

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

The Light

Vol. 67 Issue 8 August 2024



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

Warm Season and Community of Warm Hearts

From Your Board: President's Letter

UUCP members and friends,

As we enter the heart of summer here in Northwest Florida, the sun shines brightly upon us, reminding us of the warmth and energy that surrounds our vibrant community. August brings with it a mix of reflection on the joys of summer and anticipation for the new beginnings ahead.

During the sweltering heat, as we reflect on the dangers of a warming planet, we find ourselves seeking shade and cool breezes while celebrating the beauty of our natural surroundings. Whether you're enjoying lazy days on the beach or finding solace in the shade of a quiet garden, I encourage you to embrace these moments of connection with nature — “the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”



Joe Vinson, UUCP Board President

Later this month, many of our UUCP families will prepare for the upcoming school year, filled with the excitement of new classrooms, teachers, and friends. It's a time of transition, not only for the children in our congregation, but for our college students and lifelong learners. With that in mind, CRE coordinator Honor Bell will lead the August 11 service with the UUCP youth, talking about the back-to-school hopes and concerns and honoring our congregation's recent grads.

I also want to acknowledge the passing of longtime UUCP member J.J. Jackson on July 4. J.J. was a warm and generous person who served his country as a Naval Aviator and served our congregation over the years, almost always sitting up front with his wife Evelyn. He will be sorely missed by his many UU friends, and our hearts go out to his family.

Our congregation thrives when draw our circle wider. If you have a friend, coworker, or neighbor you think might be at home in UUCP, please invite them to join us one Sunday or share a YouTube link to a past service video. We will host a Newcomer Orientation on August 18 for recent UUCP members and friends, and prospective members are welcome to attend as well.

As we embrace the final weeks of summer and prepare for the changing seasons ahead, let us hold onto the values of compassion, justice, and love that define our Unitarian-Universalist community. Together, we can make a positive impact in our own lives and in the world around us.

Wishing you a joyful and fulfilling August,

Joe Vinson, President, UUCP Board of Directors

DIRECTORY

See our website, uupensacola.org, for updates and a complete list of teams

Office Administrator

(850) 475-9077, uupensacola@gmail.com

Community Minister

Rev. Maggie Lovins

Governing Board

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President Elect: Crys Brockway

Past President: Scott Satterwhite

Secretary: Lisa Rawson

Treasurer: Bradley Vinson

(treasurer@uupensacola.org)

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Marianne DeGrado

Denise Gunn

Patti Underwood

Barbara Wright

MINISTRY TEAMS

Adult Exploration: Trista Blouin

Buildings & Grounds: Ed King

Caring: Trista Blouin & Rev. Maggie Lovins

(caring@uupensacola.org)

Children's Religious Education Coordinator:

Honor M. Bell, III (cre@uupensacola.org)

Communications: Joe Vinson

(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)

Outreach: Laura Keith King

Safer Congregation: Denise Gunn

(safer@uupensacola.org)

Social Justice: Paula Montgomery & Scott Satterwhite

Sunday Services: Nancy Hagman

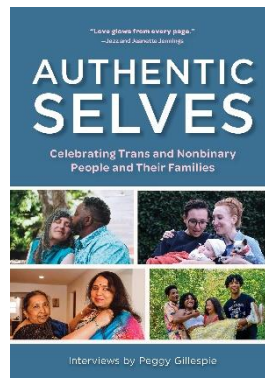
A Blessing for the Dying

Michelle Buhite
UUA WorshipWeb

We bless you on your journey
We honor and celebrate the life that has been yours;
The lives you've touched,
The legacy you leave.

We release old wounds and regrets.
We forgive and are forgiven.
We cherish the life we shared,
The life that is larger than us.

Out of mystery we are born,
And mystery receives us when we die.
With sorrow and gratitude for all that has been,
We bless you on your journey.



UUA Common Read

The 2024–2025 UU Common Read is *Authentic Selves: Celebrating Trans and Nonbinary People and Their Families*, edited by Peggy Gillespie. The Common Read builds community in our congregations and our movement by giving diverse people a shared platform for reflection and a shared focus for action. *Authentic Selves* invites us to explore the nature of living authentically and the ways connections among us help us thrive.

