



SUNDAY SERVICE

February 25, 11:00 am ~ “My UU Journey”

This Sunday, three of our members share their own personal journeys to Unitarian Universalism. UUFG members Jim Wright, Debra Neill-Mareci and Sue Boone will share the pulpit. Sue Boone serves as worship associate, and James Chase provides our story for all ages. Our Chalice Choir sings under the direction of Tané DeKrey.

Live Stream

If you're unable to attend, you may watch our live streaming service starting at 10:50 am this Sunday on our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/UUGainesville>

Starting at 10:50 am each Sunday, you can use this link to go directly to the live broadcast:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSnQkwxBNGT-H1RLSg6lRfA/live>

TOWN HALL MEETING ON FINANCE & BUDGETS

Sunday, February 25, 12:15 pm

Following service on Sunday, February 24, our Fellowship's Finance Committee will facilitate a Town Hall Meeting to help members see our current financial situation as we look forward to budgeting for an interim minister this coming year.

Win a Prize!

There will be a prize given at the meeting to the person who can make the closest guess as to how much we need in pledges in order to fully fund a budget with an Interim Minister (clue: last year we received \$263,000 in pledges).

Please “mark your calendar” to attend this important Town Hall as we prepare for our annual stewardship drive beginning in March.

Questions about the Town Hall Meeting? Contact Jim Wright, Finance Team Chair, at jim.wright123@gmail.com.

UUFG OFFICE CLOSED ~ March 1 and 4

Cam Pierce, UUFG's Administrator, will be out of the office on Friday, March 1 and probably Monday, March 4 for jury duty.

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Monday, February 26, 6:30 pm

Our Governing Board holds its monthly meeting on Monday, February 26 at 6:30 via Zoom. Our Board welcome members of the congregation to attend any part or all of the regular meeting. Members are also welcome to talk briefly at the beginning of each meeting during an open “congregational input” time period (information introduced during the open congregational input time may not be addressed at this month's meeting).

Zoom link:

<https://uuma.zoom.us/j/94077032344?pwd=WE94Y3hmVFJrcmZla1Fkd0FOTGJ0dz09>

Meeting ID: 940 7703 2344

Passcode: 321615

For more information, contact Leah Cobb Lee, Congregation President, at leahcobblee@gmail.com.

In This Gazette:

- Financial Report for January
- Pineridge Children's Presentation — Feb 28
- Yoga in the Sanctuary — Mar 2
- 1619 Project Class — Mar 3
- Unbanning Books — Activities in March
- Medicaid Expansion Petition Drive in March
- Food4Kids Volunteering — Mar 16
- Food4Kids collection continues
- Statement from the UUA on Gaza
- Gratitudes, Calendar, Sunday Facilitators, Birthdays and more!

SOCIAL JUSTICE AT UUFG

Pineridge Children's Presentation — *Wednesday, February 28, 4:40 pm*

A special invitation from Kirsten Flamand and our volunteers at Pineridge: The children in the Pineridge after-school tutoring program are celebrating Black History Month with a special performance on Wednesday, February 28 from 4:40 - 5:00 pm. They will host a "Famous Black Americans Wax Museum" with in-costume presentations. Bring quarters to donate to the Children's choice of a charity and be prepared for a cuteness overload. The performance will be at the Pine Ridge Community Center located at 6015-6135 NW 26th St, Gainesville, FL 32653. You are invited!



COMING IN MARCH...

Petition Drive for Medicaid Expansion in Florida

The Social Justice Circle will be collecting petition signatures for Medicaid expansion in Florida beginning in March. Medicaid expansion in Florida would allow anyone whose income qualifies to join Medicaid. Right now in Florida, only pregnant women and their children and people with disabilities are eligible for Medicaid. This amendment would allow about 800,000 low-income Floridians to get health care under Medicaid. It will also benefit rural hospitals who are dependent on Medicaid funds and it now has bipartisan support in the legislature. Watch for our table following services in March!

1619 Project Class — *Sunday, March 3, 1:30 pm*

Coming up on March 3rd, don't miss Richard MacMaster's third and last class on the 1619 Project. The class will be held in person in the Common Room and on Zoom.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/98707395025?pwd=WTNQRmV5N1owYUNzY1ZjSWdhdVdYQOT09>

Passcode 889473

Meeting ID 987 0739 5025

Unbanning Books Month Activities in March

On Sunday, March 3, Social Justice will kick off Unbanning Books month with an informational display in the Phillips Social Hall during coffee hour of the books we have purchased with our Foundation Grant and a donation from Vets for Peace. This coffee hour will also open the banned books library to check out at the book cart.

