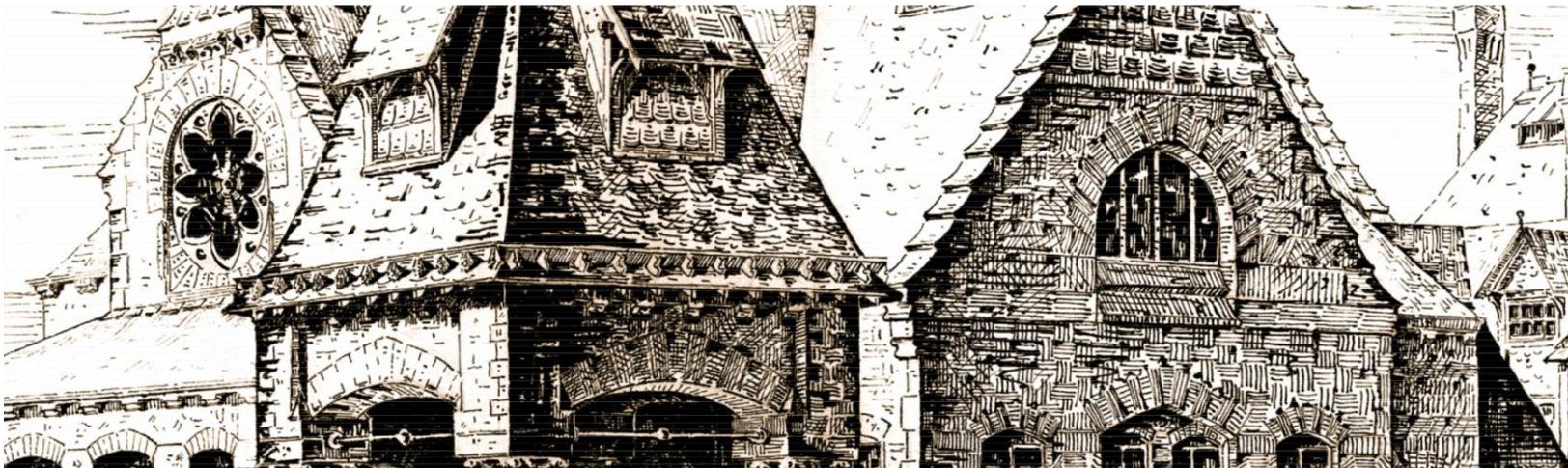


# The Beacon

The Monthly Newsletter of the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia

December, 2018



## December Worship Services Theme: Hope

### After Mecca

*Sunday, December 2, 11:00am, Sanctuary*

*Led by: Rev. Abbey Tennis*

After decades of feeling dispirited by racism in the United States, Malcolm X found unexpected hope in seeing Muslims of all races coming together in harmony on his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1964. Where can we turn when hope is hard to find?

\* *Children's Religious Education (CRE) will start in the main sanctuary. Children are invited upstairs to CRE after our time for all ages.*

### Releasing Hope

*Sunday, December 9, 11:00am, Sanctuary*

*Led by: Rev. Abbey Tennis*

Poet Emily Dickenson writes "hope is a thing with feathers." Yet, like with all feathered creatures, if we cling too tightly to hope, we risk destroying it. What gifts arrive when we let go of all hope?

\* *Children's Religious Education (CRE) will start in the Joseph Priestley Chapel, located directly in front of the side entrance.*

### Hope from the Journey

*Sunday, December 16, 11:00am, Sanctuary*

*Led by: Rev. Abbey Tennis*

Join us for our intergenerational \*no rehearsal\* pageant as we explore hope's hidden locations along the mountainous journey of life.

\* *Children invited to be in the Sanctuary to participate in the pageant if they would like, no preparation required! Childcare will also be available upstairs.*

### Blue Christmas

*Sunday, December 23, 11:00am, Sanctuary*

*Led by: Rev. Abbey Tennis*

Sermon description coming. Check out [www.philauu.org](http://www.philauu.org) for the latest worship updates.

