

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

The Light

Vol. 69 Issue 1 January 2025



Celebrate Diversity *Strive for Justice* *Inspire Love*

At a Threshold...

From Your Board: President's Letter

Dear Beloved UUCP Community,



As we step into January, we find ourselves at a threshold. The holidays have passed, the calendar turns, and even here on the Gulf Coast we feel subtle shifts in the season. The mornings are cooler, the days sometimes quieter, and the pace of life invites reflection. January offers us a chance to pause, to take stock of who we are, and to recommit ourselves to the values that guide us as a faith community.

This month, our Sunday services will focus on a theme that is both timely and deeply rooted in our Unitarian Universalist commitment to justice and compassion. Together, we will explore social justice, religiosity, and the ways religious texts—particularly the Bible—have been used to condone discrimination, exclusion, and hatred. We will also turn our attention to the essential question before us: how do we challenge and resist this rhetoric with integrity, love, and moral courage?

Across our nation and world, we see religion invoked to divide rather than unite, to harm rather than heal. As Unitarian Universalists, we are called not only to question these interpretations, but to speak clearly and act boldly in response. Our services this month will invite us to examine how sacred texts can be understood in broader historical and ethical contexts, and how faith can be reclaimed as a force for liberation, dignity, and justice for all people.

January is often associated with resolutions and fresh starts. As a congregation, this is an opportunity to renew our shared resolve: to stand against hatred, to confront injustice wherever it appears, and to live out our principles not just in words, but in action. May we approach this work with humility, open hearts, and a willingness to listen, learn, and grow together.

I invite you to join us each Sunday as we engage these important conversations, support one another, and continue building a community rooted in love, reason, and hope. May this new year bring clarity, courage, and compassion to us all.

In faith and fellowship,

President

Crys Brockway

Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola

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

- President: Crys Brockway
- President Elect: Brett Ramsey
- Past President: Joe Vinson
- Secretary: Marybeth Ramsey
- Treasurer: Bradley Vinson
(treasurer@uupensacola.org)

Members at Large:

- Ian Briggs
- Herman "Pappy" Campbell
- Penny Fendt
- Claire Helton
- Mark Swaney

Key People & Contacts

- Adult Exploration:** Scott Satterwhite
- Buildings & Grounds:** Wayne Chardon Jr.
- Caring:** Crys Brockway
(caring@uupensacola.org)
- Children’s Religious Education Coordinator:**
Honor M. Bell, III (cre@uupensacola.org)
- Communications:** Joe Vinson
(communications@uupensacola.org)
- 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 will return in the new year!

*Thank you all for everyone who has participated in 2025!
~ Claire Helton*



UUCP
11:30am – 12:30pm
Jan 24
Feb 14



PFLAG Pensacola is official and nationally recognized! We are working on a date to “open the doors,” and if you’d like to stay updated on the events and support group meetings for PFLAG, please use the QR code to enter your email address and we’ll keep you posted!!

What is PFLAG: (originally Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) is the first and largest organization for LGBTQ+ people, their parents, families, and allies, focused on creating supportive, inclusive communities and advocating for equality through peer support, education, and advocacy. They provide resources, host meetings (in-person & virtual), and work to ensure LGBTQ+ individuals are safe, celebrated, and empowered by supporting families through the coming-out process and educating the public.

What PFLAG Does:

Support: We offer peer-to-peer support for LGBTQ+ individuals and their loved ones through local chapters and online communities.

Education: We educate families, allies, and communities about LGBTQ+ issues to foster understanding and acceptance.

Advocacy: We work for just, equitable, and inclusive policies and legislation at local, state, and national levels.



Scan me!

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 4, 2026

Service for All Ages (SFAA)

"Our Gospel and Blues Inspiration"

Presentation: Thom Botsford and musicians

Join us in bringing in the New Year. UUCP's musicians and vocalists will create a special service to uplift our spirits for the winter season and to help us move toward the light.

