



THE MESSENGER

FIRST UNITARIAN

Albuquerque • East Mountains • Socorro

January 2022

This Month's Theological Theme Is Living with Intention.

i am running into a new year/and the old years blow back/like a wind/that i catch in my hair...

Every New Year, the words of Lucille Clifton's poem ring in my mind. The beginning of a new year is an auspicious time, inviting creativity, novelty, and optimism. Across cultures, people celebrate New Year's Eve with an eclectic array of rituals including:

- Eating 12 grapes
- Being sure to have money in their wallet
- Writing down what they want to leave behind and then burning the paper
- Getting dressed up
- Kissing someone
- Fireworks, sparklers, or noisemakers
- Running around the block with a suitcase in hand, and
- Wearing undergarments that are red (for love) or yellow (for money)



Many people also make a New Year resolution of some kind. But as we head into our third pandemic year, am I the only one who fears (only-half jokingly!) that making personal plans will only invite more trouble? Things still seem pretty unpredictable. Perhaps January's theological theme offers a better alternative. Instead of being resolute, why not take a few minutes to reflect on your intention for 2022? Intention contains the Latin roots for "to stretch toward." Regardless of outside forces, we can set an intention of practicing compassion, of being more of our authentic selves, of asking for what we need, of doing random acts of kindness—or whatever would help you grow in spirit and in love. With a spirit of experimentation, our intentions will guide us in living faithfully and joyfully though life's ups and downs.

May 2022 be a year of connection, abundance, and joy. Happy New Year!

Blessings,

Membership & The Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 30

Unitarian Universalism's 5th Principle is "*The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large.*" Our congregation puts this principle into action every year during our Annual Congregational Meeting on the last Sunday of January. We vote for members of our board of directors and standing committees; approve a financial budget for the year; decide which nonprofit organizations will receive designated Change for the Future funds; and vote on other business. This year, that other business includes approving the Strategic Plan for 2022-2026, which establishes the church's vision for the next 5 years. **All are welcome to attend, but you must be a member in good standing as of December 31, 2021 to vote.** Voting membership is attained 30 days after signing the Membership book, or a designated proxy. Members eligible to vote are those who made a financial contribution of any amount during the last year, unless specific alternate arrangements have been made with church staff. If you need to make a contribution to bring your membership into good standing, mail a check to the church office before the end of the year, or go to our Giving Page:

<https://uuabq.org/pledging-and-contributions/giving-page/>

Worship Calendar for January

Community News



Rev. Bob and His Advisory Committee Want To Hear From You

I know it may be hard to believe, but I arrived in Albuquerque back in that distant, pre-pandemic time known as Fall 2019. In the past two years, you've gotten to know me as your parish minister, mostly remotely. This entire time, I have been working alongside Rev. Angela, who is a constant fount of feedback and excellent advice. I have a ministerial mentor, Rev. Joel Miller, who serves our UU church in Indianapolis. And I have an advisory committee made up of members of this congregation.

Since Fall 2019, Larry Alei, Kelsey Atherton, Judy Goering, Gilbert Gutierrez, and Carla Williams have met with me every month. Joining us this year is Jerilyn Bowen. Our meetings are wonderful. I talk about the joys and learning opportunities that came up in the last month. I'm asked hard questions about the decisions I make in the pulpit and in daily ministry. And I receive affirmation. I'm so grateful to these thoughtful people for sharing their time and wisdom all this year.

To help me and the advisory committee out, we're seeking your feedback on my ministry, which will help us better understand exactly what is going on in the congregation, and how best I can continue to serve you as your minister. It's important for me to hear your thoughts and impressions of my work for First Unitarian. This feedback will, in part, inform how the committee writes my fall evaluation to the UUA's Ministerial Fellowship Committee, who will determine if I will receive what they call a "renewal." This is a statement that the UUA approves of my work and that I'm one step closer to receiving Full Fellowship as a UU minister.

One note about giving feedback: Because we are all in covenant, we ask that anyone offering feedback tell us who they are. This allows the committee and me to respond—perhaps to offer context or make amends—or simply to say thank you. Anonymous feedback doesn't allow for any of those important relationship-building practices.

