years old.” Recalls Lynne, too, “I was raised Methodist, but as a child we only attended Easter and Christmas. As a teenager I attended the Methodist youth group.” After her mother joined the Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church, Lynne also joined, while keeping her UU membership.

Jay, as a UUCP member, provided leadership as a two-year treasurer of the Charitable Trust, and is currently on the Building and Grounds team.

For Jay and Lynne, both now retired, there is more to do beyond the walls of church and home. “I like being close to the different bodies of water,” says Jay. “My cousin Bill Bullivant, who was also a very active member of PUUF/UUCP, taught me to water ski in Bayou Texar shortly after moving here. Later my dad bought a boat, and I was fishing and SCUBA diving in the gulf and water skiing in the bays and rivers around Pensacola.”

"I retired in in 2020 and enjoy gardening, maintaining our home and relaxing on our deck observing the varied wildlife around the beautiful wooded lot," says Jay. "Our home is in the Woodlands neighborhood and our lot is very wooded—we have seen turtles, snakes, possums, raccoons, and armadillos."

"I got interested in college sports when Camron attended FSU in Tallahassee. I'm still a big Seminoles fan."

Lynne retired April 28, 2023. "I am currently volunteering with 'Take Stock in Children,' mentoring a young high school student. The statewide not-for-profit program is operated under the Escambia County Public Schools Foundation." Lynne's interests always have included sports and recreation, she says: "As a kid I attended the park in my neighborhood. I also love to read historical fiction." Among church events she enjoys, along with Jay, are the music nights, grounds beautification and events like the MLK parade.

Reports Jay, "We recently acquired an RV and will be exploring the country in our 'tiny home.' No specific plans yet in the RV, but we are looking forward to our next adventure."

Down whatever roads the RV steering wheels leads, Jay and Lynne will know where their home is— together.

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## **Valerie's House**

By Charlotte Crane

When Jenni Elzweig came to UUCP as a guest speaker on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, few there likely knew that Valerie's House, where she is program manager, was on the menu for an event that afternoon that could "truly be a game-changer," viewed Jenni, for her organization.

The event was positive: Valerie's House was awarded a grant of \$108,364 from Impact 100 at its 2023 annual meeting that day, to help the organization pursue its mission, which is to help children, ages 5 to 18, and families, to work through loss of a loved one and go on to fulfill their lives. For Jenni, the wait that day was nerve-wracking: "I was excitedly anxious when I was speaking to the congregation." That afternoon she attended the Impact 100 meeting in support of Valerie's director,

its presenter Crista Brandt. Knowing there would be 11 winners among 15 finalists, “When we actually won, we were over the moon,” says Jenni.

Valerie’s House occupies a Gadsden Street home built in 1904, which was used by a variety of businesses and was recently purchased by Valerie’s. Valerie’s now plans to make it its permanent location. The grant money will be used to build a brand-new kitchen, making it possible to prepare food onsite and hold cooking classes, “fostering good habits which can be overlooked when a family is in the throes of grief.”

Notes Jenni of her UUCP visit, “I was so warmly welcomed by the audience at UUCP, I felt right at home. I have received follow-up messages of support from several members and it warms my heart.”

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**The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola  
9888 Pensacola Boulevard  
Pensacola, FL 32534**

TO:



Deadline for the January *Light*:  
Thursday, December 21

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