



**UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF
BLOOMINGTON
NORMAL**

Love Radically ● Serve Gratefully ● Wonder Daily

[A LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation.](#)
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October 20, 2024

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This Sunday's Worship Service:

Harvest

Cindy Cotton and Sean-Thomas Gunnell, Worship Associates

Harvest traditionally serves as a time for communities to come together. As a beloved community, we will come together to reflect on the theme of harvest exploring gratitude, community, and growth.

Join us in one of the following ways:

- In person
- Telephone: 1-646-558-8656 and use meeting ID 949-975-206 when prompted.

- Click below to join on Zoom.

[Click Here to Join on Zoom](#)

[Click Here for Order of Service](#)

Upcoming Services

10/27 - Sacred Solidarity: Accompaniment as an Expression of Our Faith

Heather Vickery and Rev. Rebecca Gant

Accompaniment is the radical act of being with someone even when it is hard and you don't know how things will turn out. With the increase in fascism across our country, our society often tells us to isolate, take care of our own first, and fear the other. However, our faith calls us to hold love at the center, to recognize everyone as family even if we've never met, and to support and follow the lead of those most impacted by systems of oppression. Join us to learn of the ways UUs are accompanying trans and gender expansive individuals and families, asylum seekers and others on the frontlines of building the beloved community.

11/3 - All Souls' Day Service of Remembrance

Rev. Rebecca Gant and Thomas Burr, Worship Associate

As the wheel of the year turns and we move toward winter, we will take time out to remember our loved ones and those members of our congregation who have died in the last year.

Bring a memento of your loved ones to add to our communal altar.

Our services are shared live on zoom, and most-- except All-Ages services-- are recorded and posted on YouTube. You may be seen on Zoom or in the recording if you sit in a pew that is not marked "not visible on camera." If you are concerned about being visible on camera, please speak to Rev. Rebecca and we will find a way to accommodate those concerns.

Want to plan something at the church or do you have something you want people to know about?

Parish News Deadline: Tuesdays at 9 am

[Event Registration Form](#)

[Communication Form](#)

This Week's Events

Sunday, October 20

8:45 AM – 9:45 AM Adult Choir (Walker Room)
8:30 AM – 11:45 AM Childcare
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM Sunday Service
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM Halloween Party and Potluck (Whole Church)
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM Bloomington Normal Meditation Group (Walker Room)

Monday, October 21

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM Lunch Bunch (Irvin Room)
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM Volunteer Training for OTR (Irvin Room)
7:00 PM – 7:30 PM Vespers (Sanctuary)

Tuesday, October 22

4:00 PM – 5:30 PM Walker/4th Tuesday Covenant Group (Walker Room)
5:30 PM – 6:15 PM Fairly Frequent Singers (Jr. High and High School) (Walker Room)
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM Private Event (Walker Room)

Wednesday, October 23

4:45 PM – 5:15 PM Emerson Singers (up to 5th Grade) (Walker Room)
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM Safety Committee Meeting (Irvin Room)

Thursday, October 24

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM Rehearsal for Baroque'n Consort (Walker Room)
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM Social Justice Team Meeting (Online)
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Private Event (Fell Room, Kitchen, Sanctuary)

Friday, October 25

6:15 PM – 10:00 PM Private Event (Walker Room)

Saturday, October 26

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM Private Event (Whole Church)
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Private Event (Irvin Room)

[To View the Full Events Calendar Click Here](#)

Stewardship

Emile Garneau, Chair

We want to return to (financial) normalcy

If, in 2024, we raise sufficient pledge funds to achieve a break-even budget – we need about an 11% increase in our pledges for 2025 – we can return to “normal”, which means:

2-3% increases in pledge income in the future; no need to try and raise additional pledge funds to erase a deficit

positive income, however small, to gradually increase our cash reserves for the stewardship committee, less emphasis on the financial aspect of stewardship and more on fellowship
less need for a robust pledge drive/pledge drive, communications etc.

The Stewardship Committee

"We need this [church] community in this area, and we need it for future generations. We need to support the good work of the people who work here and make this a comfortable and safe place for us."

- Camille Ehlers

From the Minister's Desk



Welcome Our New Staff Member!

Adrienne Alt is the new Preschool Lead Teacher in the Childcare Room. We are happy to have her! You might already know Adrienne as a frequent volunteer with our youngest UUs. Stop by and say hello.

Here's what Adrienne says about herself:

My name is Adrienne Alt and I am currently back in school pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Education. I have worked in a few different childcare settings including before and after school programs through the town of Normal's park and recreation department and two daycares in town. The best part about childcare work is interacting with children and being able to share my creativity with them too.