Your feedback helps me become a better minister, so please reach out to them at the emails below:

Larry Alei: alei_79@yahoo.com

Kelsey Atherton: kelsey.d.atherton@gmail.com

Jerilyn Bowen: jbowen1@unm.edu

Judy Goering: goering1951@yahoo.com

Gilbert Gutierrez: nvomxo@hotmail.com

Carla Williams: toosnoop@yahoo.com

Membership Milestones

Welcome to our newest members who joined the church in December!

Julie & Steve Hartig

Rebecca Leeman

Shanna Sasser

Cierra Wagner

Happy Membership Anniversary in January!

Ten Years

Eliza Schmid

Fifteen Years

Sandra Noll

Pat Parrish

Jennifer & Tom Stark

Deedee & Sean Stroud

Anna Watkins

Twenty Years

Cheri Masitti

Forty Years

Jane Baldwin

Ready to Join?

Our next New Member Joining Ceremony is on **Sunday, February 6 at 12:15 pm in Memorial Hall**. To join, you must be at least 14 years old, in agreement with our Mission Covenant, and have made an identifiable financial contribution to the church. You can RSVP for the ceremony by filling out a Ready to Join form on our website (<https://uuabq.org/becoming-a-member/ready-to-join-form/>) or by visiting the Membership Table after in-person worship on Sundays. Email our Director of Membership & Communications, Laura Magnusson, at LMags@uuabq.org with any questions.

Healthy Community and Conflict Resolution

The Healthy Community Committee continues to serve the congregation by providing resources for dealing with conflicts within the church, including those involving members, committees & teams, and ministers. For more information, please see our brochure at the church website under [About - Governance & Organization - Conflict Resolution & Healthy Community](#). To reach the HCC directly, email hcc@uuabq.org.

Virtual Worship: Sundays at 9:00 am

Enter Meeting ID: 168 223 701 or [click here](#).

In-Person Worship: Sundays at 11:00 am

Social distancing will be observed and masks will be required.

Virtual Vespers: Wednesdays at 7:00 pm

Enter Meeting ID: 593 831 292 or [click here](#).

Grief Support Group

Many in our beloved congregation are grieving the deaths of beloved spouses, partners, family members, or friends. Pandemic isolation has made it much harder for us to comfort one another as we would have even a year ago.

Our First Unitarian Care Team will offer a six-week **Grief Support Group starting on March 1 from 6:00-7:30 pm on Tuesdays**. If congregational policies allow, we will gather in person. If not, we will use Zoom. The group provides a supportive environment for anyone experiencing personal grief. Facilitated sessions offer companionship, support, information, and activities to assist with your unique grief journey. Experience tells us that you are best served by this opportunity 6-36 months after the death. If you think you will benefit from this kind of support, please consider registering for the spring session.

You can sign up by emailing Caring@uuabq.org, or by leaving a message with Penny in the church office at (505) 884-1801. We will want your name, phone, and email contact information at the time you sign up.

We Light a Candle

We grieve the sudden death of church member Paul Caskey, who died on December 15. We hold his wife Mary Turpin and his mother Molly Caskey in our loving care.

We light a candle for David Manning as he enters hospice care, and hold his wife Sarah in our hearts.

We mourn with Will Ranken, whose sister Doris has died at the age of 90.

We hold Samantha Miranda in our heart while her father recovers from a heart attack.

If you're experiencing difficulties, health issues, or transitions, reach out to our Caring Network at caring@uuabq.org.

January 2

“Emerging into Joy”

The Worship Coordinators

In these pandemic years, we have been waiting. Though in many ways the world still holds its breath, can we begin to emerge into joy? This interactive service will incorporate our annual worship stations, both in person and on Zoom.

January 9

“Intention”

The Rev. Angela Herrera

In physics, “inertia” describes the way things that are in motion continue in that motion until some external force interrupts. It's what you might call the “same old, same old” quality of matter. Our lives can also take on an inertia-like quality, perhaps heading in a less than satisfying direction, unless we apply intention to them.