Social Justice invites the Congregation to participate in Unbanning Books Month:

- Read a Banned book! Unfortunately, there are lots of opportunities for this. Check one out of our library or the public libraries. Our Public libraries are not yet subject to book bans so there are lots of books there you can read
- Read a banned picture book to a child or lots of children.
- March 24th after church: Participate in our Readout in The Park organized by social Justice member Zohara Simmons. Location TBA

Volunteer at Food4Kids Backpack Program — *Saturday, March 16, 10:00 am*

Mark your calendars! Next month we'll be helping out at Food4Kids! Join us for the next UUFG volunteer day at Food4Kids on Saturday, March 16th from 10:00-12:00. Contact Judi Oltmans if you'd like to sign up to volunteer at rjmsoltmans@yahoo.com.



**KINDLY SILENCE YOUR
CELL PHONE**

GAZETTE SUBMISSIONS: The Gazette is reserved for UUFG business and concerns submitted to the office (email uoffice@uufg.org) for editing by noon on Wednesdays. Please put "for Gazette" in your subject line. Your submissions will be posted up to three times, inserted on dates you indicate.

JANUARY FINANCIAL REPORT

	January	YTD
Income	\$36,813 (budget: \$26,524)	\$178,865 (budget: \$185,668)
Expenses	<u>\$23,026</u> (budget: \$31,103)	<u>\$143,237</u> (budget: \$217,961)
Net	\$13,787	\$35,628

Year-to-Date numbers here reflect our general fund’s cumulated income and expenses from July 1, 2023 through January 31, 2023, which concludes the second quarter of our fiscal year.

Please note that detailed financial reports are included in the monthly board meeting package that is emailed to the congregation prior to the Governing Board’s monthly meeting. If you have questions, please contact Cam Pierce, Congregational Administrator, at uoffice@uufg.org, or Mary Anthony, Treasurer, at maryanthony13@gmail.com.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Please wish “happy birthday” to Michael Lat-timer, Tom Palmer, Joe Rowe, Elizabeth Ferris and Donovan Slone!



Do you have a birthday this coming week, but aren’t on our list? Please contact the office to let Cam know (uoffice@uufg.org).

YOGA FOR UFG IN THE SANCTUARY THIS MARCH *Starts Saturday, March 2, 9 am*

Start your Saturdays in March with Kripalu yoga, a gentle practice accessible to all. Your guide will be certified yoga instructor Susan Christy, who trained at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health in Stockbridge, MA. She enjoys sharing practice with others who seek to nurture their bodies and their spirits in community.

Classes will be appropriate for both beginners and longtime yoginis. If you can get up and down from the ground by yourself, you can participate. All you need is a mat and an open heart. No mat? You can borrow one. Want to bring a friend or non-UUFG family member? That would be wonderful.

Classes will be held in the Sanctuary every Saturday morning in March, starting March 2, plus the first Saturday in April. Cost will be \$15 per person, payable with check or cash. All proceeds will be donated to UUFG. Class will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 10:15. Please arrive 15 minutes early your first time.

If you are used to packing “a matt, two blocks and a blanket,” please do so. Shavasana will definitely be part of our practice! Yoga is a great way to build community while also nurturing body and spirit. I hope you will join us.
~ Susan Christy



I AM GRATEFUL TO...

Many thanks go out to *Jeanne Gossman* and the *UUFG Foundation Directors* for hosting last Sunday's Coffee Hour. Building community through our after service gatherings is indeed foundational to the spiritual health of our Fellowship.

~ Susan Christy

Do you have a “gratitude” to share, expressing appreciation for someone working “behind the scenes” to make UUFG a warm and welcoming place? Please send an email to Cam Pierce at uoffice@uufg.org.

LITTLE FREE PANTRY



Near our entrance, we have a “free pantry” box, which allows people to drop off or pick up food donations in our neighborhood.

Do you have some non-perishable food to share? You may put items directly into the pantry box, or leave them in a donation box in our Phillips Hall.

Elizabeth Farris is monitoring donations and helping ensure that our pantry box is filled regularly!

Questions? Contact Cam in the office at uoffice@uufg.org / 352-377-1669.

