

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

The Light

Vol. 68 Issue 12 December 2025



Celebrate Diversity *Strive for Justice* *Inspire Love*

How we carry the light of the season...

From Your Board: President's Letter

Dear Friends,



As we step into December, I'm reminded once again how quickly the seasons shift here on the Gulf Coast. One week we're reaching for sunglasses and iced tea, and the next we're digging out sweaters we'd nearly forgotten we owned. The air grows crisper, evenings come earlier, and the scent of approaching holidays settles gently over our days. It's a time of transition—of cooler breezes, warm gatherings, and reflection on the year that's been.

December often brings its own kind of stillness, even amidst the bustle. It offers us space to slow down, to reconnect, and to take stock of the small acts of kindness and community that have carried us throughout the year. As a congregation, we've supported one another through joys and challenges, and I hope each of you feels proud of the resilient, welcoming community we continue to build together.

This month, our Sunday services will center on a theme of Unity, Care, and the Holiday Season. It feels fitting, as these values lie at the heart of both our Unitarian Universalist principles and the spirit of this time of year. We will explore how we care for ourselves and each other, how we cultivate unity in times of division, and how we can carry the light of the season—whatever traditions we each observe—into the world around us.

I hope you'll join us for these gatherings, whether in person or in spirit. Your presence enriches our shared experience, and December always feels a little brighter when we come together.

As we move through the final weeks of the year, may you find moments of peace, connection, and joy. May the shifting weather remind us that change brings its own beauty. And may we each step into the new year with renewed warmth, intention, and hope.

With gratitude and love,

Crys Brockway

President, Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola



DIRECTORY

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

Office Administrator

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Community Minister

Rev. Maggie Lovins

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 President Elect: Brett Ramsey
 Past President: Joe Vinson
 Secretary: Marybeth Ramsey
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 (treasurer@uupensacola.org)

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 Claire Helton
 Mark Swaney

Key People & Contacts

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Buildings & Grounds: Wayne Chardon Jr.
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Communications: Joe Vinson
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Denominational Affairs: Joe Vinson
Finance: Laurie Winterberg
Fun and Fellowship: Marybeth Ramsey
Leadership Development: Scott Satterwhite
Membership: Lauren Anzaldo
 (membership@uupensacola.org)
Outreach: Laura Keith King
Safer Congregation: Brett Ramsey
 (safer@uupensacola.org)
Social Justice: Paula Montgomery & Scott Satterwhite
Sunday Services: Nancy Hagman



OutoftheBox Story Circle Second Hour isn't scheduled for December. So we will take a break for the season and return in the new year! Thank you all for everyone who has participated.
 ~ Claire Helton



UUCP
 11:30am – 12:30pm
 (None in December)
 Jan 24
 Feb 14



What's the Story Behind....the White Star Ornaments on the Christmas Tree?

For as long of most UUCP members remember, the Christmas tree in the sanctuary has been decorated with white lights and white star ornaments. But what's the story behind them?

Hannalore Musial and her late husband, **Victor** handmade each and every one!

In the 1920's, when Victor was growing up in Poland, he learned how to fold strips of paper to make the stars. Also known as Moravian or Frobel Christmas stars, each year, a new supply of white stars needed to be made as the stars from the previous year were not saved.

Years later, Victor continued making stars for his family's tree here in Pensacola. In the 1990s at a holiday gathering at the Musial home, UUCP member, Jeanne Bullivant, asked Victor if he could make some for the church tree.

Quality materials and teamwork went in to making thousands of stars. Victor found a local paper supplier who would precision machine cut high quality paper into the strips needed for the folded stars, Hannalore did the final trimming and finishing.

Not only do Victor's stars decorate the church tree, but for many years, he and Hannalore crafted more stars which were made available to members and friends in the church. Stars grace homes every year in Orlando, Oregon, Montana, South Dakota, Colorado, North Carolina, Connecticut, Virginia, Germany and many other places.

Sunday Services in December



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 7, 2025

Service for All Ages (SFAA)

Finding the Why: The Power of "Win-Win" in modern policing

Presenter: The City of Milton, Chief of Police, Jennifer Frank

Modern policing succeeds not just through enforcement but by proactively building trust, understanding, and shared solutions with the community. Chief Frank's "win-win" and "finding the why" approach encourages officers to uncover the reasons behind people's actions, shifting interactions from confrontation to collaboration and helping de-escalate situations. By prioritizing empathy, dignity, and accountability, this mindset strengthens individual encounters and fosters long-term community confidence.

Children stay in the Sanctuary/Main Hall this Sunday.

Second Hour: *Earthstars; Newcomer Orientation*

December 14, 2025

CRE Reflections, A Community Project

Presenters: Honor M Bell, III

Join us for a reflective service on how CRE has developed over the last couple of years and how our

children and youth are being held in community.

Second Hour: *Sunday Sweets; Holiday Gift Exchange & CRE Party*

December 21, 2025

The Wholly Family Service

Three families of our congregation will share in this service, Joe, Bradley and Elliot Vinson, Jimmy and Lee Poteat, and Ric Kindle

This time of the year is often focused on the Christian concept of the Holy Family. Our Church Family is sacred to so 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: *Earthstars; Long Term Planning Committee Listening Session*

December 24, 2025

Service for All Ages (SFAA)

Christmas Eve family service

Led by 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 replenish our UUCP Members Assistance fund which is used throughout the year to benefit

members of our church family in time of need.