\* *Children's Religious Education (CRE) will start in the Joseph Priestley Chapel, located directly in front of the side entrance.*

## Christmas Eve: Candlelit Service of Lessons and Carols

Monday, December 24, 6:30pm, Sanctuary

Led by: Rev. Abbey Tennis

Join us for our annual candlelit service to share the ancient story of hope reborn, sing carols, and reflect on the meaning of Christmas in our lives and in the world. Stay after for a reception in the Parish Room. The plate collection during this service will be for the church's pastoral care fund.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Advent Vespers Services

Contact Rev. Abbey at [minister@pbilauu.org](mailto:minister@pbilauu.org)

Join us for our monthly contemplative evening worship service, a time to rest from the demands of the world and immerse ourselves in the beauty of singing meditation and a candlelit Sanctuary. Feel free to join us at 6PM with your voice or an instrument for a drop-in musical rehearsal prior to the service, or to help set up.

Next Vespers Service: Wednesday, December 5, 7PM



## News and Notes!

### Holiday & Hope Fest

Sunday, December 16th, following Sunday service

Our Holiday & Hope Fest is a great way to celebrate the winter and holiday and renew hope while benefiting the church. Join us after service on the 16th! Want to help make it happen? This year, the coordinators are asking for help in the following ways:

1. Bring new or like-new gifts to be sold and re-gifted during this holiday season. These items will be collected during coffee hour on Sunday December 9 and 15. Maximum price limit is \$10.
2. Come to a workday on Saturday, December 15 to help prepare and decorate! We will be in the church from 12pm - 4pm.

3. Bake holiday treats to be sold at the Fest. These items can be brought to the help day on Saturday, December 15.
4. Put together a gift basket for silent auction
5. Perform music at the Fest!

Please contact Luana at [luanagoodwin@gmail.com](mailto:luanagoodwin@gmail.com) or stop by the Holiday Fest coffee hour table after service on Sunday.

### Stuffing Backpacks for People Experiencing Homelessness

Wednesday, December 19, Sanctuary, 6pm

Join Philadelphia's [Bethesda Project](#) to provide urgently needed items for people without adequate shelter in Philadelphia.

### Paul Winter's "Missa Gaia" & Winter Solstice Concert

Friday, December 22nd, 8:00 PM

Join us for a choral performance of the Missa Gaia (Mass for the Earth) to celebrate community, the earth and winter solstice, presented by the Greater Philadelphia Unitarian Universalist Cluster. Suggested donation of \$15. No one turned away for lack of funds.

### POWER Racial Justice Discussion

Tuesday, December 11, 12pm

Congregation Rodelph Shalom, 615 N. Broad St.

Join First Unitarian Church at POWER's second Racial Justice Lecture and Conversation with invited speaker, Rev. Deth Im, Director of Formation with Faith in Action. During this luncheon talk Rev. Im will discuss strategies for tackling the dimensions of racism in our organizing work and campaigns. To learn more and RSV, visit [powerinterfaith.org](http://powerinterfaith.org)!

### First Unitarian Church getting new software tools for everyone!

A dedicated team of staff and members are exploring different congregant-relationship-management software tools, that will allow lay leaders congregants to connect to each other more easily, promote events, coordinate ministry teams,

donate easily through a smartphone app, and RSVP for events on a shared calendar.

What kinds of features would you like to see? What have been some challenges in communicating, connecting, and coordinating that you've had that could be resolved by better software tools? Let Communications and Membership Director, Ben Kuss know at [communications@philauu.org](mailto:communications@philauu.org). As we move forward in this process we will update the congregation!

### **Give Now for Staff Holiday Bonuses**

Our congregation is committed to raise \$5,000 for year-end holiday bonuses for our devoted staff. Please make your tax-deductible gift before Sunday, December 16 ([www.philauu.org/donate](http://www.philauu.org/donate) or by check or cash in a pledge envelope) to show your gratitude and support for our extraordinary staff. Be sure to note "Holiday Bonus" in the memo line!

