



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF LITTLE ROCK

## Monthly News & Updates

February 2026 | VOL. 75  
ISSUE 2

### Worship Services

**Feb 1: Virtual Church (Winter Weather)**

Join a casual gathering via Zoom.

**Feb 8: "Embodying Resilience"**

Rev. Paul is in the pulpit.

**Feb 15: "Harmony with the Divine"**

Rev. Paul is in the pulpit.

**Feb 22: "Music & Mysticism"**

Rev. Paul is in the pulpit.



### Special Events

Black History Month is an annually observed commemorative month originating in the United States. It was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in February 1926, as a way to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, History, and culture to the global community.

It is commonly said that Woodson selected February to encompass the birthdays of two great Americans who played a prominent role in shaping black history, namely Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, whose birthdays are the 12th and the 14th, respectively. It's crucial to recognize that even though Black History Month centers on Black people, there is still an active part for allies to play. Read on for more...

### 10 am Forum Topics

**Feb 1: Cancelled Due to Winter Weather**

The program was to be Jeanne Brown sharing how she came to be a UU.

**Feb 8: Share the Plate - Hunger Relief**

This month we support the work of Potluck Food Rescue.

**Feb 15: UU Shared Values: Transformation**

Rich Roy will be the presenter.

**Feb 22: "What's on Your Mind?"**

Hosted by Clyde Bailey

## Upcoming Events

- 2/2 Between the Lines Book Club (7pm, Pehrson)
- 2/6 Card Playing Night (6-8pm, Pehrson)
- 2/8 Book Exchange & Recycling Sunday (Mehta)
- 2/8 Vegetarian Potluck (Mehta)
- 2/8 Exploring UU Class (1-3 Pehrson)
- 2/8 Focus Together (1-3 RE Downstairs)
- 2/10 Young at Heart Lunch (11:45am, Mehta)
- 2/11 Program Council Mtg. (5:15pm, Pehrson)
- 2/12 Site Ops Mtg. (12:30, Zoom)
- 2/15 Health & Safety Team Mtg (12:30, Sanctuary)
- 2/16 Forbidden Dialogue (6-8pm, Mehta)
- 2/17 Our House Meal Serving
- 2/17 UUCLR Board Meeting (7pm)
- 2/20 Short Story Discussion Group (Noon, Pehrson)
- 2/22 LUUnch Out! (location TBD)
- 2/23 Memorial Service: Bobbye Nixon (2pm)
- 2/28 Parents Night Out

Reminder: AARP uses Mehta each Thursday & Friday.

## Outer Circle Deadline

NOTE: The deadline for submitting information to the next Outer Circle is February 25th.



## Young at Heart Luncheon

Join the festivities at Young at Heart, Tuesday, February 10th, for pizza, salad, dessert, great conversation, friendships, and a visual treat of photos and commentary shared by Marvin and Sandy Schwartz of their extensive travels! Joanne Kriehn and Jeanne Brown coordinate volunteers to supply food, and we all are asked to donate \$10 to cover costs if we can. Also, many hands are needed for setup and cleanup before and after the 11:45 meeting time, so please offer your services if possible. We should finish around 1:15 or so. We look forward to a wonderful gathering on February 10th!

Warmly,  
Selma Blackburn, Coordinator

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View the online calendar to see times and locations of all the upcoming events - [www.uuclr.org](http://www.uuclr.org).

## First Friday Card Nights

Monthly card playing nights are continuing in to the new year. Look for these usually on first Fridays from 6-8pm in the Pehrson Room. All ages are welcome, as are BYO snacks and beverages. Come play with us!



**AARP Foundation**

**TAX-AIDE**

Free tax assistance for those who need it most

## AARP Free Tax Service

From January 29th until April 10th, our friends at AARP will be using the Mehta Wing each Thursday and Friday to provide free tax prep for anyone with a simple filing. These services are available to all ages!

## February Share the Plate & Special Challenge



The February recipient for Second Sunday is Potluck Food Rescue. Potluck Food Rescue is an important organization in the fight against hunger. When a grocery store wants to donate food that is close to the sell-by date, they turn to Potluck. If a gala has leftovers, they turn to Potluck. Potluck provides food once a month to our food pantry and to other kitchens and pantries in the Central Arkansas area. There are no fees to be a part of this.

In addition to being the Second Sunday organization, UUCLR has formed a team to participate in a 24-hr phone bank event to ask for donations. The event is Feb 25 and Feb. 26 to raise \$40,000 in just 24 hours. You can be a part of this team (DEADLINE FEB. 6), or you can be prepared to respond when you get a text request from one of the team.

Contact Nell Matthews, [uuclrnell@gmail.com](mailto:uuclrnell@gmail.com) or 501 563-6734 for more information.

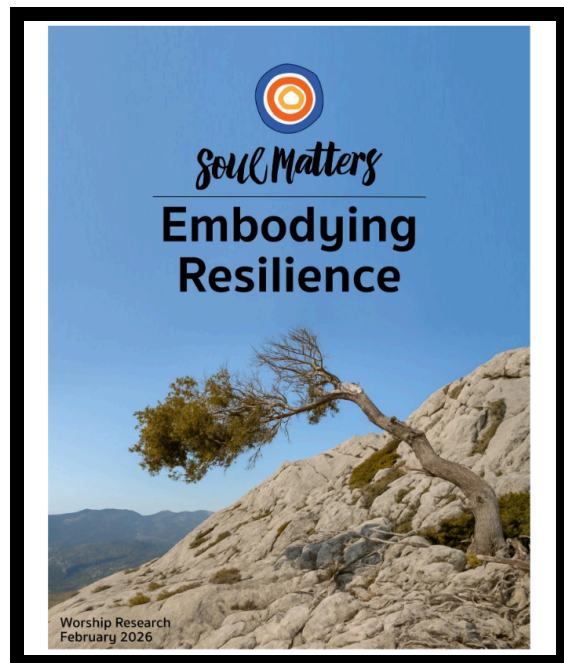
## Caring Concern: Kay Morgan

We are saddened by the passing of Kay last month. Service details will be shared soon.

