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CONNECTIONS is a periodic publication of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Southwest Utah (UUFSU).

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<https://uufsu.org>

CONNECTIONS

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Southwest Utah

DECEMBER 2025 & early January 2026

UUFSU Programs



Dec 7th INTERGENERATIONAL GATHERING: "The Opposite of Fear." What is the opposite of fear? In this all-ages service, we'll explore how we respond to the unknown—through stories, laughter, and a few surprises along the way. Together we'll reflect on what helps us move from worry to wonder, and how transformation often begins when we face what frightens us with open hearts and minds. After refreshments, kids 3-9 will make paper bag monsters while adults and youth 10+ discuss the opposite of fear.

Dec 14th CHALICE SERVICE: "Giving the Gift of Forgiveness". The service will focus on forgiving oneself as well as others using video examples. We will also learn about Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner's "Fourfold Path to Forgiveness." Child care is offered during this service (see Page 6 for details).

Dec 21st CHALICE SERVICE: "Holiday Celebration". Service will be led by Michael Kruse. Please Join us for UU Christmas carols and poetry, a Hanukkah song, and a celebration of winter solstice.

Separate/concurrent children/youth programming: Kids 3-9 will explore transformation in nature and in themselves through stories, movement, and creative projects—bring clean plastic containers to turn into mini herb garden planters! For details on programs for kids (3-9) and youth (10+) see Page 6.

Dec. 24th Christmas Eve Celebration. We are invited to join the Grace Episcopal Church Celebration of Christmas Eve at 4 pm. *All are invited.*

Dec 28th Communal Meal Fellowship. A potluck luncheon where we will invite our Grace Episcopal friends to join us and get better acquainted. Child care is offered during this service (see Page 6 for details).

2nd PRINCIPLE OF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALISM

"Justice, equity and compassion in human relations."

WAYS WE ACT ON OUR PRINCIPLES

Reflection on the Second Principle

“Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations points us toward something beyond **inherent worth and dignity**. It points us to the larger community. It gets at collective responsibility. It reminds us that treating people as human beings is not simply something we do one-on-one, but something that has systemic implications and can infuse our entire cultural way of being.

“Compassion is something that we can easily act on individually. We can demonstrate openness, give people respect, and treat people with kindness on our own. But we need one another to achieve equity and justice.

“Justice, equity, and compassion are all part of the same package. Just as the second Principle overlaps with the **first**, so it is related to the **seventh Principle**—the interdependent web of all existence.”

—Rev. Emily Gage, Unity Temple, Chicago, IL—

ACTIVITIES - UPCOMING

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION/ORIENTATION will be held **Sunday, JANUARY 11th (4 to 6:30 pm)**, at the Bourke/Foster residence. A light supper and child care will be provided. Please register early as information materials will be assembled. Contact Ann Foster, shdwker@gmail.com to register and receive directions.

DISCUSSION GROUPS on Zoom



OPEN MINDS (OM) GROUP (Zoom on Wednesdays at 7pm)

After two weeks off the group will reconvene on Wednesday, December 3 at 7:00 pm to discuss **“Wisdom Takes Work”** by **Ryan Holiday**. For the Zoom link, contact Susan Mullins at susan141@gmail.com. ***New discussion participants are always welcome!***



MOVIE CLUB GROUP (Zoom on December 7th at 4pm) Our movie selection for the December Zoom discussion is **“Mr. Nobody.”** Watch the film at your convenience and join us for what is likely to be a thought provoking discussion. “Mr. Nobody” is an unusual movie that delves into the concept of multiple timelines and the choices that shape our lives. The film follows Nemo Nobody, the last mortal man on Earth, as he recounts his life to a reporter, revealing that his memories are fragmented and contradictory. This fragmentation stamps

from a pivotal decision that branches into a multitude of possible futures, each with its own set of joys, sorrows, and inherent meaning. The film explores themes such as the illusion of choice, the burden of possibility, and the butterfly effect, among others. It is a mind-bending narrative that challenges viewers to piece together the puzzle of Nemo’s life and ponder the impact of choices on our existence. The film may be streamed on Netflix, Hulu, and other services. To receive the Zoom link to join our discussion, contact Barb at nanabarb6472@gmail.com. Trailer can be found [HERE](#).