### **Usher and Greeter Training**

*December 9, following service, meet in back of Sanctuary*  
*Contact: Membership and Communications Director, Ben Kuss at [communications@philauu.org](mailto:communications@philauu.org)*

Are you interested in ushering at First Unitarian Church but not sure what is involved? Have you been an usher but want a chance to brush up on some of the finer points of meeting and greeting people? Come to a brief but effective usher training after service.

### **Seeking Holiday Poinsettia Donations!**

Beautify our sanctuary with these traditional colorful holiday plants this season! A 6" Poinsettia may be purchased for \$15.00 to remember or honor your loved ones. All dedications will appear in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Orders of Service. The plants are available to take home after the holiday services (or you can let them grace our church until services on January 1). Make checks payable to First Unitarian Church and write "Poinsettia" in the memo line. Alternatively, you can pay online by credit card at [philauu.org/donate](http://philauu.org/donate) or place cash in an envelope in the collection plate. Remember to make a memo of "poinsettia" and

include the wording for your dedication!  
Reservations needed by Sunday, December 16.

### **New Member Ceremony**

*Sunday, December 9, 10:00am, Parish Room for reception, and during 11:00am Service, Sanctuary*

Are you feeling ready to join? If you have found your spiritual home here, we invite you to officially become a member on December 9! Those considering membership are encouraged to attend a UU & You and "Pathways" Class, and email

[membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org), but all who feel ready are welcome. New members should arrive at 10:00am for a reception in the Parish room and sign the membership book prior to the ceremony taking place during service.

### **Make a Meal for the Winter Shelter!**

*Contact: Coordinator Valerie*

*Flower, [valerieraeflower@gmail.com](mailto:valerieraeflower@gmail.com)*

We will once again make a meal for the Winter Shelter every third Friday beginning in November. Winter Shelter is a cooperative association with the Community Outreach Partnership (CORP) programs at Trinity Memorial Church (22nd & Spruce) to feed and serve the 15-20 men who spend the night there from November through April. We need volunteers to provide a complete home-cooked meal with vegetables and dessert as well as serve it from 6-8:00 PM. You do not need to be a member to volunteer to participate. Please register with Valerie Flower in advance. A sign-up sheet is available at the Welcome Table at the back of Sanctuary now.

### **Announcing Friends of 2125**

Friends of 2125 Chestnut Street, a recently-founded 501c3, will raise awareness of our building's importance and fundraise for its preservation and modernization. We have recently received approval from the Commonwealth and have submitted for our tax-exempt status. The Board of Directors will have church and non-church membership, all appointed by the Board of Trustees of the church. The founding and current Board members are Luana Goodwin, President; Caroline Winschel, Treasurer; and Anthony Campisi, At Large. They will report further as this process moves along.

**First U Improv is Back!**

*First Unitarian Church, Parish Room,*

*Second and Fourth Tuesdays, 6pm - 8pm*

*Contact: Jo at 408-636-8383, or David at 215-760-5782*

Join us for a fun and free weekly community improvisation group! All ages/ abilities and drop-ins welcome! Come take risks, be silly, and maybe try something new, all in a safe, supportive environment.

Find us on Facebook: First U Improv.

## Welcome Newcomers!

WELCOME to the First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia! We are an intentionally diverse religious community inspired by our historic urban ministry: we seek to be guided by the wisdom and experience of people of all genders, theologies, ages, abilities, colors, classes, and sexual orientations. We aim “to lead meaningful lives, to love one another without prejudice, and to build a just and sustainable world.” If this congregation has become a religious home for you, we encourage you to become a member. We invite you to join us as we move into our third century as a center of liberal religious thought and action in Philadelphia.

### Let's Be in Touch!

Following each Sunday Service, we invite newcomers to join us during the Coffee Hour in our Parish Room for refreshments and conversation. While there, please fill out a Visitors' Form so we can keep in touch.

## Membership

Have you been attending services regularly and find yourself in sympathy with the Principles of Unitarian Universalism and the goals of this congregation?

- ❖ Do you feel "at home" here with this group of people and wish to deepen your connections to them?
- ❖ Do you want to keep growing spiritually and intellectually—expanding your heart and mind?
- ❖ Would you like to find ways to offer service to the larger community and work to make the world a better place?

