

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

# The Light

Vol. 68 Issue 1 January 2025



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

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## New Year: Reflecting, Growing, and Moving Forward Together

From Your Board: President's Letter

Dear UUCP friends,

Happy New Year! As we step into January and the second half of our church year, I find myself reflecting on all that we accomplished together in 2024. From inspiring services and meaningful programs to the shared laughter and support of our UUCP community, we have continued to live out our principles with courage and grace, even in difficult times.

The arrival of a new year brings opportunities for growth and renewal—a time to reflect on where we've been and to envision where we hope to go. In that spirit, I'd like to invite you to join us for our mid-year congregational meeting on Sunday, January 12, following the lunch and service. This gathering will provide an opportunity to review our progress and discuss potential changes and improvements. Your input and participation are vital to the health and vibrancy of our congregation, so I hope to see many of you there.



*Joe Vinson, UUCP Board President*

January is also a time to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and recommit ourselves to the work of justice, equity, and compassion. On Monday, January 20, we will participate in Pensacola's MLK Day parade as we have done for many years. Dr. King's dream of the Beloved Community challenges us to break down barriers, foster understanding, and work tirelessly toward a world where love and justice prevail. As a congregation, we remain steadfast in our commitment to this vision, striving to embody these values in our actions and relationships.

May this year bring renewed purpose and connection to each of you. Whether you are engaging in worship, lending your voice to social justice efforts, or simply offering a listening ear to a fellow congregant, know that your contributions matter deeply. I am grateful for the many ways you show up for this community and look forward to all we will create together in the months ahead.

With gratitude and warmest wishes for the New Year,

Joe Vinson

President, UUCP Board of Directors



## DIRECTORY

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

### Office Administrator

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

### Community Minister

Rev. Maggie Lovins

### Governing Board

President: Joe Vinson

President Elect: Crys Brockway

Past President: Scott Satterwhite

Secretary: Lisa Rawson

Treasurer: Bradley Vinson

([treasurer@uupensacola.org](mailto:treasurer@uupensacola.org))

### Members at Large:

Denise Gunn

Claire Helton

Marybeth Ramsey

Barbara Wright

## MINISTRY TEAMS

**Adult Exploration:** Trista Blouin

**Buildings & Grounds:** Ed King

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

**Children’s Religious Education Coordinator:**  
Honor M. Bell, III ([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:** Marybeth Ramsey

**Leadership Development:** Scott Satterwhite

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

**Outreach:** Laura Keith King

**Safer Congregation:** Denise Gunn  
([safer@uupensacola.org](mailto:safer@uupensacola.org))

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

**Sunday Services:** Nancy Hagman

Who wants to go? Who wants to share a group to watch sections virtually from UUCP? Contact Paula



*The UUA General Assembly is the annual meeting of the Unitarian Universalist Association, where delegates from congregations gather to conduct business, engage in worship, and discuss social justice issues.*



Our Faith Is Needed: UUA Membership Steady and Religious Education Growing! 🌟

In a time when many report the shrinking role of religion, the 2024 UUA Certification Report offers encouraging news: Unitarian Universalist membership has remained steady, and participation in religious education has grown by 16%—the first increase in a decade!

This stability amidst broader trends of decline in mainline denominations highlights the resonance and relevance of our faith today. As Rev. Ashley Horan, UUA Vice President for Programs and Ministries, put it: “Our faith is needed.”

Key findings include:

- ✔ Over 1,000 UU congregations and communities.
- ✔ Innovative religious education efforts driving growth.
- ✔ Financial resilience, with average pledges up 43% over the past decade.

This year, the UUA is embracing transparency by releasing the full report online, inviting all of us to use this data as a tool for reflection, innovation, and action.

Explore the full report on UU World at <https://bit.ly/3Z8UNee>.

[#UnitarianUniversalism](#) [#FaithInAction](#)  
[#ReligiousEducation](#) [#UUA](#) [#UU](#) [#LoveAtTheCenter](#)  
[#SharedValues](#) [#friends](#) [#family](#) [#church](#) [#faith](#) [#welcome](#)

# Sunday Services in January



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).

