



**UNITARIAN
UNIVERSALIST
CHURCH OF
BLOOMINGTON
NORMAL**

Love Radically ● Serve Gratefully ● Wonder Daily

[A LGBTQ Welcoming Congregation.](#)
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December 22, 2024

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This Sunday's Worship Service:

All Ages Holiday Pageant and Potluck

Rev. Rebecca Gant and Terina Carter, Director of Religious Exploration

A black bear cub wakes up to see snow for the very first time and begins a quest to find nature's colors. A whole host of animals help him in his search as they bring the colors of the forest to him, one by one. Together all the animals create a magical symbol of the season. We'll celebrate the coming of winter with the story of The Snow Tree and a shared meal.

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

12/24 - All Ages Candlelight Christmas Eve

Rev. Rebecca Gant and Jan Baird, Worship Associate

Join us at 4:30 for poetry, readings from the nativity story, carols, and candles.

12/29 - Letting it Go: A Fire Communion

Cindy Cotton and Chad Kahl, Worship Associates



[Sign Up Here](#)

Holiday Potluck and Fellowship December 22

Join the Membership Team for our monthly brunch and fellowship following the Sunday service on December 22.

We'll provide ham, and we invite you to contribute to the meal however you can and/or help with the set-up and clean-up. Use the sign-up form here to let us know how you will participate. We are looking forward to seeing you!

Submitted by the Membership Team

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

Note: The deadline for the 12/28 and 01/04 Parish News is 12/22 at noon!

[Event Registration Form](#)

[Communication Form](#)

This Week's Events

Sunday, December 22

8:45 AM – 9:45 AM Adult Choir (Walker Room)
8:30 AM – 11:45 AM Childcare (Preschool and Childcare Room)
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM Sunday Service (Sanctuary)
10:15 AM – 11:15 AM Children and Youth Religious Exploration (Lower Level/Back Lawn)
11:15 AM – 12:30 PM Potluck Brunch (Fell Room)
4:00 PM – 4:45 PM Sacred Rest (Online)
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM Bloomington Normal Meditation Group (Walker Room)

Monday, December 23

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM Lunch Bunch (Fell Room)

Tuesday, December 24

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM Cookie Reception (Fell Room)

Wednesday, December 25 - Office Closed

Thursday, December 26 - Office Closed

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM Rehearsal for Baroque'n Consort (Walker Room)

Friday, December 27 - Office Closed

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

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



From the Minister's Desk

Rev. Rebecca Gant, Minister

Christmas Eve Offering

Our Christmas Eve offering this year will go to support local efforts to help resettle trans people and their families in Central Illinois. We are working in collaboration with Pink Haven (pinkhaven.org), a trans-led organization supporting folks who need to leave less-safe states and find a new home in a safer place. Your offering will go toward things like rent, groceries, gas, or other needs to help a person or family who chooses to come to the Bloomington-Normal area. If you won't be at the Christmas Eve service and still want to give, make your check out to the church and put Pink Haven in the memo line, or give on Breeze. If you have questions about Pink Haven and our church's involvement, contact Rev. Rebecca.

Religious Exploration

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

I am grateful to the congregation, board, and Rev. Rebecca for supporting my sabbatical. I will be away from all church work beginning February 1 with plans to return on May 1. Over the next few weeks, I'll finalize plans for Religious Exploration offerings to happen in my absence. You'll see those shared here in Parish News and in the church's Facebook group. BIG

thanks to all who have stepped in to cover things. There are still some things without coverage. If there is something you would like to help with or get involved in before I leave, let me know! Here are a few ideas: Easter Egg Hunt, being on a list of people comfortable sharing the Time for All Ages, subbing in an RE room on Sunday morning, helping teachers prep materials, helping Karen with Gnagey Library or helping Cory with Stevenson Library, finding help with cleaning up the Nature Playspace at the end of March or beginning of April, representing RE on the Safety Committee, helping make sure teachers know what they need to know for the Severe Weather drill in spring, emailing visitors with information about small groups or RE, leading a monthly hike.