Sabbaticals

We are excited to announce that both Reverend Rebecca and Terina will take sabbaticals in 2025! Terina's sabbatical is February 1 through April 30. Rev. Rebecca's sabbatical is April 21-August 17.

Sabbaticals for religious professionals are different from sabbaticals for academics. Ministry and church leadership is a deeply invested calling - emotionally, psychologically, and communally - that goes beyond the bounds of a 40 hour a week job. To maintain the health and wellbeing of both the minister or religious professional and the congregation, Unitarian Universalist ministers and religious professionals take sabbatical leave for the purpose of rest and restoration. When they return, they bring a rejuvenated spirit back to the congregation, replenishing the vibrancy of our covenants and values.

What does this mean for Religious Exploration, Sunday Services, rites of passage, and Pastoral Care needs that occur during the sabbatical?

Before Terina's sabbatical, she will work with the congregation, RE teachers, Worship Team, and Covenant Group facilitators to create plans for the continued success of religious exploration programming for all ages. Blair's administrative support for RE will continue.

During Rev. Rebecca's sabbatical, the Board will contract with a sabbatical minister to preach and support our Worship Team, provide pastoral care and support our Pastoral Care Associates, and support our staff during the sabbatical time.

More details to come in future newsletters and brochures, but for now we want to make sure you know well in advance - and are ready for lots of delicious food and tasty treats for the send off and welcome back parties to celebrate this time-honored Unitarian Universalist tradition!

Check out these articles for more information.

<https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/sabbatical>
<https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/sabbaticals-all>

submitted by the Minister's Sabbatical Task Force:
Jill Enchelmayer, Allison McLeod Carlson, Ginny Pace, and Cheryl Springwood

Looking for Some Quiet In Your Week?

Vespers Service Monday at 7 pm

Join us in the sanctuary at 7 pm every Monday for a simple, contemplative 30-minute gathering. This will include words, music, and time to reflect and light a candle for whatever joys or sorrows you'd like to mark. All ages are welcome; we'll have quiet activities for people of all ages.

Help for Those Affected by Hurricane Helene

Our UUA Disaster Relief Fund gives grants to those affected by natural disasters.

You can contribute at this link: www.uua.org/giving/disaster-relief

Religious Exploration

Terina Carter, Director of Religious Exploration, LRE@uubn.org

Service Provider Needed for Gender Expansive Resource Center!

We need one more person for the Gender Expansive Resource Center. You could handle whatever kind of appointment comes up (around 4 a month total). Or you could process only the requests for shipping items (around 4 a month total). Our goal is for client requests to be acknowledged within 24 hours and to be processed within 2-3 days.

What's the Workflow?

- receive email notification that a request form was completed
- open the request form spreadsheet in Google to add your name to the notes
- contact the client the way they request (usually text) to confirm item, size, and shipping or appointment information
- If shipping, prep items for shipping and then notify me so I can take them to the post office
- If an appointment:
 1. arrange for a time that works for you. Preference is for a time when at least one other person will be in the building.
 2. arrive 10 minutes before the appointment to unlock cabinet and pull out items
 3. appointments usually take less than 30 minutes
- Whether you prep for shipping or have an appointment, update the spreadsheet notes with your plans and end result.

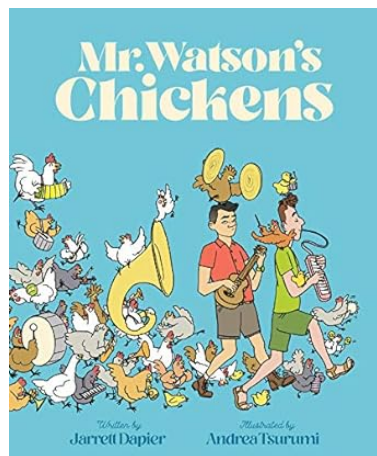
What do you need?

- training from me and/or Sawyer
- personal email account you check every couple days for notification a request form was completed
- a phone for texting clients
- knowledge of and access to Google Sheets (similar to Excel)
- time to meet clients at the church for appointments (usually weekday evenings or Sundays)
- vehicle to meet clients at the church for appointments
- compassion & listening skills

We Do Not Babysit That Which is Ours

[This is a great article](#) from Rev. Erin Wathen about the language we use when we serve at a church. "To volunteer means that you are an outside resource, stepping in to help an organization in need. Volunteering is what we do when we pick up trash at the park, or build

a house with Habitat, or help sort food at the local food pantry. Volunteering is what I do at my kids' school on Fridays. In other words, it's what you do at a place that is important to you—but not at a place that belongs to you.”