January 16

“Within, Among, Without”

The Rev. Bob LaVallee

The work of anti-racism and anti-oppression requires that we encounter it on a variety of levels; within ourselves, in our relationships, and in the systems and institutions of the world. A big first step is understanding what kind of effort is required for what level. On this Sunday before Martin Luther King Day, Rev. Bob LaVallee will explore how we might do this as individuals and as a congregation.

January 23

“Unintended Consequences”

The Rev. Angela Herrera

Sometimes we set out with the best intentions, and then things go hilariously or terribly wrong. What then?

January 30

“Eulogies”

The Ministers & Spare Parts

The popular, annual service dedicated to notable (if sometimes unknown) people who died in the last year. We'll celebrate some of the regular people whose lives touched ours, even if we never knew their names. Inventors, activists, scientists, musicians and more... come for good music and good stories; leave with a spring in your step.

Community News

Monthly Financial Update

Our Operating Fund financial position has improved from last month, due to the large amount of contributions we have received. Thank you! Our operating expenses are still low, because the campus was closed most of the year. We currently have an Operating Fund Balance of \$62,711 and we are still expecting more year-end Pledge Payments through December. We appreciate your generosity! If you have questions, please contact our Director of Finance, Phillip Robinson, at accountant@uuabq.org.

First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque				
2021 Financial Update				
(Fund 01- Operating Revenue & Expenses)				
As of 11/30/2021	2021 Budget	2021 Nov YTD Actual	2021 Forecast	Comments
Contribution Revenue	982,436	892,088	959,155	Contributions are slightly down, Need 2021 pledge payments
Other Revenue	48,950	30,371	31,039	Low due to deferred reopening
TOTAL REVENUE	1,031,386	922,459	990,193	
Compensation Expenses	782,725	673,650	733,714	Low due to deferred reopening
Operating Expenses	139,000	120,257	129,445	Low due to deferred reopening
Program Expenses	31,800	20,253	21,581	Low due to deferred reopening
Capital Expenses	86,084	67,686	86,084	Expected as budgeted
Other Expenses	98,333	84,457	95,668	Low due to deferred reopening
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,137,942	966,304	1,066,493	
EXCESS INCOME/EXPENSES	-106,556	-43,845	-76,299	
Allocated Surplus- Prior Yr	106,556	106,556	106,556	
ENDING SURPLUS / DEFICIT	0	62,711	30,257	Ending Fund Balance

Board of Directors Update

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Meeting on January 30 at 2:00 pm. We will have important decisions to make together.

The Strategic Planning Task Force will present five directions that have emerged from discussions with many church groups, members, and friends. **We will vote on whether to commit to these strategic directions for the next 5 years:**

Anti-Racism / Anti-Oppression: Embracing multiple cultures in our church and building our relational skills to be fully inclusive;

Church for All Ages: Weaving all ages into all we do to support each other at each stage of our lives;

Engagement & Connection: Strengthening connections and deepening relationships to care for each other;

Welcoming Campus: Putting our campus to work to serve our values;

Social Justice: Joining forces with community partners and our youth to work for social, economic, and environmental justice.

The congregation will also vote on next year's budget. We are facing a significant gap between pledges and an

SAVE THE DATE!



2022
CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING
 SUNDAY, JANUARY 30
 2:00 PM

operating budget that includes newer paid positions—Director of Operations, Director of Finance, IT support, Tech Arts Director—as well as our fabulous first-rate ministers and existing church staff.

The budget assumes the ability to rent out space in the Arc Building from time to time to cover the cost of owning it—anticipated at \$8,000/year. Given our current funding gap, the Board is looking to a new Director of Operations to explore viable options for the Arc Building, including a 2-3 year lease—hopefully to a non-profit that aligns with our mission and values—until we can update our campus master plan in 2023.

The budget does not yet include items we know we need, but don't currently have funds to cover, including:

Funds for training on diversity, inclusion, implicit bias, cultural competence, and interpersonal skills which we will need for a focused year of action in 2022, **leading to a vote on adopting the 8th Principle in 2023.**

Funds to update our Campus Master Plan (~\$15,000), which includes deciding how best to use the Arc Building (and what to call it!), incorporate it into our campus, and phase out the Arnold/Wesson Building, which is at the end of its life.

