



GET CONNECTED

HOLIDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

CHRISTMAS PAGEANTS

Sunday, Dec. 23 and Monday, Dec. 24
at 4 p.m. each day

Our annual Christmas Pageant is a beautiful telling of an ancient story. It is a tale of hope and hospitality, a story that speaks to us all of what it means to be a seeker, a wise one, a wanderer. Optional childcare is available on Dec. 23 only and must be requested at least seven days in advance using the childcare request on our website.

SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Friday, Dec. 21, (doors at 7 p.m.; ritual at 7:30 p.m.)

This is the 38th year that First Universalist will honor the longest night of the year! We will move through the evening with beautiful music, chants, a story for all ages, time spent in darkness, and sharing of joy and light. Childcare is available by advance request only; submit the childcare request form on our website by Friday, Dec. 14.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Monday, Dec. 24 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. No childcare available.

SINGING SUNDAY

Join us for a multigenerational Sunday service.

POINSETTIAS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A LOSS - TODAY

The holidays can be a time of challenge when you've experienced a significant loss during the year. The Congregational Care Team and First Universalist Church acknowledges the loss of family members with the gift of a poinsettia. This is how we express our care and spiritual companionship with those in the valley of grief. If you have lost a loved one this year, please go to the narthex and pick up your poinsettia. The Congregational Care Team has been following the mention of losses in the Cycle of Life announcements and will have a plant waiting for you. If you have not been listed in the Cycle but have experienced a loss, please stop by. We have a plant for you, as well.

On Sunday, Jan. 6, we will be honoring loss and the death of loved ones in our Sunday service with candles and altars built to acknowledge our ancestors and/or loved ones on the other side of the veil.

CHOIR TO PERFORM VIVALDI'S GLORIA DEC. 16

On Sunday, Dec. 16, the First Universalist Choir will lead worship with a performance of *Gloria* by Antonio Vivaldi. Hidden inside this seasonal classic is a story of sanctuary. Vivaldi wrote *Gloria* for Ospedale della Pietà, a charitable institution established in the 14th century to house and care for orphaned and abandoned children. To support its mission of providing sanctuary for children, the Pietà formed a girls orchestra and choir which became known throughout Europe. Their most famous teacher and concert master was Vivaldi. Please join us for this beautiful and joyous work!



WELCOME

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.

Are You Visiting?

Come to First Step, a brief orientation to First Universalist Church and Unitarian Universalism. First Step is generally offered on first and third Sundays.

Our next orientation takes place: December 16

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.

CYCLE OF LIFE

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

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 info,** stop by our Information Center in the Social Hall downstairs, call 612-825-1701, or visit our website: firstuniversalistchurch.org.

OFFERING PLATE

Recent offering plates from Sunday Service:

- 11/11 First Universalist Church \$2,957.50
- 11/18 Simpson Housing \$1,181.74
- 11/25 Augsburg Fairview Academy \$1,085.88

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

Text to Give

To make a donation to the offering plate via credit card, use your smartphone to text **firstuniv** to 73256. You'll receive a link to a secure form where you can enter your info. You may also use the Square Cash app using our cash tag, \$firstuniv. Thank you for your generosity!

GET OUR NEWSLETTER

The Weekly Liberal, our email newsletter, is published on Thursdays. Subscribe at: firstuniversalistchurch.org/the-weekly-liberal

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Meal Support

If the ground has shifted beneath your feet, let us bring a meal or two to offer comfort and care. Whenever possible, the Congregational Care team enables congregants to provide meals for each other on a short-term basis in times of need. Contact: Susan Schonfeld at susanwschonfeld@gmail.com.



DECEMBER WORSHIP THEME: SANCTUARY

Image: "Coffee Klatch" by Ricardo Levins Morales (used with permission)

THE SANCTUARY IS BURNING

REV. KAREN HUTT
DECEMBER 9, 2018

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

Prelude

I'll Fly Away
- Albert E. Brumley

Franco Holder

Call to Worship

Leila Ambrus

Opening Hymn #1018

Come and Go With Me

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
(Reprinted with permission by the UUA)

Musical Interlude

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
(Reprinted with permission by the UUA)

Welcoming In Joy

Centering Song

Where You Go
Where you go, I will go,
Beloved, where you go, I will go. (Repeat)

Where you lie, I will lie,
Beloved, where you lie, I will lie. (Repeat)

Chorus:
And your people are my people,
Your people are mine.
Your people are my people.
Your divine, my divine.

Reading

Rev. Karen Hutt

Musical Offering

Turn Your Radio On
- Albert E. Brumley

Franco Holder

Sermon

Rev. Karen Hutt

The Sanctuary Is Burning

Offertory

Do Lord
- Traditional

Franco Holder

Closing Hymn #95

There Is More Love Somewhere

Closing Words

Rev. Karen Hutt

Blessing in Song #413

Go Now in Peace

Worship Leaders

Rev. Karen Hutt	Adjunct Minister
Rev. Jen Crow	Senior Co-Minister
Leila Ambrus	Worship Associate
Franco Holder	Pianist
Georgia Guin	9:30 A.M. Chalice Lighter
Matt Dalby	11:15 A.M. Chalice Lighter

Holiday Decorations

The Visual Arts Committee has added holiday flourishes to our worship spaces—with best wishes to the congregation.

Offering: Support for Residents of the Franklin/Hiawatha Encampment

The Franklin/Hiawatha Encampment continues to face daily challenges as winter sets in. Many organizations, including our Faithful Action partner, Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, are seeking long-term solutions, but short-term needs remain. Two organizations, The Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center and the Native American Community Clinic are able to provide needed supplies and health care, respectively, to people at the encampment and those transferring to housing. Today's offering will be allocated between these two organizations.

December Worship Theme: Sanctuary

In ancient times, finding an inn was more than finding a place to spend the night. Certainly, the inn was a place for the traveler to rest, but it also provided safety and healing to the wayfaring stranger. There were no hospitals in those times, so the inn functioned as one. It was a place to tend to the physical body, and to gather one's spiritual resources for the continuing journey. When we hear the story of the Nativity, when an innkeeper provided a place for the Christ child to be born, perhaps we could imagine ourselves as the innkeeper, and our church as the inn, a place of respite and healing. This is one of our strengths as a faith community. We are a sanctuary, a place one can go to find health, healing and community. When people ask, "What do you believe?" We might respond: "Come with me to a place on 34th and Dupont Avenue South. This is a place where people are nourished, where people begin ministries, where people invest in something beyond self interest, growing in community and ever widening circles of compassion." Theologian Gary Gunderson writes, "I may have trouble articulating *what* I believe; it is easy to say *where* I believe." This month we explore the *where* of what we believe.

A Musical Note from Franco:

Gospel and blues music is deeply rooted in African American culture, soul, and memory. This music was sanctuary for the hearts and minds from which it emerged. From the Saturday night juke joints to the Sunday morning church pew, no other music has had such far reaching impact and appeal. It is the source of nearly every form of modern music we consume today from Soul, Rhythm and Blues, to Country and Rock and Roll, not to mention Jazz. Today we go back to the source that has been a sanctuary for so many across generations.