Book from

Coming Out Day Service

Mr. Watson's Chickens, the story from the All Ages Coming Out Day service, is available to check out from the Gnagey Library. There's a great (free to print) [activity kit](#) to go with the book too.

Coming of Age for Adults!

**Six Tuesdays in November & December, 6:00-7:30,
Walker Room**

Coming of Age for Adults is a 6-session series designed for adults of all ages to explore their spiritual journey and religious identity. You will reflect on how you got to now, engage with texts as they relate to your spiritual life, and craft a statement about who you are as a person of faith. Join us on Tuesdays at 6:00. This series requires email to LRE@uubn.org or text to [REDACTED]. Participant range is 5 minimum/12 max.



1. November 5 - Coming of Age...for Adults?
2. November 12 - Stages of Faith
3. November 19 - Your Spiritual Journey
4. November 26 - Statements of Faith
5. December 3 - Developing Your Statement of Faith
6. December 10 - Sharing Your Statement of Faith



[Click Here to Sign Up!](#)

Halloween Party and (Soup and Salad) Potluck for All Ages

Sunday, October 20, 4:00-6:00, Fell Room

All are invited! Dress up in your favorite costume and join the party! Bring soup or a salad to share. Sign up to help (or sign up to bring cheese pizza instead of soup or salad).

Hosted by Sarah Boesdorfer.

Are you an animal lover? Did you know there's a UU organization focused on issues related to animals?

UU Animal Ministry (UUAM) helps UUs live into our values in relation to animals by promoting compassion, justice, and respect for all beings. Stay connected through their newsletter, social media, or at UUAM.org to learn about events, educational programs, and advocacy efforts. Whether it's the annual Celebration and Blessing of the Animals or exploring how UU values call us to care for animals, you'll find inspiring ways to take action nationally or by forming a local chapter. Join in and help create a more compassionate world for animals!

Attend the Annual Celebration and Blessing of the Animals!

Join Our Pet Loss Support Group

Losing a beloved pet can be heartbreaking, and it's important to have a space to grieve and heal. UU Animal Ministry offers a compassionate Pet Loss Support Group, led by Chaplain Rev. Russell Elleven, to provide comfort and understanding during this difficult time. Held online the first Wednesday of every month at 7:00 pm CT, the group offers a safe space to share your feelings and connect with others who have experienced similar loss. Whether you're dealing with a sick pet or mourning a pet you've lost, you don't have to go through it alone. To join, contact Rev. Elleven at [REDACTED] for Zoom details.

Online Small Groups

Email Tom at [REDACTED] or text/call [REDACTED] to join any of the following Zoom discussions as participant or listener. You will receive the Zoom link the day before the session.

The purpose of the **First Sunday Nonfiction Book Group** is to educate ourselves in order to take actions toward justice for all in public policy.

- November 2, 2-3 P.M. *Transgender History: The Roots of Today's Revolution*, by Susan Stryker, 2nd edition, Seal Press (CA), 2017.
- December 1, 2-3 P.M. *Autocracy, Inc.: The Dictators Who Want to Run the World*, by Anne Applebaum, Penguin Random House (Doubleday imprint), 2023. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize.

The sixth and final discussion through end of book of Søren Kierkegaard's *The Sickness Unto Death*, translation by Bruce H. Hirmmse, is Thursday, November 21, 7-8 P.M. 6 Registered.

LET US READ A NOVEL (LURAN) #9 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain, 1884, will meet for the first time on Monday, October 28, 7-8 P.M. on Zoom to discuss the first 7 chapters. After we finish discussing Huck Finn in several sessions, we'll read and discuss LURAN#10 *James*, by Percival Everett, Doubleday, 2024, a recasting of the Huck Finn story from the point of view of the runaway Jim. 11 registered.

The next Share Your Writing session will be Tuesday, November 19, 7-8 P.M. Any kind of writing in any stage of development is welcome. 6 registered.

Announcing a new discussion focused on a book about climate change. In response to the UUBN Service on September 29 and to Larissa Armstrong's provocative talk on climate change, which included a reference to *What If We Get It Right: Visions of Climate Futures*, by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, Penguin Random House, 2024, I offer this opportunity to read, reflect on, and discuss Johnson's ideas about what can be done, both individually and collectively. Register by sending me an email by January 1, 2025, to give yourself and the world a new year's gift of thought and action.

