

## GET CONNECTED

### CHRISTMAS PAGEANT - TODAY AT 4 P.M.

Our annual Christmas Pageant is a beautiful telling of an ancient story. It is a tale of hope and hospitality, a reminder that every child is born a redeemer, a story that speaks to us all of what it means to be a seeker, a star, a wise one, a wanderer. Join us today at 4 p.m. for this annual favorite.

### SINGING SUNDAY - 10 A.M. NEXT SUNDAY

Worship next Sunday, Dec. 31, will be offered as a single service at 10 a.m. Join us for a multigenerational service of singing and reflection.

### NEWCOMER CIRCLES IN JANUARY

You're invited to join a Newcomer Circle. These four-session gatherings of 6-10 newcomers offer a chance to explore core Unitarian Universalist values, reflect on our spiritual journeys, and connect with other folks who are new to church. Join us for one of our upcoming 4-session Newcomer Circles: Wednesdays, Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24 from 7-8:30 p.m. or Tuesdays, Jan. 9, 16, 23 & 30, 7-8:30 p.m. Sign up at the Information table in the social hall or by emailing [sandy@firstuniv.org](mailto:sandy@firstuniv.org).

### WINTER CIRCLES: SIGN UP BEGINS JAN. 4

Enrich your spiritual life by joining a Circle this winter! Circles are groups of 8-10 committed participants who come together with a trained leader to nurture spiritual growth in community. Information about offerings will be made available the first week of January, and sign up will open online at [firstucircles.weebly.com](http://firstucircles.weebly.com) on Thursday, Jan. 4.

### CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE - TODAY AT 9:30 P.M.

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service is a time of mindfulness, meaning making and music. This service is a weaving of scripture readings, poems, musical offerings, silence, and lighting our hearts and spirit with the candlelight and hope. Join us this evening at 9:30 p.m.

### YEAR END GIVING

With the end of the year quickly approaching, the financial team wants to remind you about the deadline for giving for the calendar year. If you'd like financial gifts counted toward 2017, checks should be postmarked no later than December 31. **Please be aware that the office is closed between December 22 and January 1.** Contributions can be dropped off at the information table in the social hall after any of the services today or Sunday, Dec. 31, and you are also welcome to give online by Dec. 31 using MyFirstU or SquareCash. Thank you for your generosity!

### REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY - JANUARY 7, 2018

Remembrance Sunday is a time to reflect on our losses over the past year and to honor those we love who have died. It is also an opportunity to mark other significant losses in the life of your family, such as a separation or divorce, saying goodbye to friends who've moved away, the passing of an animal companion, or the loss of a home, job, or familiar school community. You're invited to bring a photo or memento of loved ones you are remembering to the sanctuary for our shared altar that Sunday morning.

## WELCOME

### We are so glad you are here.

At First Universalist Church, in the spirit of love and hope, we give, receive, and grow. We welcome, affirm, and protect the light in each human heart; we listen deeply to where love is calling us next; and we act with humility, bravery, and compassion in service to justice. We do all this as a faith community committed to racial justice. These spiritual practices and commitments are the ways we move in rhythm with the great love that is alive in the world.

### LET US KEEP YOU IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

If you are experiencing a crisis or transition, or celebrating a joy—please let us know. To be included in our Cycle of Life each Sunday in worship, contact Sandy DiNanni at [sandy@firstuniv.org](mailto:sandy@firstuniv.org) or 612-825-1701.

If you would like support, contact the church office at 612-825-1701 or any member of our Pastoral Care Team.

### Are You Visiting?

Come to a brief orientation to First Universalist and Unitarian Universalism.

### Our next orientation takes place: Sunday, January 7

Meet us in the front of the Sanctuary immediately after the service. Find out more about our community in this 45-minute overview. No sign up needed. Childcare is provided during the session after the 11:15 a.m. service.

**The Visiting Families Welcome Station** at the north end of the Religious Education wing has information about our Children, Youth & Family Ministries. Stop by if you are interested in learning more, or email Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries Lauren Wyeth at: [lauren@firstuniv.org](mailto:lauren@firstuniv.org).

### CELEBRATING OUR GENEROSITY

Offering plates from Sunday Service:

- 11/26 Marnita's Table \$2,622.09 (100% to recipient)
- 12/3 Avenues for Homeless Youth \$1,034.79
- 12/10 Simpson Housing Services \$1,164.61

Know a charitable organization that shares our commitment to justice and equity? Nominate an offering recipient at: [firstuniversalistchurch.org/offering-plate](http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/offering-plate).

If you'd like to make a donation but don't have cash, use the Square Cash App. It takes no time at all to set up and use! First Universalist's cash tag is \$firstuniv. For more information, go to <http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/new-giving-option-square-cash/>.

### HELPFUL INFORMATION

Hearing devices are available; please ask an usher. Cushions are available for the pews and are located next to the sound booth and at the entrance to the Sanctuary. Please return them to their home after the service. We also have **fragrance-free rows** marked in the balcony. **For more information**, stop by our Information Center in the Social Hall downstairs, call 612-825-1701, or visit our website: [firstuniversalistchurch.org](http://firstuniversalistchurch.org).