If you respond positively to these questions, we invite you to consider joining as a Member! First Unitarian Universalist Church is happy to have visitors and friends as part of our community, but our congregation really comes alive through the commitment of our Members.

Please contact the Membership Ministry Team [membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org) for more information!

## Membership

[membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org)

To become a member of the First Unitarian Church, you must be 18 years of age and have attended one of our UU & You orientation sessions, or met with the minister in a scheduled appointment or belonged to a UU church elsewhere. Members are expected to take part in our congregational activities and to make a financial pledge according to their means.

### UU & You

*Sunday, January 6 following Worship, Sanctuary*

[membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org)

Come to an informal informational gathering especially designed for those who want to know more about us and our liberal religious movement! This roughly hour-long get-together offers attendees an opportunity to get to know one another and this congregation better, and includes a quick tour of Unitarian Universalist history and the story of this congregation.

### "Pathways" Class

*Saturday, January 26th, 1pm - 3pm, Parish Room*

**Childcare provided (please give advance notice)**

Contact: [minister@philauu.org](mailto:minister@philauu.org)

Have you attended a UU & You meeting and are considering joining First Unitarian Church? Come join us for a more in-depth "Pathways" class! We will get to know other newcomers, discuss our spiritual paths and the meaning of membership, and learn more about the history and vision of this congregation and faith. Email [membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org) with any questions!

### New Member Welcoming Ceremony

*Sunday, December 9, 10am reception in Parish room, and during 11am worship service*

Have you been considering membership at First Unitarian Church? If you feel like you've found your spiritual home here, we invite you to officially join on April 14<sup>th</sup>! Those considering membership are encouraged to attend a UU & You and "Pathways" Class, and email [membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org), but all who feel ready are welcome. New members should arrive at 10:00am for a reception in the Parish room and sign the membership book prior to the ceremony taking place during service.

## Upcoming Events & Programs

### Board Meeting Schedule

In all cases, meetings will begin at 6:30 PM at the church

- ❖ December 20, 2018
- ❖ January 17, 2018
- ❖ February 21, 2018

### Choir Rehearsal

Contact Nate Bergey at [musicdirector@philauu.org](mailto:musicdirector@philauu.org)

- ❖ **First Unitarian Choir** (main adult choir):  
Thursdays 7:00-9:00 & Sundays at 9:45
- ❖ **First Church Voices** (intergenerational choir - all ages and levels): 2nd Sunday of each month 12:30-1:30

### Prayer Shawl Ministry

First Sundays after service.

January 6, 2018. 12:30, Olympia Brown Room

February 3, 2018. 12:30, Olympia Brown Room

Contact: Aggie Rieger, [arieger@wellesley.edu](mailto:arieger@wellesley.edu)

The prayer shawl ministry is on a roll! In the Catholic tradition, prayer shawls are shawls or lap blankets thoughtfully created by congregants and blessed for people who are facing a physical health problem or emotional crisis. We will be meeting at least once this month (and every month in the future!) to share prayer/positive thought ideas, stitches/designs, and each other's company. You can also learn the basics of crochet at this meeting - no prior experience necessary! Knitters, crocheters, quilters, weavers, and all aspiring textile artists are welcome. Please bring any supplies that you would like to use for yourself or donate.

### Women's Book Club

Contact: Coordinator, Christine Carlson, 215-732-0308 or [christine.carlson333@gmail.com](mailto:christine.carlson333@gmail.com).

All women Bibliophiles invited to join in monthly discussions of previously chosen books in members homes. Book club meets the first Monday of the month. Come at 7:30 to meet and socialize with discussion facilitated by member to follow. Contact coordinator for Host instructions as well as answers to questions or to receive list of future readings.

**January 7, 2019:** Our annual meeting to select next year's books at the home of Christine Carlson. Please contact Christine at [christine.carlson333@gmail.com](mailto:christine.carlson333@gmail.com) to let her know you are coming.