Funds to cover a paid position for a Social Justice Coordinator.

These funding gaps echo the Strategic Directions, highlighting the gaps between where church members want to be, and where they see our church now. We are a healthy and growing church, and we have big dreams—some which may be future phases of a larger vision.

We are also a church of ourselves; we travel together on a long road. I am so grateful to journey with all of you.

- *Mikaela Renz-Whitmore, President*

Religious Education



From Our Director of Religious Education



“At the center of your being, you have the answer; you know who you are, and you know what you want.”

-Lao Tzu

Greetings!

This month's resources mention that *Living with Intention* seems to be more about allowing us to connect with who we already are. I loved reading this and thinking about our kids through this lens. There's so much focus on who kids will become, and yet, we can already see in our children that they are builders, or readers, or artists, and so much more. They already possess the talents and interests that will carry them into adulthood. We must give them opportunities to explore what's out there and take what excites them—often, that excitement turns out to be because of what's already in them, even if we (and they) didn't know it yet.

I hope you all have been enjoying the weekly lessons I've been sharing. I'll continue sending links to recordings of great stories and fun activities and things to ponder to our registered families. Our stories will explore Intention through the lenses of Empathy, Passion, Persistence, Accepting Mistakes, and Pausing. At church, we'll continue to connect to each other through play. It is my intention to have children and families associate our RE program with fun and friends. We'll grow from there!

Mia Noren
 Director of Religious Education, Credentialed
Dre@uuabq.org

The very best way to stay up to date with the latest in First U RE is to register your children/youth in our program. It's free, and you'll remain on our email list which we use to communicate the most to date information about classes, holidays, and events. You also get access to our exclusive Facebook page, a special birthday gift from us, and more! [Click here to register](#) your family or use this QR code to go to the new Google form registration.



Our Current Programming for Children

Our children need time to play. Time spent outside on our playground helps children re-establish connection with adults, other children, and our church environment. If you are comfortable with returning, we are here. If you're waiting, we'll be here when you're ready. The theme of play and interaction will continue.

In the case of inclement weather, I will offer our chapel and entry hallways as a place for indoor activities such as art and block play. When we have more volunteers, we can expand into other rooms.

If you want to be a part of our RE community, please consider volunteering for a session of play! Click here: <https://tinyurl.com/UUABQplay>. We are not yet asking for volunteer teachers.

At home, parents have been responsible for the Religious Education of their children. Noting that families are not returning in large numbers yet, Mia has begun creating weekly posts and emails featuring a recorded storybook on the theme, and an activity to do with your children. Please give feedback on how this is working for you, how it could be better, or even if you don't find it helpful.

Youth News



Katie Covey, the DRE for Soul Matters, shared that her research for this month's youth packet, *Living with Intention*, revealed that "intention is different from setting goals or resolutions in that it 'pulls us into' who we truly are. Goals and resolutions 'push us out' into future

possibilities." To set intentions, we must listen to our inner voice, which tells us who we truly are.

This distinction is especially important this month—a time we hear tons of talk about creating goals and imagining who we might become. We've likely all heard about New Year's resolutions, which seem to be all about creating a "brand new you." But might there be a deeper part of us that longs to simply lean into who we already are? Finally be you!

We'll explore the skills it takes to live with intention: passion, persistence, accepting mistakes, and taking pause.

Alana Rodriguez (youth@uuabq.org)
 Youth Programs Coordinator, RE Assistant

Connect & Learn

Sunday Explorations

Bring your tea or coffee and join us at 10:00 on Sundays!

Meeting ID: 842 4289 2753/Passcode: 041625

This month, Sunday Explorations topics will include documents from UU figures in our rich history. We will explore topics that, although addressed more than a century ago, have some relevance as we consider social issues of today. Copies of the readings will be sent prior to the discussions.