## January 5, 2024

### The Spiritual Wisdom of Narrative Theory: How Life's Gaps Transform Us

Presenter: Zach Helton is an ordained minister, board-certified spiritual care counselor at Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola, and a writer exploring the intersection of storytelling and spirituality.

What if the gaps in our lives—the tension between what we want and what actually happens—are where transformation begins? Drawing on narrative theory and the craft of storytelling, this talk explores how the struggles, surprises, and unanswered questions in our lives might be inviting us into wholeness. When we embrace the 'story tension,' we may discover a deeper wisdom unfolding—one we didn't expect but needed all along.

*Second Hour: Heathen Kinship*

## January 12, 2024

### The Spiritual Wisdom of Narrative Theory: Beyond Villains and Heroes

Presenter: Zach Helton is an ordained minister, board-certified spiritual care counselor at Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola, and a writer exploring the intersection of storytelling and spirituality.

In narrative theory, good antagonists aren't just villains—they're complex, relatable, and essential for growth. When we reframe the 'bad guys' in our experiences as real people in difficult situations, we open ourselves to empathy and transformation. This talk explores how the wisdom of narrative theory can help us live deeper, more compassionate, and more meaningful stories.

*Second Hour: Mid - Year Congregational Meeting*

## January 19, 2024

### In Honor of Martin Luther King weekend

#### The Music of Nina Simone, performed by Pearl Ash

Singer Pearl Ash surprised fans at last spring's Pensacola Jazz Fest with her spirited tribute to Nina Simone. Nina Simone was a jazz and blues artist who became an outspoken civil rights activist in the 1960s and '70s. Pearl will reprise the performance with a group of seasoned jazz players during this special service.

*This Service is sponsored by Thom Botsford*

*Second Hour: Heathen Kinship*

## January 26, 2024

### Unitarian/Universalist History

Presenter: Mark Swaney, member of UUCP

Mark Swaney will present the history of the Unitarian Universalist churches: their origin and development through the Reformation, and the history up through their founding in the USA. This presentation will be a "sketch history" discussing the main points of our heritage.





# January at UUCP



## Sunday Sweets

Sunday Sweets for the month of January will be held on Sunday January 12th after the service.

The Sunday Sweets Schedule for 2025 is:

**Winter :** Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>; Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>; March 9<sup>th</sup>; April 13<sup>th</sup>; May 11<sup>th</sup>

### Summer Break

**Fall:** Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>; Oct. 12<sup>th</sup>; Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>; and Dec. 14th.

Sunday Sweets is held on the **second Sunday** of each month.

Thank you. Michael Newcomb

*To accommodate members who are practicing gluten-free eating there will be a separate table for gluten free baked goods to prevent cross contamination.*



In the late 1700s and 1800s, widespread panic arose over book-reading, deemed "an outrage on decency and common sense," with concerns that avid novel-readers were becoming 'addicted' and anti-social.

## Readers' Group

Dearest Gentle Readers -

The UUCP monthly Readers' Groups wishes to recommend for your consideration the following.....

Mink River - by *Brian Doyle*

Magpie Murders - by *Anthony Horowitz*

The Life Impossible - by *Matt Haig*

The Many Lives of Momma Love - by *Lara Love Hardin*

Exile Music - by *Jeannifer Steil*

Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murders - *Jesse Sutanto*

Untamed - *Glennon Doyle*

A Refiner's Fire - *Donna Leone*

Despite the above admonition - there have been no known reports of widespread anti-social or addictive reading behaviors evidenced among participants of the local Readers.

## READERS' GROUP ON WINTER BREAK - January and February 2025

Want to know more? Contact Laurie Winterberg

## COMING SOON - FOR YOUR FURRY, FEATHERED, SCALED ETC COMPANIONS.

Recent Board approval has been given to the establishment of a dedicated area for pet memorials. Somewhat like the non-member memorial area in the Memorial Garden, a space outside the garden has been identified where you can arrange to have your pet's name and date of death placed on a tall metal pole. The cost for is \$50 which will cover the cost of the nameplate and will help fund the overall maintenance of the gardens.

Thank you to the Ad Hoc Team who have worked on this - Lisa Hudson, Marcy Moreland, Laurie Winterberg and Kate Wolverton. And to Rev. Maggie Lovins who suggested the idea.