### CARING CORNER: SEND A CARD!

Write a note to a congregant who could use support. Cards are available in the library, located off of the Social Hall. Leave the card in the basket and we'll mail it for you.

### THE WEEKLY LIBERAL

*The Weekly Liberal* is published on Thursdays. Subscribe at: [firstuniversalistchurch.org/the-weekly-liberal/](http://firstuniversalistchurch.org/the-weekly-liberal/). Do you have news or information you'd like published? Fill out the submission form on our website!



*In the Universalist spirit of love and hope,  
we give, receive, and grow.*



WORSHIP THEME: HOPE

## WISDOM OF THE FOUR-LEGGEDS

REV. RUTH MACKENZIE

DECEMBER 24, 2017

*We welcome, affirm, and protect the light in each human heart; we listen deeply to where love is calling us next; and we act with humility, bravery, and compassion in service to justice. We do all this as a faith community committed to racial justice.*

## Music for Gathering

Franco Holder

## Words of Welcome

Rev. Jen Crow

## Bellsound

## Prelude

*Song to the Moon*  
- Antonín Dvořák

Franco Holder

## Call to Worship

Kathy Coskran

## Opening Carol #228 (Please rise in body or spirit)

*Once in Royal David's City*

## Lighting the Chalice

Love is the spirit of this church  
And service is its law.  
This is our great covenant:  
To dwell together in peace,  
To seek the truth in love,  
And to help one another.

-James V. Blake

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## Song for the Season

*Do You Hear What I Hear?*  
(Lyrics to the right)

## Reading

*The Camels Speak*  
- Lynn Ungar

Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

## Offertory

*La Colombe* (The Dove)  
- Olivier Messiaen

Franco Holder

## Silence

## Cycle of Life

Rev. Jen Crow

## Hymn of Prayer #123 (Please remain seated)

*Spirit of Life*

Spirit of life, come unto me,  
Sing in my heart all the stirrings of compassion  
Blow in the wind, rise in the sea:  
Move in the hand, giving life the shape of justice.  
Roots hold me close. Wings set me free.  
Spirit of Life, come to me. Come to me.

-Carolyn McDade

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## Song for the Season

#243 *Jesus Our Brother*  
- Randall Thompson

(Verses 1-4 and 6)

## Homily

*Wisdom of the Four-Leggeds*

Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

## Ritual of Milk and Honey

*La Cathédrale Engloutie*  
- Claude Debussy

Rev. Ruth MacKenzie  
Rev. Jen Crow  
Franco Holder

## Closing Hymn #232 (Please rise in body or spirit)

*The Hills Are Born at Bethlehem*

## Closing Words

Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

## Blessing in Song #413

*Go Now in Peace*

## Worship Leaders

Rev. Ruth MacKenzie	Minister of Worship and Pastoral Care
Rev. Jen Crow	Executive Minister
Kathy Coskran	Worship Associate
Franco Holder	Pianist

## Offering: Marnita's Table

Marnita's Table seeks to close gaps across difference through making Intentional Social Interaction the new pattern for society where people of color, the disenfranchised, the poor, the unheard, the fragile, the LGBTQ+ and anyone who is normally left out of community decision making are automatically included and valued at the policy-making and resource-sharing table. This holiday season, we've invited our members and friends to join us in rethinking the meaning of gift-giving by reducing our would-be holiday spending and redirecting what we save to our Holiday Giving recipient, an organization that is working to bring people together across differences and advance racial equity in our community. Online gifts can be made at: <https://tinyurl.com/ycyqp24y> or via the Square Cash app (instructions on the back under "Celebrating Our Generosity").

## Lyrics for *Do You Hear What I Hear?*

Said the night wind to the little lamb  
Do you see what I see  
Way up in the sky, little lamb  
Do you see what I see  
A star, a star, dancing in the night  
With a tail as big as a kite  
With a tail as big as a kite

Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king  
Do you know what I know  
In your palace warm, mighty king  
Do you know what I know  
A Child, a Child shivers in the cold  
Let us bring Him silver and gold  
Let us bring Him silver and gold

Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy  
Do you hear what I hear  
Ringing through the sky, shepherd boy  
Do you hear what I hear  
A song, a song, high above the trees  
With a voice as big as the sea  
With a voice as big as the sea

Said the wise ones to people everywhere  
Listen to what I say  
Pray for peace, people everywhere!  
Listen to what I say  
The Child, the Child, sleeping in the night  
He will bring us goodness and light  
He will bring us goodness and light

## December Worship Theme: Hope

Barbara Kingsolver writes, "the very least you can do in your life is to figure out what to hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope. Not admire it from a distance but live right in it, under its roof." Some of us struggle to find hope. Some of us take hope for granted. Hope is what sends a student to school, an addict to a 12-step program, an activist out into the street. Theologian Julie Neraas writes, "while hope is a strengthening force, it also lays a person open to the vulnerabilities of love, desire, expectation, disappointment, loss." This month we wrestle with hope, what to hope for, with all its complexity, and how to live under its roof.