UUFG CALENDAR

Sunday, February 25 —

- 10:00 am** Childcare (Classroom 5 — Questions about Religious Education at UUFG? Contact James Chase, Director of Lifespan Faith Development, at dre@uufg.org)
- 10:00 am** Messy Playdate (Playground — For info, contact James Chase)
- 11:00 am** Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:00 pm** Coffee Hour (Phillips Hall)
- 12:15 pm** Town Hall Meeting on Finance (Sanctuary)
- 12:30 pm** Jewish Voices for Peace (Common Room — Questions? Contact Abi Fletcher at abigayl.fletcher@gmail.com)
- 12:30 pm** RE for Children (Classroom 5)
- 12:30 pm** OWL Class (Classroom 4)
- 12:30 pm** Auction Event—Spanish Class with Martha Davis (Classroom 3)
- 3:00 pm** Joy of the Lord Outreach Ministries (Sanctuary & Phillips Hall)

Monday, February 26 —

- 3:00 pm** Gainesville Bridge Club (Phillips Hall & Sanctuary)
- 6:30 pm** Governing Board (Zoom — Questions? Contact Leah Cobb Lee, Congregation President, at leahcoble@gmail.com)

Tuesday, February 27 —

- 8:30 am** Morning Meditation (Common Room & Zoom — Questions? Contact Pete Turner at peteturner123@gmail.com or Diane DePuydt at diane.depuydt@gmail.com)
- 8:00 pm** Silent Meditation (Zoom — for info, contact Carol Stiles at uuvaldosta@yahoo.com)

Wednesday, February 28 —

- 7:00 pm** Young Adult Group (Phillips Social Hall — To confirm event and for info, join the group chat [HERE](#) or contact Renée Richter at reneeofflorida@gmail.com)

Thursday, February 29 —

- 7:00 pm** Chalice Choir (Sanctuary — For info about music programming, contact Kirsten Flamand at kirstenflamand@gmail.com)

Friday, March 1 —

UUFG Business office closed

- 12:30 pm** Gainesville Bridge Club (Phillips Hall)

Saturday, March 2 —

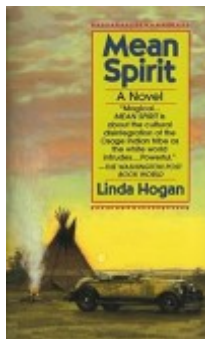
- 8:00 am** Kripalu Yoga Classes (Sanctuary — For info, contact Susan Christy at susan.christy42@gmail.com)
- 10:00 am** Friends of the Courtyard (Classroom 3 — Questions? Contact Peggy Maloney at maloney1952.pm@gmail.com)
- 10:30 pm** Interim Ministry Search Team (Common Room)

Sunday, March 3 —

- 10:00 am** Childcare (Classroom 5 — Questions about Religious Education at UUFG? Contact James Chase, Director of Lifespan Faith Development, at dre@uufg.org)
- 10:00 am** HUUGG / Humanist Class (Common Room — For info, contact Kay Anderson at kayanderson59@gmail.com)
- 11:00 am** Worship Service (Sanctuary)
- 12:00 pm** Coffee Hour (Phillips Hall)
- 12:30 pm** RE for Children (Classroom 5)
- 12:30 pm** Middlers Class (Classroom 6 — Questions? Contact James Chase at dre@uufg.org)
- 12:30 pm** Auction Event—Spanish Class with Martha Davis (Classroom 7)
- 12:30 pm** Touchstone Discussion Group (Classroom 7 — For info, contact Katelin Rhan at katelinbeal1213@gmail.com)
- 12:30 pm** OWL Class (Classroom 4)
- 1:30 pm** 1619 Project Class (Common Room — for info, contact Mary Bahr Social Justice Council Chair, at kmlisle.mary@gmail.com)
- 3:00 pm** Joy of the Lord Outreach Ministries (Sanctuary & Phillips Hall)

COMMON READ

Our Social Justice Circle’s first Common Read for 2024 is an Osage author’s novel about the Osage Nations tragedy described in the movie *Killers of the Flower Moon*. The book title is *Mean Spirit*, and the author is native American writer Linda Hogan, who was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize.



However, because UUFG Social Justice is sponsoring three sessions on The 1619 Project through March, we have decided to postpone our common read discussions until later in the year and concentrate on The 1619 Project. Let Paul Hargrave know if you want to purchase a copy of The 1619 Project through the Book Cart. The book is also available in paperback, Audible, and eBook versions through the public library and book sellers.

ONLINE GIVING TO UUFG

You can use our safe, online payment portal to make donations through our website.