The MOVIE CLUB GROUP will also be discussing Ken Burns' documentary "**The American Revolution**" on **January 4th at 4pm**. *If you're interested in participating, the series debuted on PBS beginning Sunday evening, Nov 16th.* Burns said that he had to relearn almost everything he knew about the revolution while researching how to tell this story. It wasn't easy, as there was no photography back then, so re-enactments had to be relied on. If anyone reads The Atlantic Magazine, the November issue is full of fascinating chapters all about the key players in this pivotal chapter in our country's history.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The next Board Meeting will be held **December 19th at 1pm** at Grace Episcopal Church. The meeting is open to all members. To place anything on the agenda, contact president@uufsu.org at least 5 days prior to the meeting.

Officers:

President, Linda Mahlaik
Vice President, Bill Bohling
Secretary, Glenn Berg
Treasurer, Brinton Bohling



Members-at-Large:

Teri Koenig
Kay Ross

LOCATION

UUFSU meets at [Grace Episcopal Church, 1072 E 900 S, St. George](#) and the Sunday program time is **1:00 pm** followed by beverages, light refreshments, and discussion. The facility offers plenty of space for Fellowship growth including two rooms for child/youth programs, a large kitchen, safe parking and an outdoor area for activities.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT/SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Sharing Place is offering another training session for volunteers on December 5th. Contact Heather Lungren, Washington County Director (www.thesharingplace.org); 385-507-0689. Heather presented at UUFSU on Oct. 19th. As a volunteer you will have opportunities to support children and adults going thru the grieving process.



Listen to the impact The Sharing Place is having in Utah on NPR's *This American Life*: <https://www.thesharingplace.org/the-sharing-place-on-this-american-life/>



Sara Bohling thought members might be interested in a [WEBSITE](#) (started by a friend of hers) where you can sign up for a weekly email with tangible ways to take action on current social justice issues (<https://heywhatcanido.com>). The emails make it easy to focus one's energy on steps you can take to counter some of the egregious actions of the current Administration and also includes positive news showing where our collective action is having an impact.

Manos Amigas Utah is a new community group of “helping hands” working to support detained and deported immigrants and their families (our neighbors) in southern Utah. The group formed in response to local ICE detentions. The nonviolent principles of personal, cultural, and societal transformation practiced by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. guide their work. The goals are to: 1) Help families who have lost a loved one to detention or deportation meet their basic needs. 2) Support detained immigrants at Purgatory Correctional Facility in Hurricane, Utah by writing to them, making donations so that they can call their families, and connecting them with legal resources when available. To get on the mailing list, contact ManosAmigasUtah@gmail.com

ENVIRONMENTAL/CLIMATE AWARENESS & ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

Recognizing and Debunking Climate Misinformation

“Five ways Joe Rogan misleads listeners about climate change.”

(summarized by Jean Lown, UUFSU member and St. George CCL Group Leader).

<https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2025/11/five-ways-joe-rogan-misleads-listeners-about-climate-change>

Joe Rogan spreads climate misinformation to his 50 million followers. What can you do when you encounter friends and family who are misinformed about our changing climate?

Five common techniques of climate denial:

- **Fake experts**: presenting an unqualified person or institution as a credible source. Rogan tends to invite fringe, unqualified climate contrarians who dispute the expert consensus.
- **Logical fallacies**: arguments where the conclusion doesn't logically follow from the premise. Rogan spouts a tired logical fallacy: because Earth's climate has changed naturally in the past, present-day climate change must also be natural.
- **Impossible expectations**: demanding unrealistic standards of certainty before acting on the science. Rogan claims that climate models have been wrong and thus global warming predictions can't be believed. In reality, climate models have been remarkably accurate.
- **Cherry-picking**: carefully selecting data that appear to confirm one position while ignoring other data that contradicts that position. Rogan cherry-picks details from studies about global temperatures and *completely misrepresents* the results.
- **Conspiracy theories**: an explanation for a situation that rejects the consensus view in favor of a secret plot by powerful groups with a malevolent goal. Of all the techniques in the climate denier's playbook, Rogan relies most heavily on this one. **More than 99% of the experts agree** that modern climate change is real and human-caused.