Sacred Rest

Sunday, December 22, 4:00-4:45, Online, Email LRE@uubn.org for a monthly reminder with the link

During these monthly gatherings, we'll hear a reading from Rest as Resistance by Tricia Hersey; rest together; reflect on rest as resistance in a capitalist society, and leave with a "practice to resist grind culture" from Tricia Hersey's Rest Deck.

Our Whole Lives for Children and Youth

Our Whole Lives kicks off in January for children in K-3rd, 4th & 5th, 7th & 8th grades. Those lessons will happen on Sunday mornings in the lower level rooms. RE for children in 6th & 9-12th grades will be their usual Sunday morning lessons in the youth room. Parents and teachers have additional information in email from me, but let me know if you have questions!

Winter & Spring Small Groups for Adults - Online

Biblical Literacy Part 1

Wednesdays, February 12-March 19, 7:00pm-8:30pm, Facilitated by First UU Dallas

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

This is a unique opportunity to explore the Bible through a Unitarian Universalist lens. The 11-week course will be offered in two parts, one in the winter and one in the fall of 2025.

Parents and Caregivers as Sexuality Educators

Wednesdays, January 8 - March 12, 7:00-8:30pm, Facilitated by Javiera Monardez and Cheryl Springwood

Register at the link: <https://forms.gle/uDdu1HNhMpt7ZEb4A>

A program for Unitarian Universalist parents and caregivers who seek support and skills to be effective sexuality educators of their children. Adults are invited to ask: How can I embody my role as my child's primary sexuality educator in a way that expresses my UU values and faith?

Soul Matters Covenant Group

Last Wednesday of the month, 7:00-8:30pm, shared facilitation

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

Each month, group members receive a packet on a monthly theme. The packets include spiritual exercises, questions that encourage reflection on daily living, and a few pages of recommended resources that help you explore the theme in more depth. At the monthly meeting, you'll share your experience with the packet and build a circle of trust through deep listening.

Winter & Spring Small Groups for Adults - In Person

Love at the Center Covenant Group

Third and Fourth Tuesdays, February 18 - July 15, 6:00-8:00pm, bring your dinner or snack if you'd like, Facilitated by Rev. Rebecca Gant and Terina Carter

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

Each month we'll focus on two values in the first session and the related covenant statements in the second session. Each value session will focus on questions that explore ourselves and Unitarian Universalism through deep questioning and listening. Putting our beliefs in action in our covenantal faith will be explored through experiences and storytelling that will illuminate how we want to be as faithful people.

Non-Theistic Spiritual Practices Covenant Group

Thursdays, 6:00-7:00pm, Walker Room, shared facilitation

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

What benefits can a non-theist derive from religion? How can an atheist transition from the practices and rituals of their past faith to ones that meet their current needs? How does religious trauma affect us? Why do these questions matter? This new Covenant Group is just being developed. More details in the next Parish News.

Soul Matters Covenant Group

Fourth Tuesday of the month, 4:00 - 5:30pm, Walker Room, shared facilitation

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

Each month, group members receive a packet on a monthly theme. The packets include spiritual exercises, questions that encourage reflection on daily living, and a few pages of recommended resources that help you explore the theme in more depth. At the monthly meeting, you'll share your experience with the packet and build a circle of trust through deep listening.

Soul Matters Early Birds Covenant Group

Last Monday of the month, 9:00 - 10:00am, Irvin Room, Facilitated by Sandy Aronen

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

Each month, group members receive a packet on a monthly theme. The packets include spiritual exercises, questions that encourage reflection on daily living, and a few pages of recommended resources that help you explore the theme in more depth. At the monthly meeting, you'll share your experience with the packet and build a circle of trust through deep listening.

Winter & Spring Small Groups for Adults - Multiplatform

Soul Matters Covenant Group

Third Wednesday of the month, 6:30 - 8:00pm, Lower Level Youth Room and online, Facilitated by Ann Crumpler

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

Each month, group members receive a packet on a monthly theme. The packets include spiritual exercises, questions that encourage reflection on daily living, and a few pages of recommended resources that help you explore the theme in more depth. At the monthly meeting, you'll share your experience with the packet and build a circle of trust through deep listening.