[Click for entire announcement](#)

Member Gratitude

Dear Members, Thank you for your concern and cards regarding my eye surgery. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated. Michael Newcomb



Sunday Services in August



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).

August 4, 2024

Hiroshima in Popular Memory

Presenter: Joe Vinson, Member and Board President

After 79 years, how do we remember the atomic bombings of Japan? What do many people even know or understand?

Second Hour: Heathen Kinship

August 11, 2024

The Joys of School and Education

Presented by UUCP Youth and Honor Bell III, Children's Religious Education Coordinator

Come join us for a Service for All Ages led by a panel of our children and youth on the joys and concerns about going back to school. We will also be honoring our recent grads with major transitions of all ages.

Second Hour: OutoftheBox Story Circle, facilitated by Claire Helton 11:30-12:30, in the Library

August 18, 2024

Antisemitism and Antizionism: Are They the Same?

Presenter: Thom Botsford, friend of UUCP

This hot topic is much discussed in the coverage of the Gaza war, but poorly understood by the public. Our presentation would not take a "side" so much as point out the key elements of the current situation, both in the Middle East and at home.

Second Hour: Heathen Kinship

Newcomer Orientation after service, (see next page)

August 25, 2024

Experiential Service on other practices of devotion

Presenter: Mike Kilmer, UUCP Musician

This presentation aims to intertwine a set of tools by which we can reach beyond ego and intellect towards divinity (or if you prefer the unconscious). These tools are found as widely as bhakti devotional branch of yoga, prayerful songs of Hildegard von Bingen along with Sufi poets like Rumi and Hafiz. Musical practices of Afro-cuban Ifa/Orisha culture mysticism, prayer, music, poetry and movement will assist in providing tools to deepen our respect for this powerful toolset.

Second Hour: TBA



(In the middle of a Pride parade, a trans woman in a white cowboy hat poses with a rainbow fan.)

Rainbow Blessing

*Cricket Hall
UUA WorshipWeb*

May the drag stage rise to meet
you
May the world rise to accept and
embrace you
May the rainbow of love enfold
you
May your fluidity never be
hindered
May your pronouns always be
supported and your deadname
forgotten
May those you invite into your
life remain loyal
May your chosen family lift you
up and catch you when you need
it
May you be able to catch others
when they need it
May you remember sensitivity is
not weakness,
but instead a great strength
welling up inside you
And until we meet again,
may you remember that you are
loved and
you are divine.

August at UUCP



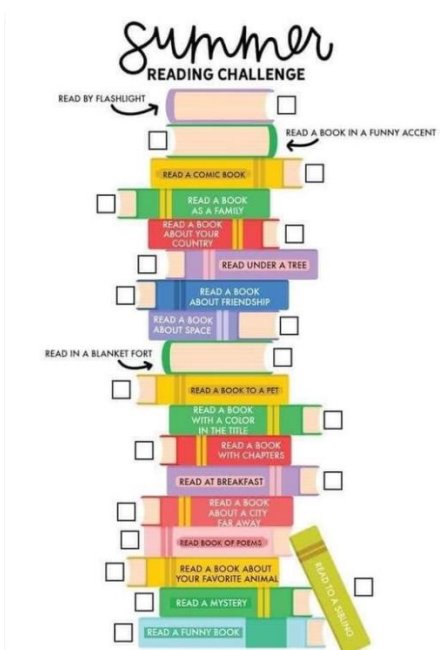
Sunday Sweets

will be taking a break over the summer. The event will resume in the Fall. The Fall schedule for Sunday Sweets is **Sept.8th, Oct.13th, Nov.10th and Dec.8th**. Thank you members and friends for supporting this fundraiser for the church.

READERS' ZOOM GROUP on Vacation.

Group Resumes in September. Monthly meeting day/time will be announced in Aug.

In the meantime:



NEWCOMER ORIENTATION

Sunday, Aug 18

1130am (after Sunday Service)

Recent UUCP Members and Friends as well as prospective Members are invited to join us for Newcomer Orientation at UUCP. This interactive orientation will take place in the sanctuary following Sunday Service that day. Childcare is available during this service.

The orientation will provide useful information about our church while allowing you to meet and interact with other newcomers to UUCP. Topics covered include how to get involved in the activities of UUCP, the rights and responsibilities of membership, Fun & Fellowship activities, our budget and pledging, our Children's Religious Education program, our communication systems, and more! Orientation is presented by the Membership Team with support from other Ministry Teams and the UUCP Board.