Take away:

- Debunking myths with facts alone is rarely sufficient to change people's minds. But helping people recognize *patterns* of misinformation can inoculate them against misleading claims.



Got MAGA friends and relatives? To learn more about how to talk to climate skeptics and overcome misinformation come to the Citizens' Climate Lobby <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/> St. George Chapter meetings at Utah Tech SET room 420, 5-6 p.m. and on Zoom.

January 15: Psychologist Dr. David Christian will explain how to *effectively* communicate with people with different viewpoints (climate, political, etc.).

February 12: What is the Citizens' Climate Lobby? How can I make a difference?

March 19: Combatting Climate Misinformation with Sue Jelus and Dr. Mollie Murphy, USU.

April 9: Celebrate Climate Successes and Earth Day



MEMBER NEWS



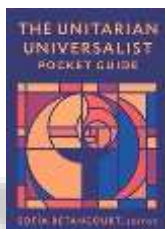
Ann Foster and Chris Bourke appreciate the many delicious meals!

The WeCare Committee set up a Meal Train for Ann Foster (and Chris Bourke). Ann had surgery in November for a broken knee cap and is in the midst of several more weeks of immobility. We invite all UUFSU friends to join us in helping Ann and Chris with meals *through the end of December*. You can still participate at <https://mealtrain.com/gzd1oe>. When you click on the link, it will show you open dates and who has already signed up to bring a meal. You can even see what they're bringing so Ann and Chris don't get chicken soup three times in a row. If you have questions, please contact Barb Gillespie (715-650-7829)

What is Meal Train?

There are times in our lives when friends and family ask, "What can I do to help out?" The answer is usually to help them with a meal. When many friends provide support through a meal, Meal Train keeps everyone organized. MealTrain.com is a free meal calendar tool that makes planning meals among a wide group easy and less stressful.

INFORMATION /INSPIRATION



Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide

The new, updated Unitarian Universalist Pocket Guide is now available. It's a basic yet passionate explanation of our central values and commitments. This guide is helpful in its incorporation of our newly adopted Values. Order at uuabookstore.org. You'll find many other inspiring books there, too.



Fellowship Volunteers Needed!

You are needed! We are an entirely volunteer-run organization, so it takes all of us to make it work. Please lend a hand to lighten the load by joining one of these committees (time commitments vary, ask the chair for more info). *It's a wonderful way to strengthen our UUFSU community!!*



- **Membership:** *Linda Mihalik*
- **Programs/Worship:** *Joyce Spinelli*
- **Care/Welcome:** *Diane Richardson/Barbara Gillespie*
- **Audio/Visual:** *Glenn Berg*
- **Marketing:** *Clare Sowinski*
- **Finance:** *Brinton Bohling*
- **Children/Youth:** *Sara Bohling/Ann Foster*— [Click here](#) for the online sign-up sheet

KIDS CORNER

At UUFSU, we joyfully embrace children and families as an essential part of our beloved community. Our children's programming is designed to be engaging, inclusive, and fun—a place where young minds can explore, grow, and connect while learning the values that define Unitarian Universalism, including the UUA's [Shared Values](#) and [Seven Principles](#).

Intergenerational gatherings are held the 1st Sunday of each month and incorporate stories, music, videos, and activities that are interesting and engaging for ALL ages. **On the 3rd Sunday of every month**, we offer separate programming for children (ages 3 to 9) and youth (ages 10+) concurrent with the adult programming.

In November, our Religious Education (RE) program will focus on the shared value of **Transformation**.



Dec 7: Sometimes the things that seem scary at first turn out to be not so scary after all! In this lively, adult- and kid-friendly service, we'll use stories, songs, and creativity to explore how curiosity can help us see the unknown in a whole new light.

Dec 21: Kids aged 3-9 can join us for a fun, hands-on service all about **transformation**—in nature and in ourselves! We'll fold origami, read some stories, do a silly movement activity, and turn recycled containers into mini herb gardens. Please bring clean plastic containers (like yogurt cups or takeout tubs) to transform into planters as we explore how patience and self-care help us grow like plants and butterflies. Youth 10+ will celebrate the transformation of seasons on the Solstice (Dec. 21st).