Go to <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YXTK/home>



Or use the QR code here

Thanks to Sunday Facilitators!		
	February 25	February 25
Outside Greeter	Wendy Visscher	
Welcome Table	Cindy Prabst Alice Primack	
Foyer Monitor	David Willkomm	Jonathan Coron
RE Monitor	Ben Lee	Peggy Maloney
Ushers	Debra Neill-Mareci	Debra Neill-Mareci
Visitors Table	Alice Primack Wendy Visscher	
Audio-visual	Erin Parish Ricardo Sosa-Melo	Erin Parish Ricardo Sosa-Melo

FOOD4KIDS BACKPACK PROGRAM

We are collecting food donations again for the Food4Kids program through May. Food4Kids provides food-filled backpacks to many schools including the ones that our Pineridge kids attend.



Below is a list of the foods they need. Please drop off your donations into the folding shopping cart in the Phillips Social Hall.

Nonperishable Food Donations:

- Breakfast Items
- (oatmeal packets, granola bars, cereals)
- Canned/Boxed Goods
- (beans, meats, pasta, soup, veggies)
- Snacks
- (raisins, pretzels, fruit cups, pudding, peanut butter and jelly, etc.)
- Drinks
- (shelf stable milk, juice boxes/pouches)

Thank you!
Judi Oltmans

RECENT ATTENDANCE

On Sunday, February 18, 79 adults attended service, while our YouTube channel shows 60 views of the service online.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: SIGN UP ONLINE FOR COFFEE HOUR

Click [HERE](#) to volunteer yourself, you and a few friends, your family, your committee (you get the idea) to host Coffee Hour. It's fun, easy, and so appreciated!

DOESN'T COST A DIME

Reimbursement sheets are provided, and the reimbursement process is easy. Just save your receipts.

Questions? Contact Susan at susan.christy42@gmail.com

A MESSAGE FROM REV. DR. SOFIA GETANCOURT, UUA PRESIDENT & THE UUA



This is a terrifying moment for our fragile world. As Unitarian Universalists, we share a belief that every human life is sacred, with no person more deserving of freedom and flourishing than any other. This is why it was critical that your Unitarian Universalist Association has reaffirmed our condemnation of the Israeli military's ongoing violence against Gaza and join again with the growing chorus of voices across the globe urging immediate and total ceasefire.

Find our recent statement below, with links to additional reading and resources.

We offer prayers to all who are working to mitigate harm and stop the atrocities and we urge Unitarian Universalists to listen deeply, especially to the voices of Palestinians whose lives and communities have been the vast majority of casualties of this war, and to think critically about the ways the United States is complicit in enabling this disaster to continue.

Be well, Beloveds.
Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt

UUA CONDEMNS VIOLENCE AGAINST GAZA, URGES IMMEDIATE AND TOTAL CEASEFIRE

This statement was developed by the Office of the President and other senior national staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), grounded in the values of Unitarian Universalism and in conversation with previous resolutions, statements, and actions passed by General Assembly, the UUA's democratically-elected governing body.

There are crystallizing moments in the course of history when, in spite of the differences that exist among us, our common reverence for life demands that we speak with moral courage and clarity on the side of love. As people of faith and conviction, Unitarian Universalists share a belief that every human life is sacred, endowed with worth and dignity from the moment of birth, with no person more deserving of freedom and flourishing than any other. Our living tradition has long maintained that the only hells that exist are those that we create for one another, here on earth.

We are watching in real time as the people of Gaza exist in a human-made hell that grows more unimaginable every day. At this point, [28,000 Palestinian civilians have been killed](#) and nearly 70,000 have been injured by Israeli attacks in Gaza since Hamas attacked Israeli citizens on October 7. The medical infrastructure in Gaza has been decimated, and the Israeli government continues to prevent humanitarian aid, including food and water, from reaching refugees. And this week, the Netanyahu administration has announced the forced evacuation and ground invasion of Rafah, where 1.3 million displaced Palestinians have set up a massive tent city as a last refuge. The UUA [first joined the call for a ceasefire](#) on October 17, rooted in our historic positions as an organization; nearly four months later, this situation could not be more urgent.

In their [January 26 emergency interim ruling](#), the International Court of Justice found that these atrocities in Gaza plausibly constitute genocidal acts and issued an immediate order to the Israeli government to "take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts within the scope of Article II," the United Nation's Convention on genocide ([PDF, 4 pages](#)). While the UUA has [historically affirmed](#) the importance of the Genocide Conventions, we know there is a wide range of opinion among Unitarian Universalists about how this terminology is used today. What should be clear to all of us, however, is that the Israeli government's forced displacement, punishment, and intentional inflicting of suffering and death upon children and civilians in Gaza is a moral catastrophe that our faith demands we condemn and resist.