More information in the coming weeks.



## January LUUnch BUUnch

So, where do we start the UUCP Lunch Bunch Year of 2025, on the 2nd Wednesday? On the 8th, as soon as it can be! We'll stick with a "theme" we've been working on, with Juan's Flying Burrito (JFB), at 200 South Alcaniz, the southeast corner of Alcaniz and Intendencia. There is potential for sitting outside... maybe. As usual, 1 PM (1300), and since it's a small location, it would help to know how many tables of four on the inside we might need. (We have eaten here before, soon after Covid restrictions lapsed, I think, late '21?) ... JFB is a smallish chain, roots in Louisiana I think, and if you go online, I think the party pictures are not local. And the dishes look pretty good. Please advise by Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup>.



So, how was NOLA, Dec.11th, 2024? Well, for me, so-so. Arriving early, I noted only one two-table group of lunch eaters in the dark, main room. I asked for more light, and they nicely showed me into the back room, where altering the window shades allowed indirect sun light. Soon joined by 5 of those expected, and able to see the front door from my seat, only lack of UUCP's qualified Louisiana food taster lowered the potentials of our lunch. There was plenty to order from, and Michael as usual set the bar by his more interesting dish (shrimp fettuccine ? but you don't know that until after it comes to the table.)

For me, I had the special, two fried green tomatoes, nice crunchy batter, and seafood gumbo (one of three gumbo choices). I'm not a gumbo pro, but quickly alerted to the lack of okra along with the 6-8 or so shrimp; true, the base color was dark, almost black, supposedly a positive sign for good gumbo, but NO okra. (Reminds me of a PCV story, when an upcountry fellow volunteer positively remarked on the vegetable his cook had fixed, and after he described it, I said "Yes, Dave, that's okra." Being from New York State, he'd never been exposed.) ,, So, Happy New Year and come to the 2nd Wed.'s LB, if you're interested.

-Hugh Ed T.

### **NEW UUCP MEMBER WAYNE CHARDON, JR.**

**Now Gov. I.T. Pro, Dad of 3,  
He Grew Up Roaming World**

*Editor's Note: To help UUCP get to know new members, each is asked to request and respond to a questionnaire. That response is now submitted to the Light and published in their own words, with little editing. Wayne was the first of the latest new members to request and respond. We thank him and look forward to others. Dolly Berthelot*

#### **What are your pronouns?**

*To be honest, I don't really think about gender or have a strong connection to specific pronouns. I also don't really care about titles. I prefer people to just use my name.*

#### **Where were you born and raised? Education –High school, college, major, graduation?**

*Growing up was like being on a never-ending move. Both parents were Navy. That's how they met. My soldier mom did her best to give me stability while navigating life as part of a military family that seemed to be always on the go. We'd pack up our bags and hit the road every 3-4 years, so I never really had one place that felt like "home". But you know what? Home is where your heart is – or in my case, wherever I happen to be at any given moment!*

*I spent most of my childhood moving from base to base around the world. We lived in Okinawa, Japan for a bit (hello sushi, anime, and ramen noodles!), and I even got to graduate high school there! Who knew that being a military kid would give me such an awesome international education?*





*After high school, I attended college at the University of Maryland remote campus on base. Just as things were getting settled, life had other plans – literally again! This time it was all about exploring new places and making memories with my family moving back to the US. I recently decided to finally go back to school so I am currently enrolled at NewLane University pursuing my Associates in Philosophy.*

*Nowadays, when people ask me where I'm from, they always want to know if I have a "home state". And honestly? It's hard for me to pinpoint just one. But what I can say is that no matter where life takes me next, I've got a sense of adventure and a heart full of wanderlust.*

*I think this experience has taught me that home isn't always about geography; it's about the people you love, the places you feel connected to, and the memories you create along the way. So wherever my journey takes me – be it across the globe or just around the corner – I'll always have a sense of home with me.*

**Your career—Current or former work? Your chosen profession? What did you like about your career?**

*Growing up, I was all about the great outdoors – hiking, biking, and playing sports. But little did I know that my time in Japan would be the spark that ignited my passion for tech. After high school, I found myself stuck in retail work – just like many other students trying to figure out what's next. But then, I landed a gig at Best Buy and suddenly my passion for computers was no longer just a hobby, but a career path!*