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 28, 2025

Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" as Unitarian Thesis

Presenter: Pat Gleich, Doctorate in Social Science and Sociology

Charles Dickens' 1943 novella, *A Christmas Carol*, exposes Dickens' Unitarian roots and demonstrates that a profound inner transformation is possible even without explicit religious references. He shows that a person can undergo a deep personal renewal—one that inspires compassion and generosity toward others. Through Scrooge's dramatic change of heart, Dickens suggests that his readers, too, can move from a cold, self-absorbed outlook to one grounded in kindness, hope, and goodwill, rejoining the human community in the process. Rather ironically, to Dickens, this renewal was the essence of Christmas.

Second Hour: *UN-Deck the Halls*



Sunday Sweets

The last Sunday Sweets of 2025 is on **Dec. 14th.**

Thank you. - Michael Newcomb

Readers' Group

UUCP folks do read - a lot. Here's a few recommendations from the November ZOOM Readers' Group. Enjoy!

People of the Book - *Geraldine Brooks*

Banquet of Consequences - *Elizabeth George*

Beartown - *Fredrik Backman*

The Broken Country - *Clare Leslie Hall*

The Constant Princess - *Phillipa Gregory*

The Street Lawyer - *John Grisham*

The Southern Book Club's Guide to Slaying Vampires - *Grady Hendrix*

The next ZOOM meeting will be **Monday December 8 at 10 am**. A link will be emailed to all current Members and Friends a few days prior.

Happy Holidays - Happy Reading!

See you!

On November 18th we had an interesting "kick-off" for the Research Phase of our new justice problem. There were 60 network members including 5 from UUCP who were eager and ready to begin. There are many different aspects of mental illness. It will be very very interesting to find out how our research directs our path forward.

If you did not attend, but would like to be on the Mental Health research committee, it is not too late. You can let Paula Montgomery know and she will pass your name along. Or you can contact Tricia Wessel through the J.U.S.T. website. Exciting times are ahead. Stay alert!



FUN AND FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!

UUCP Holiday Gift Exchange Party! Sunday, December 14th, directly after service. Lunch will be provided, just bring a wrapped gift to exchange at the party. The children will have their own Holiday party, so this gift exchange is adults only. Please see Marybeth Ramsey for details.



Do you want to get to know other UUs?

How about enjoying some adult conversation or a stimulating evening! Circle Dinners are your answer. Circle Dinners align with UU principles affirming human worth, dignity, compassion, and acceptance of one another. Plus, they're fun! The company's great — and so is the food! They are a wonderful opportunity to meet and get to know your fellow UUs. Circle Dinners begin with a "UUCP Circle Dinner Kickoff Party" in January followed by dinners in February, March, and April. Participants will each have an opportunity to host one month and provide a main dish. Others provide salad/vegetables or dessert/bread. The host will decide on a convenient date by conferring with those assigned. The six assigned people will provide the food, and the host may invite two new UU members or others from the church he or she would like to get to know better. This means there could be six, eight or more adults participating. If your abode can't host a dinner, *no problem!* We have members that are willing to let you use their houses. Singles as well as couples are encouraged to join. Substitutes are always needed. If you are interested in participating – as a regular or a substitute – just indicate on the sign-up sheet in the foyer! Sign-ups have already begun! You will be contacted with information concerning the "UUCP Circle Dinner Kickoff Party" and a schedule in late January. I hope to see you there!

*If you are unable to participate in the "Meet & Greet" in January, you are still invited to join our group.
Any questions or to sign-up, call/text Linda Cobb

December LUNCH BUNCH



We'll stick with 2nd Tuesdays for one more month and discuss moving back to 2nd Wednesdays for 2026. And we'll end the year at a Pensacola's favorite, McGuires on Gregory, at 1:00 PM as usual. Please advise me on the 7th if you plan to make it. Our previous experience has been that they want most of the party to ready/available outside before they take you in, and if we have 10 expected but only 8 showing, will usually let us get seated with some spare seats at the table. The last two times, I believe, we got a round table, seating about 8, and it made the conversation easy (no competition talkers at adjacent tables as I recall, at least early). I don't know if they have tables of larger diameter.

So, how was The Fishing Hole? Well, pretty good I'd say; Michael and I were followed by 10 more, so the conversations were in twos and fours mostly, and no yelling one end to the other. Dolly and I had 3PM appointments so ours arrived nicely early, and I hope that all were served warm hushpuppies like those I received. The six large shrimp were good, but the cheesy cheese grits and coleslaw with varied colors and textures and interesting dressing were even better. Hugh T.

New UUCP Member Yvonne Walsh **RV Traveler Now Renovating Home**

Each new member is invited to request our standard questionnaire, fill it out by email, and submit to me for any essential editing and follow up questions. I submit to monthly LIGHT. Anyone may text or call me with related questions.

Dolly Berthelot for the UUCP Membership Team

What are your pronouns? She/her

Where were you born and raised? Education—High school, college, major, graduation?

Washington DC/Computer Science

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

Software Developer/Network Engineer.

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

Sold my house 5 years ago and bought a RV. Travelled around the country.

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

No family, only child. No children.

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?

N/A

What do you like about the area?

N/A

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

Music. I was singer in a band for 20 years, playing bars, special events, festivals.

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?

No religious background, I like the liberal spirit of UU.

Were you a member previously?

No

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

TO:



LGBTQ

Welcoming Congregation

Deadline for the January
Light:
Sunday December 21

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