We also offer **child care on the 2nd and 4th Sundays** of every month. On these days, parents are welcome to drop their child(ren) off in the kids' room starting at 12:45 pm, where they can engage in supervised free play for the length of the service. If using the child care room, we recommend that parents arrive early to get their children settled before the start of the service. Youth (10+) are encouraged to attend the adult programs on these days.



UUFSSU WeCare/WeShare Support

WeCare Program: Are you recovering from an illness, injury, or surgery? Or for another reason, do you need a temporary helping hand? WeCare will do its best to meet the needs of our UUFSSU Community with things like:



- Homemade or catered meals
- Rides to doctors' and PT appointments
- Other requests? Let's talk about what is possible.



WeShare Program: Do you temporarily need tools? Medical or yard equipment? A stroller, highchair, crib? Something else? Contact us to see if anyone in our Fellowship Community may be able to loan you what you need.



For both WeCare and WeShare requests, email UUFSSUWeCare@gmail.com or call (435) 414-1230 (#12).

FROM THE UU-VERSE

Love, Respect, Principles, Heart, Compassion, Values, Humanist, Unitarian Universalist. How often do we, as individuals and a congregation, stop to truly examine these words? We did exactly that at our Sunday November 9th Service.

On November 9th, we began by hearing about the history of the UU Principles and the newly adopted Values ([Shared Values | UUA.org](https://www.uua.org)). Per its by-laws, the UUA took a hard look at the Principles and decided to update them to reflect our current understanding and practices. The result was not just a revision of our Principles, but a set of shared Values that encompasses more of what UUs strive for.

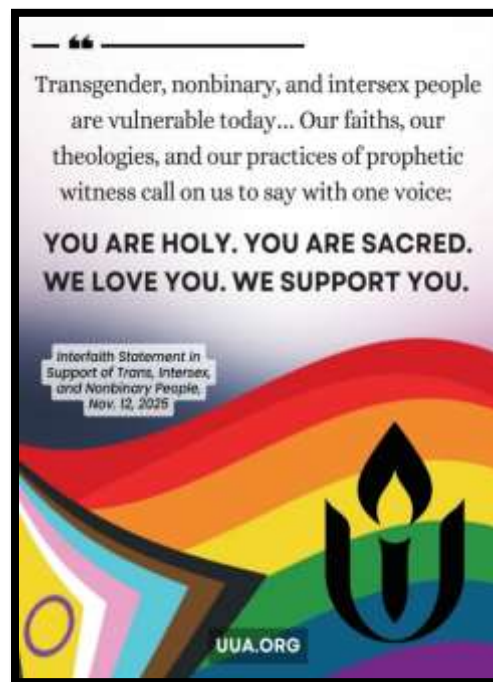


The Values were adopted by the UUA membership in 2024. We, a Covenanting Congregation, are under **no** requirement to formally adopt the Values nor abandon the Principles. As independent, democratic organizations we may do as we feel best.

Our following circle discussion was lively and insightful, as we explored the meanings of the words and phrases in both the Values and Principles, and even the meanings of the words Values and Principles themselves. There were many diverse viewpoints as we shared our feedback and beliefs.

I, for one, left with a deeper appreciation for, and understanding of, those who spoke. I am grateful for the trust we have that encourages us to speak without fear and listen without prejudice.

Yours Truly,
Linda



Earlier this week, leaders from diverse religious traditions in the United States, including the UUA, came together to challenge the misconception that people of faith don't affirm the full spectrum of gender identity. In a public letter, UUA President the Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt joined leaders from Reform Judaism, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ, and others to let it be known that our Transgender beloveds are created in the image of God – Holy and whole.

This is an important message worth sharing anytime, but as we approach Transgender Day of Remembrance in a year when Trans identity has so tragically been used as a political weapon, we hope this message can be a source of hope and healing for our Transgender, Intersex, and Nonbinary beloveds. Find a link to the statement and more UUA resources, programs, updates, and events [HERE](#).



BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

Newsletter submissions are due by the 15th of the month for publication in the CONNECTION the following month. Please send your cartoons, nonpolitical items, and articles to Sue McCloskey, suemccloskey@gmail.com.

