Music for Gathering
Franco Holder

Words of Welcome
Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

Prelude
What a Wonderful World
- Bob Thiele and George David Weiss
Franco Holder

Call to Worship
Shawn Neel

Opening Hymn (See below; Please rise in body or spirit)

Musical Interlude
Franco Holder

Silence

Cycle of Life
Rev. Ruth MacKenzie

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

Spirit of Life
Spirited 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.
Spirited life, come to me. Come to me.
- Carolyn McDade
(Reprinted with permission by the UUA)

Welcoming in Joy
Where You Go (rise in body or spirit when you hear the music start)
Where you go I will go. Beloved
Where you go I will go. (Repeat)
And your people are my people. Your people are mine.
Your people are my people. Your Divine, my Divine.
- Shoshana Jedwab
(Printed by permission)

Reading
Arif Mandani

Anthem
Peace Flows into me
First Universalist Choir
- Jake Runestad
Dr. Randal Bulkerma, conductor

Sermon
Reading the Story of Your Life
Arif Mandani

Offertory
Woodland Sketches, Mvt. IV
- Edward MacDowell
Franco Holder

Closing Hymn #1007 (Please rise in body or spirit)
There's a River Flowin' In My Soul

Closing Words
Arif Mandani

Blessing in Song #413
Go Now in Peace

Worship Leaders
Arif Mandani
Director of Membership and Adult Ministries
Rev. Ruth MacKenzie
Minister
Shawn Neel
Worship Associate
Franco Holder
Pianist
Dr. Randal Bulkerma
Director of Choral Arts
First Universalist Choir
Pierce Born-Burnham
9:30 Chalice Lighter
Lamont Schanen
9:30 Youth Reader

Chancel Flowers
Today's flowers are by Rita Franchetti of the Visual Arts Committee.

Offering: Augsburg Fairview Academy
One of our six Faithful Action Partners for 2018-2020, Augsburg Fairview Academy (AFA) is a public charter school for students who have not been successful in the public school system and/or who seek the positive and supportive AFA learning culture. Funds from today's offering will be used to support the Hope Food Closet and Hope Clothing Closet, which provide school supplies, backpacks, and other support as needed. Donations of food and clothing are also welcome. Positive feedback from staff and students suggests that we truly make a difference at AFA. To learn more, contact congregant Cindy Marsh, our church team lead, at cindymarsh.2586@gmail.com.

January Worship Theme: Your Life as Sacred Text
How do you know what you know as a spiritual person? What are the insights, texts, communities, and observations in which you place your trust, and from which your faith arises? Our liberal religious ancestors questioned creeds, picked over the Bible, examined church teachings, and proclaimed that an authentic faith must be free as well as bound by compassion and justice. They said we are gifted with reason and curiosity, and that Universalism must be shaped by our observations and interactions with the natural world and our own lives. This month, we invite you to see your life and its unfolding as one of your sources of faith, and as a sacred text: the twists, hardships, joys, grace, oppressions, pleasures, and setbacks. Together we will exegate (draw out) the context and meanings in the different passages in our lives, examine the psalms of hardships we've encountered, and come to greater insight into the gospel of an awakened life. Your life is a sacred text.
**WINTER/SPRING PROGRAM REGISTRATION OPEN**

Registration for winter/spring programming is now open! A variety of Circles beginning in February offer opportunities for spiritual growth and connection. Regular participation in circles is a key way to make and maintain meaningful connections within this community. We're excited to offer a broad variety of workshops, classes, and films this season, many of which are focused on racial and environmental justice learning. Membership and Newcomer classes, book groups, and programming for older and younger adults round out this season's offerings. Pick up a program catalog outside the sanctuary today to learn more. Registration for Circles is open through February 1. Sign up online or at the Info Desk in the Social Hall today or any of the following Sundays through Feb. 2.

**FOUNDATION SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR GRANTS**

The First Universalist Foundation Board is beginning in 2020 granting season and wants to hear from congregants about which organizations would be good candidates for a grant. The Foundation Board is particularly interested in organizations that address human rights at risk, racial justice, and climate justice, and seeks organizations whose leadership includes people of color, women, and other underrepresented groups. Nominations will be accepted until January 28 online at firstunic.org. Last year the Foundation received 24 nominations and awarded $100,000 in grants to 11 organizations. If you have questions, email foundation@firstunist.org.

**DAYTIME CONNECTIONS: THE AGING BRAIN JAN. 16**

Why should you think your aging brain? Harvard Medical School's studies are beginning to answer this question. At January's Daytime Connections program on Thursday, Jan. 16 at 11 a.m., local experts will cover what happens to our brains as we age, when to be concerned and where to go if we are concerned. Gather for sign in and refreshments at 10:45 a.m. Program is followed by lunch ($5-$15 donation encouraged) at 1 p.m. Registration requested online at firstuniversalschurch.org.

**YOUNG ADULTS LUNCH JAN. 19**

Are you in your 20s or 30s? Join the First Universalist Young Adults group next Sunday, Jan. 19 for a group lunch! This is a casual “come when you can” social opportunity that happens on the third Sunday. Meet at 12:45 at the info desk in the Social Hall before heading to a nearby lunch destination. Email Gordon Loery at glorry94@gmail.com with questions.

"BLACK PANTHER" FILM SCREENINGS

Join the Racial Justice Education Team for one of two screenings of the movie "Black Panther," which elevates superhero cinema to thrilling new heights. The movie breaks predetermined stereotypes of African culture and demonstrates that any country can benefit from qualities such as innovation, originality, compassion, and understanding. Screenings and discussions will take place on Sunday, Jan. 26, 1-3:30 p.m. and Thursday, Jan. 30, 6:30-9 p.m. and are drop-in events facilitated by members of our Racial Justice Education Team. Light snacks will be provided.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

Hearing devices are available, ask an usher. Cushions for the pews are located near the entrances to the Sanctuary. Please return them to their home after the service. Designated fragrance-free rows are located in the balcony.

**OPEN HEARTS AND SPIRITUAL CARE**

We know that worship can take us into deep and surprising places. If you find yourself needing to talk with someone about what is stirring for you on a Sunday morning, please speak with one of our pastoral visitors sitting in the narthex during and after the service. This is how we care for one another.

**OFFERING PLATE**

Recent offering plates from Sunday Service:
- 12/15 Holiday Giving: Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism $9,417.87
- 12/22 Families Moving Forward $579.36
- 12/29 Minister's Discretionary Fund $200.00

To make a donation to the offering plate via credit card, use your smartphone to text firstuniv to 73256. Or, use the Square Cash app using our cash tag. Firstuniv.

Know an organization that shares our commitment to justice and equity? Nominate an offering recipient: firstuniversalschurch.org/offering-place.

**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, or if you would like support, contact Rev. Ruth MacKenzie at ruth@firstunist.org or 612-825-1701.

**WORSHIP THEME: YOUR LIFE AS SACRED TEXT**

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

**NEW CHILD WELCOME**

For a basket or visit from our welcome team, contact Nick Nier at nicholasnierz@gmail.com or Julia Skowronski at julieow@fastmail.com.

**READ THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE**

Arif Mamdani

**January 12, 2020**

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.

**GET OUR NEWSLETTER**

The Weekly Liberal, our email newsletter, is published on Thursdays. Subscribe at firstuniversalschurch.org.