UU Churches Vandalized

Two of our UU congregations have been recent targets of arson and vandalism. [First Parish UU Church in Kingston, Massachusetts](#) and the [UU Church of Lawton in Oklahoma](#) both had their buildings broken into, fires started, and property damaged which will need thousands of dollars in repairs. These are both

small congregations and I am glad that they can reach out to sibling UU's through [Faithify](#) for help in covering the cost of repairs and continuing their mission. I suppose this is part of the risk of being a denomination that sides with Love and publicly displays support for people who have been marginalized.

In [Lawton](#), the church has been repeatedly vandalized since 2019. Graffiti has been scrawled on their building and now the violence has escalated when their community free pantry was set on fire. They are asking for help to install security cameras and make repairs.

In [Kingston](#), their Black Lives Matter and Pride flags were burnt, historic windows and shutters broken, and a fire also set inside the sanctuary. They are asking for help with repair costs.

These instances are tangible proof that enemies of justice use terrorist tactics thinking we will recoil in fear, but they are so very wrong. We will double our efforts. We will draw the circle ever wider. We may be afraid, but we use that energy to fuel our courage to create a more inclusive and caring world where all have what they need to live in peace.

Links to these two Faithify campaigns are above in the church locations. Please give as you are able and spread the links to these campaigns with your friends. Thank you.

August LUUnch BUUnch



For the Lunch Bunch on the **2nd Wednesday of August 2024, the 14th**, we will be treated to a seminar on Nutrition 101 (Getting More From the Foods You Eat) at the new Bear Family Foundation Center, Baptist Hospital off Brent Road near I-110 (125 Baptist Way), 2nd Floor. Conference Room, courtesy of ebaptisthealthcare.org/events for which you need to register, or phone 448.227.4939. (This detail comes to me bi-monthly by BHC postcard,) I suggest registering by **Monday the 12th**.

The speaker, Sarimin Rivera dietician/diabetes educator at BMG Endocrinology, I've heard once before and she covers the material/Q&A very well. The conference room, 2nd floor, is reached from the east side parking lot (I-110 further to the east) via the entry doors, then the 100' hall to the west/large window side of the building for an elevator - for which you choose you floor, 2, before entering the elevator; or you can take the steps. The conf. room is both wide and deep, with the lunch fare (typically chicken salad wraps) usually near the large windows on the south side, from which you proceed back toward the front of the room. Several viewing screens, front and side, assist with illustrations for the talk.... Best to be earlier than 11:30. Questions to me at UUCP on Sunday the 11th (or by phone/email).

Our July LB Lunch was at Cottage Cafe' on Gregory, immediately south of the Main Library, a low profile venue previously unknown to some of our attendees. Parking was a slight problem, but certainly the service and ambience were positive. They did add the tip into the bill, at 17.5%, calling it a "Food Tax, and used Block to accept card payments..

-Hugh Ed T.



HB 1365 now essentially makes homelessness illegal. Strive is looking for people willing to participate in our temporary emergency housing program. If you can or know someone who can provide a couch, room, or even an Airbnb for short-term housing for LGBTQ+ people in our community experiencing homelessness reach out to Honor M. Bell, III or email strivepensacola@gmail.com

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Faithify is a crowdfunding site where people fund Unitarian Universalist Ministries.

We envision a people with renewed faith and a Unitarian Universalism that is more connected, relevant, and vibrant.

Visit www.faithify.org/ for more information

NEW UUCP MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Heather Viron, former UUCP pianist, returns, shares

In a continuing effort to better know and integrate our congregation, the Membership Committee invites every new member to acquire and respond to a standardized questionnaire. This August 2024 LIGHT offers the first of a series publishing questionnaire responses directly with little or no editing rather than creating a fresh profile article as I've done for the last year or so. All details shared are now fully the responsibility of each respondent.

If you are a new member who has not yet done a personal questionnaire, please email me at drdollyb@gmail.com and request one. The deadline to me is the 10th of each month. Please try to keep responses to one 12 pt. typed page, including your small portrait and headline, two pages max. This one is longer, because that request hadn't been made.