Children stay in the Sanctuary/Main Hall this Sunday.

Second Hour: Undeck the Halls; Earthstars

January 11, 2026

"A Sustaining Faith"

Presenter: Dr. Lauren Anzaldo, Member UUCP

Although we are inundated with public proclamations of religiosity, we as a nation seem to have lost a shared moral order for determining right from wrong. Meanwhile, Unitarian Universalism provides a framework of shared values imbued with a living legacy of moral witness and prophetic voices. In this talk, Lauren Anzaldo will argue that our UU tradition offers a faith capable of sustaining us through difficult days.

Second Hour: Sunday Sweets; Long Term Planning Committee Listening Session

January 18, 2026

"The Challenge of Our Time: Building a Multiracial, Multiethnic Democracy."

Presenter: Richard Cohen is the former president of the Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization dedicated to fighting hate, promoting tolerance, and seeking justice for the most marginalized members of society.

Please join us to affirm how we are already involved. In addition, Richard Cohen will provide some historic context to where we find ourselves today and offer a few ideas about how we might move forward.

Second Hour: Earthstars; Long Term Planning Committee Listening Session

January 25, 2026

"Do Justice": the Prophetic Critique and Reclaiming Religious Identity as an Active Force for Good

Presenter: Joe Vinson, member of UUCP

Politicians are more than happy to use the Bible as a proof text for discrimination, hatred, and violence in ways that are truly baffling. If America were truly a

"Judeo-Christian nation," what would that look like? What can the 8th century prophets teach us about reframing divine authority for social justice causes?

Included: New Member Welcome Ceremony

Second Hour: Long Term Planning Committee Listening Session; Midyear Congregational Meeting

We have begun the process of crafting our church's next long term plan.

This plan is meant to set out the goals and priorities of our church. We will be hosting two listening sessions per month directly following our Sunday service in the library.

We want to make sure everyone has an opportunity to participate and weigh in on what you would like to see from our church over the next several years. Here are the scheduled dates for the sessions.

Please mark your calendar, and plan to attend at least one.

1/11, 1/18, 2/8, 2/22, 3/1, 3/22, 4/12, and 4/19.

Contact Brett Ramsey for questions & details. Thank you.



Sunday Sweets

2026 Schedule

Winter 2026:

Jan 11th; Feb 8th; March 8th;

April 12th; May 10th

Summer Break

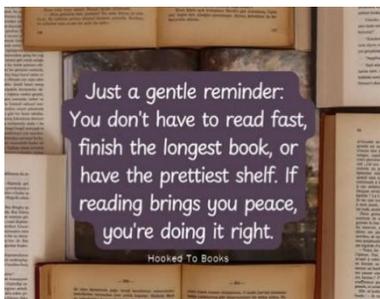
Fall 2026:

Sept 13th; Oct 11th; Nov 8th;

Dec 13th

Thank you. - Michael Newcomb

Readers' Group



UUCP Readers Recommend....

Fever Beach - Carl Hiassen

The Burning Room - Michael Connolly

Miracles and Wonder - Elaine Pagels

The Ministry of Time - Kailane Bradley

The Time of the Child - Niall Williams

Twice - Mitch Albom

Middlemarch - George Elliott

The Readers' Group - on ZOOM - takes a break for January and February. Will resume in March of 2026. The second Monday of each month at 10 am.



Do you want to get to know other UUs?

How about enjoying some conversation and 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. Other attendees provide salad/vegetables or dessert/bread. Each host will decide on a convenient date by conferring with those assigned.

The host may invite two new UU members or others from the church they 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 who are willing to let you use their house. Singles as well as couples are encouraged to join, and 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 up NOW! You will be contacted with information concerning the "UUCP Circle Dinner Kickoff Party" in late January and a schedule. 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



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 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!