### Architectural Tours of First Church

Fourth Sundays of every Month

Sunday, November 25, following services, Sanctuary

Contact: Richard Frey, [richardfrey@dca.net](mailto:richardfrey@dca.net)

Join an informal tour designed to give you an understanding of the architecture and decoration of the church, designed in 1883 by Frank Furness. Tours will be 30-45 minute guided tours to all parts of our great historic building. All are welcome. Our guide will be Richard Frey, a professional guide who has been studying the church since he joined 37 years ago. Meet after the Sunday service, at the bust of Joseph Priestley, on the west wall near the organ.



## Ministry Teams

### Children's Religious Education (CRE)

Contact: Director of Religious Education, Shantala Thompson  
[DRE@philauu.org](mailto:DRE@philauu.org).

### Volunteers Needed!!!

Our programs are **growing**, and we need your help! Religious Education is looking for amazing volunteers to work with our nursery and CRE. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Shantala Thompson at [DRE@philauu.org](mailto:DRE@philauu.org) to get involved.

*\*\*Please note that some volunteer positions will require a PA child abuse and criminal clearance.\*\**

### Descriptions:

- ❖ **Nursery** runs concurrently with worship service; volunteers are needed to assist the Nursery Director with supervision of babies and toddlers, 5 years old and under. Commitment is one Sunday per month.
- ❖ **CRE** runs concurrently with worship service; volunteers are needed to teach prepared lessons to children in grades K-3 or 4-6. Commitment is one Sunday per month.
- ❖ **High School:** Interested in coordinating a high school centered event? Let us know!

## Adult Spiritual Development

### Sunday Morning Meditation

1st and 2nd Sundays, 10 am, Chapel

Contact: Beth Ralston at

[elizabethralston123@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabethralston123@yahoo.com), 215-222-9507.

Would you like to include meditation as part of your Sunday morning worship experience? Join Beth Ralston for a half hour of silent meditation

prior to the regular service. No experience necessary!

## Membership Ministry Team

Email [membership@philauu.org](mailto:membership@philauu.org) to sign up!  
Or call the church office at 215-563-3980.

### Sign Up to Usher during November and December

We are in need of ushers and greeters for our Summer worship series. Please find the sign-up form on our website: [philauu.org/ushers](http://philauu.org/ushers) OR you may fill out a paper form in the back of the sanctuary. Remember, Summer services begin at 10:00am!

### Hospitality & Light Treats Needed!

Please bring cookies or some other light dessert for our Coffee Hour. Good coffee and something sweet encourages friendly conversation--and provides a special welcome for visitor

## Flowers

*Celebrate, Honor and Beautify*

[www.philauu.org/flowers](http://www.philauu.org/flowers)

Donating flowers is a great way to honor a loved one or celebrate a momentous occasion while simultaneously adding the beauty and color of flowers to our church services. When the service is finished, take the flowers home with you to enjoy. You may also include a special message about the person you're honoring or event you're celebrating which will be printed in the order of service and read during the sharing of joys and concerns. We're accepting flower reservations for the 2018-2019 church year. The donation is \$30.00. **If interested, please visit [www.philauu.org/flowers](http://www.philauu.org/flowers)**

**THE FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PHILADELPHIA**  
A UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATION

2125 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Church Office 215-563-3980 Fax 215-563-4209  
Office Hours 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
www.philauu.org • info@philauu.org



---

**Minister**

Rev. Abbey Tennis    Minister

**Executive Staff**

Norman Fouhy    Business Administrator  
Nic Tenaglia    Building Superintendent

**Program Staff**

Benjamin Kuss    Communications and Membership Director  
Shantala Thompson    Director of Religious Education  
Nate Bergey    Interim Music Director

**Sextons**

Jonathan Blount, Jim Devenney, Hye-Sung Gehring

**Board of Trustees**

Annemarie Vaeni    President  
Rebecca Ortenberg    Vice President  
Debby Schultz    Treasurer  
Noelia Rivera-Calderón    Secretary  
Stephen Oliver    Trustee  
Zinat Yusufzai    Trustee  
Matt Schreck    Trustee

**Congregational Moderator**

Mike Tomalin