Enjoy! Dolly Berthelot

What are your pronouns? My pronouns are “she” and “her”.

ROOTS: Where were you born and raised?

I was born in East Ridge, TN (just outside of Chattanooga) then soon moved to Maine where my parents originated. I have five sisters—one older, four younger. I graduated high school in 1992 from Calvary Christian Academy in Turner, ME. I attended college at Pensacola Christian College for one year and then moved to Rossville, GA (just outside of Chattanooga) with my family and attended Tennessee Temple University in Chattanooga, TN for one year. After that, I moved to Greenville, SC with my family and took a break from school to work for a bit. I married my first husband in 1996. I went back to school at Furman University in Greenville, SC where I graduated with a Bachelor of Music in Music Education in 1998. I taught in the Greenville County School District for six years. In 2009, I separated from my husband and moved to Pensacola, FL to be closer to family. In 2018, I married Michael Viron and in 2019 graduated from the University of West Florida with my Master of Education in Educational Leadership.



CAREER: Current or former work, chosen profession? What did you like about your career?

I am currently the Response to Intervention Coordinator at Bailey Middle School in Pensacola, FL. This school year is my second year in this position. Prior to this, I taught first grade for two years and elementary music for nine years in Escambia County Schools in Pensacola. I had taught elementary music in the Greenville County School District in Greenville, SC for six years. In between teaching in South Carolina and teaching in Florida, I have held many different jobs, one of which was creating websites for small businesses.

The best thing about my career is being able to make a positive difference in the lives of many people. I am currently working toward becoming a school administrator. Each year, I gain more experience that will help me achieve this goal.

Adventures or valued experiences the work has provided for you—and/or is still providing.

Through my work, I have learned to be patient, look for the good in others, and find common ground with my colleagues. I have learned to lean on my team when needed and be there for others to lean on me as well.

Are you from the Pensacola area, or recently moved here? What made you decide to choose the Pensacola area and where did you move from?

I was born in East Ridge, TN, but grew up in Maine and still have many family members there. My family left Maine many years ago for financial reasons. We ended up in South Carolina and stayed there for many years. I moved to Pensacola after my divorce to be closer to more family members.

What do you like about the area?

The views over the water in many places are gorgeous. For example, I enjoy the view when driving over the I-10 bridge from Milton to Pensacola and the view at Pensacola Beach.

Special interests or hobbies – now or in the past? Sports, music, reading, art, community volunteering, lobbying for a cause, other?

I enjoy knitting, crocheting, tatting, singing, reading, and playing musical instruments. My husband and I also enjoy going to sporting events (hockey, baseball, football) throughout the year.

Life's adventures you'd like to share. Travels, raising a family, helping in the community, getting involved with organizations, starting and running a business, etc.

Michael and I have not been able to have children which prompted us to look into adoption. We are now in the adoption process and look forward to the day when we will eventually meet our child. Until then, we are training our new puppy, Sadie, to be sure she is ready to welcome a new family member.

What is your religious background? When did you become interested in Unitarianism, and what is there about it that appeals to you? Were other family members associated with a Unitarian Church, specifically UUCP?

I was raised independent, fundamental Baptist which is an extremely conservative version of Christianity. I became Associate Reformed Presbyterian as an adult for a time and eventually figured out that I am an atheist. I was already in Pensacola when I realized I was atheist and attended meetings with the Gulf Coast Freethinkers. They led me to UUCP at that time. I was very relieved to find a church community that would not try to convert me to a particular set of religious beliefs.

After a while, I drifted away due to other commitments in my life (getting married and studying for my Masters degree). I came back because of the adoption process and my lack of social life. During our adoption interviews, we were asked if we would be willing to take our children to church and if we would be willing to adopt a gay or transgender child. My first thought was that we needed to reconnect with UUCP to ensure they would have a supportive community around them.

Were you a member previously?

Yes, from about 2010-2016 or so.

What do you like about our church? Changes you would like to see made? Programs you'd like to see added?

I enjoy hearing uplifting messages from different speakers, singing along with the congregation, chatting with everyone, and being involved in things that matter in our society. I love that we have many opportunities to socialize and help in the community. Eventually, I think it would be nice to call a full-time minister to serve in our church



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

TO:



LGBTQ

Welcoming Congregation

Deadline for the September
Light:
Wednesday, August 21



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