Soul Matters Drop In Covenant Group

First Tuesday of the month, 6:00-7:30pm, Irvin Room and online, Facilitated by Rev. Rebecca Gant

Register with email to LRE@uubn.org

This is the Soul Matters group for people who can't commit to regularly attending one of the other Soul Matters groups or who miss their group's meeting. Each month, group members receive a packet on a monthly theme. The packets include spiritual exercises, questions that encourage reflection on daily living, and a few pages of recommended resources that help you explore the theme in more depth. At the monthly meeting, you'll share your experience with the packet and build a circle of trust through deep listening.

Online Small Groups with Tom Clemens

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.

- January 5, 2025, 2-3 P.M. *The Message*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Penguin Random House (One World imprint), 2024. Includes his analysis of the Gaza situation.
- February 2, 2025, 2-3 P.M. *Invisible Doctrine: The Secret History of Neoliberalism*, by George Monbiot and Peter Hutchison, Penguin Random House (Crown imprint), 2024. On economic ideology and public policy in the United States.

For the group LET US READ A NOVEL (LURAN) #10, *James* by Percival Everett, Doubleday, 2024, a recasting of the Huck Finn story from the point of view of the runaway Jim, I will send out an email in the first week of January, so we can set up and start the reading and discussion schedule for the book. 10 registered.

The next Share Your Writing session will be toward the end of January, TBD. Any kind of writing in any stage of development is welcome. 6 registered.

Announcing a new discussion focused on a book about climate change: *What If We Get It Right: Visions of Climate Futures*, by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, Penguin Random House, 2024. An opportunity to reflect on individual and collective approaches. 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. 2 registered.

Social Justice Team News

Chad Kahl, Team Lead

Sweatshirts and Sweatpants Tree

We have had the tradition of collecting items (mittens, socks, underwear) under our Christmas tree for those in need. This year, let's keep up our giving and give sweatshirts and sweatpants to the Compassion Closet at Carle! Patients without other options – most often from the Emergency Department – leaving the hospital can do so with dignity with our donations.

For the rest of December, bring in NEW sweatshirts and/or sweatpants. We will keep the focus on these two items so that Carle can be stocked for the rest of the winter and spring season to help those in need.

Thank you for your generosity during this holiday season.

-Submitted by Camille Ehlers, Community Concerns and Social Justice Committee

Take Action

Ask Congress to pass the Fulfilling Promises to Afghan Allies Act. A bipartisan group of Senators has attached an amendment (S.AMDT 3290) to the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for 2025. Negotiations are taking place to combine the Senate and House versions of the NDAA. Ask your Senators and Congressperson to include this amendment in the final version of the NDAA. This amendment will provide a pathway to legal permanent status for eligible Afghans who have been in legal limbo since they were evacuated to the U.S. because they helped our forces in their country. Go to [fulfill_ffpaa/index.html](https://fulfillffpaa/index.html) for more info contact Debbie Kerrigan at [REDACTED]

submitted by Debbie Kerrigan for the Social Justice Team

Stewardship

Emile Garneau, Chair

Pledge Drive Progress

As of Dec. 17, 2024, 123 families pledged \$373,020, 85% of our 2025 goal of \$438,204. There are about 30 families who have not pledged yet.

If we were to stop right now, our deficit would be (\$65,184).

Our pledge drive will end 12/31/2024; our budget will be proposed and any deficit that exists at that time will be addressed in January 2025.

Please pledge now.

Thank you,
The Stewardship Committee: Linda Johnston, Nancy Armstrong, Jack Pace, Claire Hedden, Rain Johnson, Emile Garneau

Announcements

All-Ages Sober New Year's Eve Party

Tuesday, December 31, 6:00-8:30pm, Fell Room

Join us to welcome in 2025 with an All-Ages Sober New Year's Eve Party on Dec 31st from 6-8:30pm in the Fell Room! We'll have fun activities to help you set resolutions for yourself and for the church, games, a small-bite potluck, and mocktails. We'll also have an early-bird count down to 8pm, so you and yours can be snug in bed (or available for further festivities) well before midnight!