In that spirit, the Unitarian Universalist Association reiterates our condemnation of the Israeli military's ongoing violence against Gaza and joins again with [the growing chorus of voices](#) across the globe urging immediate and total ceasefire, the provision of massive emergency humanitarian aid, and the safe return of all hostages and prisoners.

As longtime proponents of the crucial work of the United Nations and its official agencies (see resolutions from [1965](#), [1969](#), [1972](#), [1981](#) and [2010](#)), the UUA is grateful for the nuance and thoroughness of the UN International Court of Justice's January 26 findings. We decry the Israeli leadership's ongoing rejection of all ceasefire proposals and outright flouting of the ICJ's findings and directives in its ongoing military assault.

The UUA further condemns the US government's unabated complicity in the crisis in Gaza, from providing massive military aid to Israel to slashing funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian Refugees. Without international pressure, the Netanyahu administration will undoubtedly follow through on their vow to achieve "total victory" by decimating the entirety of Gaza. We call for the US government to stop funding Israel's military machine, and to leverage its unrivaled influence upon Israel and in the world community to intervene and stop the attacks on Gaza.

Each day the assault on Gaza continues brings us closer to the brink of calamitous international war. Tensions continue to escalate among nations, and violence has already transgressed national borders and international waters. As a faith community that has historically advocated for peaceful resolution of conflict and protection of international law, we believe it is imperative that the global community respond decisively to mitigate ongoing harm and prevent further catastrophic loss of life. This terrifying moment calls all people of faith and conscience to do everything in our power to push our governments to interrupt genocide, address humanitarian crisis, avert multinational war, and weave just and lasting peace across the globe.

In that spirit, we offer our prayers to all those working to mitigate harm and stop the atrocities, from journalists and doctors and humanitarian workers on the ground, to Israeli citizens and Jews across the diaspora faithfully engaging and courageously protesting the right-wing Netanyahu regime, to global multi-faith and secular movements advocating for ceasefire. We urge Unitarian Universalists to listen deeply, especially to the voices of Palestinians whose lives and communities have been the vast majority of casualties of this war, and to think critically about the ways the United States is complicit in enabling this disaster to continue.

Like many, we dream of an enduring peace in the Middle East. Israelis and Palestinians deserve real and lasting safety, as do all people in the Holy Land. Long-term diplomatic solutions that honor international human rights and religious freedom are essential. However, in this critical moment we must pressure our leaders to turn back from this precipice of unspeakable violence, or this dream will not have a future.

We call upon all Unitarian Universalists to open our hearts and be present to the depths of human suffering in this moment – not just by one group, but by people of many nationalities, identities, and religions. We commit to identifying and mitigating the evils of anti-Semitism, anti-Arabism, and Islamophobia in our own tradition and to address their toxic legacies wherever we encounter them. Our faith rejects all forms of nationalism and supremacy, and insists that we struggle for multiracial, multi-religious democracy in our own nation and across the world. We encourage all Unitarian Universalists to take action in solidarity not only with global movements for ceasefire, but with liberatory pro-democratic movements of all kinds that are working toward a future that contains the conditions of possibility for a true and enduring peace.

Access this statement, with additional resources and links to statements from partner organizations, on our website. <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/uua-condemns-violence-urges-ceasefire>

Rev. Dr. Sofia Betancourt also signed on to a joint letter from our partner, Churches for Middle East Peace, and a diverse group of religious organizations to urge President Biden to call for a comprehensive permanent ceasefire between Israel and Palestine. <https://cmep.salsalabs.org/pr-feb152024>

On October 17, 2023, the UUA issued a statement condemning the government of Israel's ongoing bombardment of Gaza and urging international intervention to prevent further catastrophic loss of life. Read that full statement on our website: <https://www.uua.org/pressroom/press-releases/catastrophe-gaza-and-israel>

On November 6, 2023, the UUA gathered Muslim and Jewish UU professionals to host a webinar entitled, "Why We Cannot Turn Away: Resources for UUs Engaging Palestine & Israel." A recording of the webinar, a resource guide, and other materials are available on our website. <https://www.uua.org/international-justice/uua-statements-palestine/israel/resources-engaging-palestine-israel>