Social Justice Team News

Chad Kahl, Team Lead

Want to find out whose on your ballot and/or what the candidates are thinking?

Try these options:

Ballotpedia: Illinois - <https://ballotpedia.org/Illinois>

Illinois State Board of Elections - <https://votersguide.elections.il.gov/>

League of Women Voters - <https://www.vote411.org/>

League of Women Voters, Illinois Chapter - <https://illinoisvoterguide.org>

UUBN @ Midwest Food Bank Again

Friday, November 1 from 1:00-3:00 pm

Want to spend a couple hours on a Friday afternoon with others from church helping package food to be shipped out those in need? We have planned a group outing for Friday, November 1 from 1:00-3:00. Ages 13+, closed toed shoes required, but I promise it's nothing difficult.

You must sign up at this link directly https://x.g/_____ n on Oct 25, or for more information please contact Brad Bell at _____

-Submitted by Brad Bell and Social Justice Team

Announcements

Humanist Group

October 30 from 7:00-8:30 pm, Irvin Room

The Humanist Discussion group will have a 5th Wednesday meeting on October 30 at 7-8:30 pm at the Church. Everyone is invited to bring 5-10 minutes of input to share -- a Tiny Topic. Perhaps you have an interesting read you want to share or a video that piqued your interest. You may have a topic for a potential later, full, discussion that you want to try out. All topics are welcome. To accommodate everyone who wants to speak please be mindful of the time limit.

Submitted by Carolyn Pitts

New! Community Care Board

Check out the in-progress Community Care Board in the Fell Room. On that bulletin board you can find QR codes to sign up to provide practical support to members of the congregation (i.e., rides, meals, help with memorial receptions). If using a QR code is not for you, you can also see what the needs are and then speak with Blair in the office to get signed up. Thank you for caring for our community!

-from Rev. Rebecca and the Helping Hands Team

Organize and Take Action to Help our Trans Siblings

Saturday, October 26 - Dinner for Community and Church Organizers

Sunday, October 27 - Service led by Heather Vickery, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Sunday, October 27 - Planning Meeting and Lunch - All are invited including community members! RSVP to <https://forms.gle/eazFfLNBstM9ABe48>

Did you know Illinois is considered one of the most affordable safe states for trans and gender expansive people? Heather Vickery from Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) joins us at the end of October to help us get involved in supporting trans folks relocating to Central Illinois or needing a short term landing spot.

In many states, our trans and gender expansive beloveds are under attack and fit the criteria to be designated as internally displaced people (IDPs) by the United Nations. The UUA and UUSC developed direct partnerships with frontline trans-led organizing to create networks of safety and direct support for beloveds who need to relocate, access healthcare across state lines, or stay as safe as possible where they are.

During the Planning Meeting & Lunch on **Sunday, October 27**, we will break into four planning groups (housing, fundraising, daily needs, and systems support) to map out resources and connections we can bring to this work and we'll consider next steps. Attending this meeting and sharing your ideas does NOT commit you to continued involvement.

If you already know you want to help in a continuing capacity, let [Rev. Rebecca Gant](#) know! Possible roles include (but are not limited to):

- Housing Host
- Welcoming Team Member
- Care and Passenger Accompaniment
- Mutual Aid and Welcome Village Coordination
- Operational/Administrative Volunteer

New(ish) to UUBN

Tuesday, Oct. 29, 6-8 p.m.

Are you new to our congregation and want to know more about us? If so, please join us for one session on Tuesday, Oct. 29, from 6-8 p.m. in the Irvin Room. You will learn more about our theology, religious exploration, social justice work, small groups, how we celebrate together, how we share our burdens, and have a tour of the building.

Virtual attendance is available. If you wish to participate online, please contact the office manager, office@uubn.org or 309-828-0235. If having child care would help you attend this session, please contact the office by October 18.

All are welcome!

Submitted by the Membership Team

You Can Help Us Expand Our Outreach!

Have you heard the phrase, "Our church is the best kept secret in town"? We'd like to share that secret, and you can help.

If you know of a community event where we should be sharing our values, the Membership/Outreach Team has just the thing for you. Our Outreach Kit has the materials that you need, including a rainbow tablecloth, banners, tabling supplies and pop-up canopies. Except for the large items, everything is in 2 boxes. You also might want to add some additional UUA brochures, located in the church office, that apply to your specific event. The main thing you will want to add are some enthusiastic helpers!

The kit is kept in the Stevenson Library at the [REDACTED] book checkout notebook. Contact Kathy Packard at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] for additional information.