Sign up for setup, clean up, and small-bite potluck at the button below.

For more information, please contact Kristen Krienert at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

-Submitted by Kristen Krienert and Alicia Wodika, the Good Vibes Crew

[Sign Up for NYE Party Here](#)



Member Anniversaries

Congratulations to our members who have celebrated milestone years October-December!

30 years – Janine Toth

25 years: Mike Kerber, Diane Anderson, Kathy Packard

20 years – Mary & Bob Blick

10 years – Erin Furimsky

5 years – Hubert Morales

1 year – Corey Mattson, Marie & Adam Houghton, Thaw Myat, Terrie Reed & Chuck McCullough, Deborah Nieman, Alicia Wodika, Alex Thompson

Want to Check Out How Worship Gets Planned?

Sunday, January 26, 3:00-6:00 PM

Are you curious about how the Sunday worship services come to life? The Worship Team gathers quarterly to plan future worship services. Anyone is welcome to attend our planning sessions-- whether you just want to check it out or feel like you might want to be on the team! Join us!

What is the Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM)?

Did you know that there is a group of congregants that works with the Minister to assess and guide the ministries of the church? The Committee on Shared Ministry (COSM) serves to understand, assess, support, and advocate for robust and shared ministry throughout the context of congregational life. The Minister and the COSM are asked to center, to balance, and to guide the congregation in conversation with the Board, lay leadership, members, and friends of UUBN. As part of their monthly meetings, the COSM members share with the Minister any feedback they have about how things are going in the congregation.

COSM membership is appointed by the Board in conjunction with the Minister and currently consists of four members: Sandy Aronen, Kristen Johnson, Carol Torrens, and Janet Tulley, who meet monthly with Reverend Rebecca. COSM welcomes feedback of the UUBN community and is planning a more formal opportunity for this after the New Year. For more information, please contact Rev. Rebecca or any of the COSM members.

Submitted by the Committee on Shared Ministry (Janet Tulley wrote the article)



This Month's Community Plate Recipient

INtegrity Counseling

INtegrity Counseling is a community-based, non-profit counseling agency located in the heart of Bloomington's west side. INtegrity enables a growing team of concerned professionals to partner in providing counseling, outreach, and community education on topics such as grief and loss, addiction, parenting, and coping skills for those with mental or emotional disorders. Their vision is "Stigma free mental health support for all." They serve all members of the community, regardless of race, gender, belief, orientation, or economic status. They do not have a set fee for counseling, but instead, use a "pay as you can" method and ask clients to contribute what they are able to afford for counseling.

To donate to INtegRity Counseling, make out your check to INtegRity Counseling and deliver to the church. 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 2025, 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 [REDACTED] Director

Bob Mangia [REDACTED] Air Director

Molly Hjelle, AV Technician

avstaff@uubn.org

Anastasia Guzman, AV Technician

avstaff@uubn.org

Sara Kaeb, Child Care

office@uubn.org

Adrienne Alt, Child Care

office@uubn.org

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.

The UUBN Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of every month at the church. All members / friends of the church are welcome to attend in person or via Zoom. If attending in person, please alert the board so they can ensure there is adequate seating for everyone. If there are items you wish to bring up for Board discuss those requests to the Board President (2025 Board President is Julie Prandi [REDACTED]) by the first Tuesday of every month so they can be added to the agenda.

The zoom link is [REDACTED]

Meeting ID: 845 4896 2980

The full Board can also be reached for questions or comments via email 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
Larissa Armstrong and Brad Bell
Janet Tulley
Emile Garneau
Nancy Armstrong
Debby Funk
Julie Prandi

Teams

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

Kathy Packard
Carolyn Moon and Pamela Morgan
Camille Ehlers
Kristen Krienert and Alicia Wodika
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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