January 2: "The Sympathy of Religions." 1870

Thomas Wentworth Higginson was a UU minister, an author, lecturer, and abolitionist. He spoke of a common core of all religions. Let's consider his radical message of his time. Angela Merkert, facilitator.

January 9: "On the Equality of the Sexes." 1790

Judith Sargent Murray was the first published American advocate for women's rights. Read her essay of advocacy and consider its relevance in today's challenging discourse. Angela Merkert, facilitator.

January 16: "The Great Lawsuit. Man vs Men.

Woman vs Women." 1843 Margaret Fuller called for more than the spiritual equality that other UU ministers supported in the Transcendental movement. She challenged gender inequalities of marriage and spiritual doctrine. Let's consider how those inequalities manifest in our culture today. Angela Merkert, facilitator.

January 23: Keep Sharp: Build a Better Brain at Any Age

Sanjay Gupta, MD, a neurosurgeon and guest on CNN, is the author of this excellent book for the next series of classes. "Whether you're concerned about memory loss or want to boost your mental acuity, this book presents the latest science in accessible language." Ron Friederich, MD, facilitator.

January 30: "On the Errors of the Trinity." 1531

Michael Servetus made an early radical challenge to the Christian concept of the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost. How did he approach his critique and what is its relevance today? Note that this was written almost five centuries ago. Angela Merkert, facilitator.

Music Notes from Susan Peck

Our musical highlight in January is the annual Eulogies service on January 30, featuring Spare Parts, our contemporary band. We will share songs to honor some of the notable musicians who passed in 2021, including beloved singer-songwriter Nancy Griffith, Jamaican songwriter and percussionist Bunny Wailer, Broadway legend Stephen Sondheim, groundbreaking lesbian rocker Alix Dobkin, folk hymnist Bill Staines, jazz pianist Chick Corea, iconic Supremes sounder Mary Wilson, and as many others as we can fit. Contact Susan (speck@uuabq.org) if you would like to contribute (even on one song) and are available for Tuesday evening rehearsals. **We will eulogize more musicians lost in 2021 at our Zoom Open Mic on January 23 (4th Sunday @ 4:00).**

Sol Singers and Chalice Choir continue to rehearse, masked and widely spaced. Both choirs will be seeking opportunities to sing for others in outdoor settings. All are welcome to join the singing. Sol Singers, our pastoral care choir, meets every Monday in the Social Hall, 5:30 - 6:30, with a Zoom option. Sol Singers sing healing chants, music to celebrate the earth and seasons, and folk hymns, all in the aural tradition. Chalice Singers meet Thursdays in the Social Hall, 6:30 - 8:00, singing four-part choral repertoire from a variety of sources.

English & Citizenship Tutors Needed

First Unitarian's Adult Literacy and Citizenship program has been functioning online or in vaccinated small groups since 2020. At the end of January, we are hoping to register students for in-person English and Citizenship Classes on Monday evenings from 6:15 to 8:00 pm. As some online teaching will also continue, we need three types of volunteers: those who will teach in-person Monday evenings, some who will teach individuals online, and some who will assist with the online application for citizenship program for people who have been pre-screened by the NMILC. Citizenship applications are usually completed in 2 to 3 hours and training will be provided. As we don't yet know how many students will register, we don't know how many tutors and substitutes we will need. Please contact Connie Molecke at conniemolecke@gmail.com if you are considering volunteering for this program.



Groups & Activities

Wisdom Circle: The Poetry of Conflict Resolution

Saturday, January 15 10:00 am - noon

As we venture forth into another challenging year, we of the elder persuasion will come together to enjoy poems by Joy Harjo and Mark Nepo that concern resolving conflicts. Casey Spivey will lead the discussion and provide copies of the poems along with the questions to be addressed. All are welcome. Bring your seasoned wisdom along and something fortifying to sip. Given the surges of Covid variants, we may need to go back to meeting on zoom for awhile. If so, Jerilyn will let the Wisdom Circle list know before the January meeting and provide a link. If it turns out we'll be meeting in person as usual in January and you'd prefer to attend on zoom, let her know and she'll arrange for that. Contact Jerilyn at jbowen1@unm.edu.