Submitted by the Membership Team

A Message from the Right Relations Team on Justice

"...two things are wanting in American civilization—a keener and deeper, broader and tenderer sense of justice—a sense of humanity, which will crystalize into the life of the nation the sentiment that justice, simple justice, is the right, not simply of the strong and powerful, but of the weakest and feeblest of all God's children." – Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, 1875
As UUs, we know that 'justice', as one of our guiding values, means the quality of being fair and reasonable. And that the justice of rights means the fair and reasonable administration of law and order.

But what about the justice of right relationships?

In a community that centers right relationships, justice is not one-size-fits-all. Instead, it provides individualized justice that is tailored to every member of a community and their unique connections. Our Right Relations Team seeks to be attentive and responsive to the needs of our members. We mend tears in our social fabric and respond to conflict and harmful acts by making things right...not necessarily 'even'.

For more information about the Right Relations Team? Contact Carolyn Moon at [REDACTED]



This Month's Community Plate Recipient

Planned Parenthood of Illinois

Planned Parenthood of Illinois is Illinois' health centers provide a wide range of safe, reliable health care — and the majority is preventive care, which helps prevent unintended pregnancies, reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections through, and screen for cervical and other cancers. They also provide gender affirming care for trans and non-binary people as well as delivering age appropriate, comprehensive and medically accurate information that empowers women, men, teens, and families to make informed choices and lead healthy lives.

To donate to Planned Parenthood of Illinois, make out your check to Planned Parenthood of Illinois and deliver to UUBN. Donations can also be made via the Breeze Online Giving website by clicking the button below or from your smartphone when you [download the app](#). Our subdomain is uubn.

[Learn More!](#)

[Donate Here](#)

STEWARDSHIP

Pledges from our members and friends support the ministries of the church.
If you haven't made your pledge for 2024, here is the link: <https://uubn.org/wp/make-pledge/>

If you need to adjust your pledge, email Nancy Armstrong at [REDACTED] or contact the office by phone or at office@uubn.org.

Communications are confidential.

Ongoing Group Gatherings

Covenant Groups:

Lay-led small groups that meet once a month to deepen and expand the ministry of the congregation through spiritual and emotional connection. Email [Terina](#) to join a small group.

Monday Lunch Bunch:

Want to start your week with good company and lively, informal conversation? Join us in the Fell Room with or without your lunch. No reservations required. All topics are welcome. We light the chalice at 11:45 AM and release the flame at 1:00 PM. Coffee and tea provided. Hosted by the Membership Team.

Contacts

Staff

Rev. Rebecca Gant, Minister

minister@uubn.org

Available by appointment. Click this link to see when she's available:

<https://calendly.com/revrebeccagant/30min>

Terina Carter, Director of Religious Exploration

LRE@uubn.org

Available by Appointment

Blair Broughton, Office Manager

office@uubn.org

Office hours vary. Please make an appointment: 217-722-3586 (call or text)

Charlie

Director

Bob Mangia

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Sara Kaeb, Child Care

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Board Information

President: Larissa Armstrong

Vice President: Julie Prandi

Secretary: Chad Kahl

Treasurer: Nancy Armstrong

Directors: Karla Bailey-Smith, Brad Bell,

Jill Enchelmayer, Hubert Morales, and

Richard Seehuus.

Monthly Board Meetings are in Irvin Room and Online at 6:30 on the Second Tuesday of each month. All are welcome to attend. Contact the office for the Zoom Link.

Contact the board at uubnboard@uubn.org.

Trustees

Jack Pace, Paul Packard, and Brad Boesdorfer

Committees

Aesthetics
Building and Grounds
Committee on Shared Ministry
Finance and Stewardship
Denominational Affairs
Memorial Garden Stewards
Safety

Doug Johnson
Dick Hansen
Janet Tulley
Emile Garneau
Nancy Armstrong
Debby Funk
Julie Prandi

Teams

Membership and Outreach
Right Relations
Community Concerns
Green Sanctuary
Helping Hands
History
Religious Exploration (RE)
Social Justice
Worship and Music
Pastoral Care

Kathy Packard
Carolyn Moon and Pamela Morgan
Camille Ehlers
Nancy Armstrong
Carolyn Pitts
Joan Banks
Erin Ripley-Gataric, Terina Carter
Chad Kahl
Claudia Kaufman, Rev. Rebecca Gant
Rev. Rebecca Gant

To obtain contact information for the leads of these groups please see the [online directory](#) or [email the office](#).



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