*As a computer technician there, I quickly discovered that troubleshooting wasn't just about fixing screens (although, let me tell you – some computers can be stubborn!). It was also about understanding people's problems and finding solutions that worked for everyone. That's when I realized that tech isn't just about code and circuitry; it's about connecting with others.*

*Fast-forward a few years, and I found myself at the Naval Hospital in Pensacola, where my IT skills were put to good use supporting our military personnel and their families. It was an incredible experience – not only did I get to learn from some of the best medical professionals out there (I mean, who doesn't love talking about healthcare IT?), but I also got to be part of a team that made a real difference in people's lives.*

*From IT specialist to Enterprise systems administrator for the entire Navy Medical community and the Defense Health Agency(DHA), my career has been all about exploring new technologies and pushing boundaries. And let me tell you – it's taken me on some wild adventures! From traveling to remote facilities around the world to collaborating with international partners, I've seen firsthand how tech can bring people together.*

*Now, as a remote IT consultant for the US government, I get to work with people from all over and share my expertise in a whole new way. It's been an amazing ride, but through it all, I've learned that growth is about stepping outside your comfort zone and embracing the unknown.*

*So if you ever need help with your Wi-Fi or just want to geek out over the latest tech trends, hit me up!*

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

*I have traveled the world, made an impactful difference in our soldiers and their families lives, and above all served my country to the best of my ability. I have a lot of cool stories if you want to listen over a cup of coffee.*

**Family: Parents, siblings, spouse, special relatives, friends.**

*I have a Father and Mother, both still living, both retired in the military and both reside here in Pensacola. I am the oldest child with 5 sisters and no brothers. I am an uncle to several nieces and nephews. I was previously married for 8 years but to the wrong person. I was recently in a long term relationship for over 15 years. I have a best friend who is like a brother to me who lives in Milton*

**Children: names, ages. Grandchildren.**

*Xavier, 19; Hadley, 18; Landon, 7.*

**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 came here originally to get to know my Dad who was stationed here at the Naval Hospital. I felt that I needed some time with my father to gain more perspective on being a productive adult from a masculine figure. I was missing that having been raised only by my mother.*

**What do you like about the area?**

*I originally liked the quiet beach town vibe. Now, I don't really particularly care for this place anymore. It is overcrowded and seems to have lost that charm it once had.*

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

*As alluded to before, I like to travel and find new things. I used to be into sports, but haven't had much time to get back into it. I love music! I tried to teach myself bass guitar but along the way I figured out I was much better at music production. I can play a few chords on a 4 string bass but I am nowhere near proficient enough to play with anyone else. I used to love reading, but I find that rather than for fun, I read for work more and study for work and college more. I should dust off my library card and grab something fun to read sometime. I volunteer with Keep Pensacola Beautiful when I can. I don't really get too involved in*

*politics. I also love going to watch movies and I like playing video games with my kids and my brother. I have reasons that I could share over a cup of coffee if you are interested in other perspectives.*

**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.**

*I think there is just too much to put here. It could take a lot of cups of coffee to tell all more about myself.*

**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?**

*My mom was Baptist, my dad and his side of the family are Seventh Day Adventist. I don't really know what they claim to be these days. I was never forced to attend either religion but I did try to adhere to each doctrine at some point. I was even married in a Seventh Day Adventist church. At some point, I just couldn't subscribe to the contradictions and platitudes as well as the hypocrisy of organized religion. I also would like to think that I am pretty logical so I can't prove God exists nor can I prove they don't exist so I guess I am Agnostic? Like I said before, I don't really like labels. I have a belief system that works for me and I respect everyone else's belief system that works for them, as long as it doesn't cause anyone any harm.*

**Were you a member previously?**

*I was not a member previously.*

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

*I like that the congregation (is it called that?) was so welcoming of someone they had never seen before. It was a very warm and comfortable place.*

*Since I have only been a member for a short time I don't think I have any input for changes. I will definitely make suggestions if I do have inspiration later on.*



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

**TO:**



**LGBTQ**

**Welcoming Congregation**

Deadline for the February  
*Light*:  
Tuesday, January 21

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