Earth Web's Green Corner

At our December meeting, we had a great conversation with Laura Paskus, author of *At the Precipice, New Mexico's Changing Climate*, published in 2020 by UNM Press. Laura is a longtime reporter based in Albuquerque, currently the environmental reporter for NM PBS, where she produces a monthly series, "Our Land: New Mexico's Environmental Past, Present and Future" for New Mexico in Focus.

Earth Web is having a four-session book study on *At The Precipice* starting January 30, and then on February 13, 27, and March 13. We will meet on Zoom from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. If you would like to sign up for the study, get a copy of the book and start reading! Email Marilyn O'Boyle at marilynlea@aol.com, so you can be a part of the group and get the Zoom link.

CUUPS This Month

Coyote Willow CUUPS will have a **Virtual Semi-Annual Meeting on Friday, January 14 at 7:00 pm**. We will vote on officer positions, set our calendar for the next six months, decide what direction we want our CUUPS group to go in, and where we will direct our attention and energy for the next half of the year. After our business is complete, if time permits, it will give us time to socialize. Eating dinner during the meeting is perfectly acceptable! Please have a candle and source of flame nearby. Email bboydbabe@gmail.com for the Zoom log in information.

Family Promise Update

Family Promise is a national organization supporting families experiencing homelessness, and First Unitarian has been supporting this project for 5 years. Our volunteers cook meals, and provide laundry service and supplies for families. We will host four weeks in 2022: February 27 - March 6, April 10 - 17, July 31 - August 7 and October 30 - November 6.

Family Promise ABQ is now in their new space at 1516 San Pedro Dr NE, 87110, and renovations are underway in order to house 8 families, who will remain at Church of the Good Shepherd until the renovations are completed. You can support Family Promise by sending financial donations to the above address.

It has been my honor to serve as the Family Promise Coordinator for the past 3 years. The friendships gained and work we have done together make me so proud and grateful. I am stepping back now and welcoming Peggy Whitmore into the Coordinator's shoes!! Thank you for your continued support!

Paula Fisher



The Bread, Wine, and Book Club will meet on **Friday, January 14 at 7:00 pm**. Our book will be *Hamnet: A Novel of the Plague* by Maggie O'Farrell. Contact Martha Beyerlein (martha.beyerlein@comcast.net) for more information.

The Monday Afternoon Book Club will meet **Monday, January 17 at 1:30 pm** on Zoom. Our book this month is *Shaman Winter* by Rudolfo Anaya. Contact Joyce Etheridge at 509-308-5523 for further information.

The Nonfiction Book Group meets every Wednesday at 2:00 pm in the Arnold Room. Contact Bob Wood (robertwood@gmail.com) for more information.

The Readings on Racism Group meets the last Wednesday of each month at 3:30 pm. Contact Elly Van Mil (emvmil@yahoo.com) to be added to their email list.



First Unitarian
A Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Albuquerque • East Mountains • Socorro
3701 Carlisle Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110

www.uuabq.org 505-884-1801

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
- DATED MATERIAL -

Sunday Worship Services

Virtual Worship

9:00 am

Albuquerque

11:00 am in the Sanctuary

East Mountains

11:00 AM

1 Deanna Ln.

Edgewood

(off Dinkle Road)

Socorro

3:00 PM

Epiphany Episcopal
Church, 908 Leroy Place

Change for the Future 2022

The Social Justice Council has opened applications for Change for the Future 2022. Organizations that meet the criteria for consideration can submit applications online at <https://uuabq.org/2022-cftf/> by the **deadline, January 20, 2022**. The criteria are (1) having a First U member as a sponsor, (2) being a local impact group (the organization can be broader but must have local impact), (3) not having received any SJC funding for the past two years. Organizations will be able to give a presentation to the church community immediately before the Annual Meeting on January 30. Four organizations will be selected by the congregation, each receiving 3 months of Change for the Future funds. Typical funding amounts range between \$1500 and \$2500 for one quarter's donations. Please contact Bethe Orrell (beeweaveit@gmail.com) if you have questions.