January LUNCH BUNCH



First, as forecast, we'll revert to 2nd Wednesdays: ergo, 14 Jan., the latest possible 2nd Wed. of Jan.'26. And that 1 PM repast will occur at(wait for it)... Wako, Japanese Cuisine Sushi + Hibachi at 5045 North 9th Ave., on the southeast corner of the 9th Ave. Publix, ph: 850-607-7740. Its online menu options, including Bento Boxes, might make you salivate, but take a look anyway.

But how was McGuire's on the 9th of December? I anticipated a turnout of over ten, but since about four were "maybes", we only asked for table of ten at the front door (reading CEAD MILE FAILTE). With five at the ready about 1:00, we were given a table with eleven chairs; but as it turned out, only one more would show, making six. Phone checks of three revealed two cancellations, one or two serious hospital visits, and no contact with the last two. It would have been nice to have a table for six and closer sharing distances, but we did have a large alcove, so the noises of the main hall were subdued. And doubtless, all the \$1.00 bills on the ceiling and coming down the walls have a sound dampening effect on the noise potentials of the next door crowd.

As usual, the McGuire's navy bean soup was very good, but I did wonder if only beans contributed to the thickness of the liquid. My main course was the Diet Cajun Grilled Fish, with asparagus, but since it was similar to (Jack's) Fish and Chips, it came with fries which looked too good to turn back for the menu's asparagus (until Danielle noted my lack in the billing cycle, so it was a carry-home item; very good with microwave). And the fish was good, and McGuire's pineapple coleslaw, maybe too sweet (wonder if they add sugar ?), but good pineapple taste. We were back in the parking lot by 2:40; a bit past our usual exit time. We're looking forward to the New Year and the 2026 Lunch Bunch events.

Hope you are, too. Any UUCPer is welcome, and their invitees; it just takes a few hours on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. (Showing up "unreserved" is acceptable; just be prepared for rearranged seating.) - Hugh Ed T.

Here's some info of interest - Changes for charitable contributions

Starting with the tax year 2026, people who don't itemize can deduct up to \$1000 (\$2000 if married filing jointly) for qualified charitable cash contributions...

With this in mind - you may want to consider a contribution to the UUCP Charitable Trust.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE UUCP CHARITABLE TRUST?

The UUCP Charitable Trust is charged with receiving and administering financial assets for the support of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Pensacola, Florida (UUCP).

The goal of the Trust is to manage these assets so that they grow and produce perpetual income for the benefit of UUCP and ensure the presence of our liberal faith in the Florida and Alabama Panhandle Regions.

The Trustees can assist you in deciding which type of gift will suit your situation and are prepared to advise you fully on the Trust's needs and priorities.

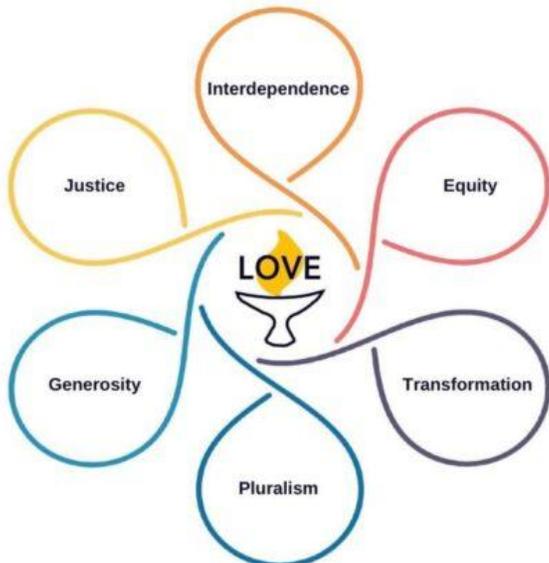
Find out more at: <https://uupensacola.org/about-us/uucp-charitable-trust/>

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

TO:



Deadline for the February *Light*:
Wednesday January 21



LGBTQ
Welcoming Congregation