[VIEW KAY'S OBITUARY](#)



## February's Worship Theme:



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## REFLECTIONS: “Something Different”



The hardest part was getting my car up onto the packed snow that had accumulated around it. At about 9:00am on Monday, January 26th, there was little traffic and the roads were plowed enough to drive comfortably with reasonable caution. I had no difficulty finding a parking place at the airport, and there was no bustling crowd inside. The flight to DFW was delayed, but far from fully booked and had ample available seats. Even DFW did not seem as bustling and crowded as usual. The flight to ABQ was full enough that they were asking for some volunteers to check carry-ons for free, but the necessary number of volunteers was low enough that I escaped.

I realized at that point that the reason I usually anticipate air travel with dread has a lot to do with the stress of being in crowds, having to rush from gate to gate to make a connection, and never knowing when an airline might throw a wrench in my plans. Just then, I wasn't feeling stressed. I had enjoyed the trip without the crowded, frantic pace, and with time between flights for a sit-down lunch. (Soup and salad - my doctor would approve!)

I was helped to start out feeling anxious when my original booking to Albuquerque was canceled due to the winter storm. Notified only on Sunday, I was rebooking the day before I left. And the app was a little glitchy. But I got it done and checked in online before bed.

I always expect air travel to be difficult. Lately, I expect the news to be depressing. I expect to see symptoms of a contentious society, even if most of my direct personal interactions are not so. Texts and emails will be mostly spam. Politicians across the country will solicit me for donations.

But then sometimes those expectations aren't met. Maybe I have a fairly stress-free travel day. And I notice the contrast between my anticipatory attitude and my actual experience.

It so happens I was reading a behavioral economist's account of dopamine a few days before my trip. The media talks about dopamine as “the pleasure chemical” in our brains. That's not quite right, according to my source. It's a neurotransmitter - a chemical that causes neurons to send electrical signals down the pathways in our brains - that registers the difference between our expectations and our actual experiences. If we receive an unexpected reward, our dopamine level rises. If we *expect* a reward that doesn't come, our dopamine level falls. If our expectations are exactly met, our dopamine level is unchanged. Dopamine causes neurons sensitive to it to fire in celebration. But it's not so much a celebration of pleasure as it is a celebration of an *unexpected* pleasure. Or so goes the behavioral economist's story.

This might seem to suggest that a curmudgeonly life has the greatest potential for happiness. But my unexpectedly low-stress trip suggests to me that I ought to keep cultivating more hope (to live in higher expectations) and keep cultivating more love (to make sure they are exceeded). Because, really, I spend a greater share of my life with my expectations than I do with moments when they are exceeded, disappointed, or met.

Rev. Paul Beedle

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## Board President's Message

Today is Sunday, February 1, which is several days past the due date for this edition of the Outer Circle! After so many days of ice and snow, I've completely lost track of the time. So, I'm in a rush, but I wanted to reflect on a few things on this cold, sunny, beautiful day.

First, I am full of gratitude for each of you. This morning was our second consecutive Sunday morning Zoom gathering in response to icy conditions at church. Seeing so many familiar, smiling faces on my iPad screen made me very happy. Second, days of solitude are lovely, and they are also an opportunity for quiet contemplation... which brings me back to gratitude for UUCLR. Our beloved community offers so many opportunities to help others, to receive help and support, to enjoy being together, to play games, to eat delicious food, to make music, and to be in sacred space – together. We can pick among a wide range of events and gatherings or plan one of our own. We can rely on our friends to join in or back us up as we go out into the world to make things a little better for our neighbors.

As we move into the spring with more sunshine and new growth, please take the time to consider the ways that you engage with our beloved community. Consider new opportunities you might want to explore. Think about ways we can grow and what we might need to facilitate that growth. We are a congregation that builds community and connections among our neighbors and other faith communities and social justice groups. And our lives are richer and more meaningful as a result of those beautiful connections.

With love and gratitude,  
Laurie Smith Prud'homme

## January Board Meeting Summary

Following approval of the minutes, we heard reports from Rev Paul, Finance Committee, Site Operations Council, and Executive Committee. We reviewed reports from the ad hoc committees including Governing Docs and OWL Feasibility. In old business, Health & Safety Team co-leaders Sherman James and Phil Peters made a presentation to the board revisiting the need for hiring a uniformed police officer followed by a lengthy discussion among the board members. The board will vote on the recommendation at the February board meeting. In new business, the board discussed clarifying language in the Rules and Regulations document stating team leaders are not required to be members of the church to serve. Several items were tabled until the February meeting due to time constraints, including board input on the 2026-27 UUCLR budget and voting on the proposed draft of the Rules and Regulations document.

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, February 19th, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Smith Prud'homme, President



### UUCLR is a Welcoming Congregation

Each of us has worth and dignity, and that worth includes our gender and our sexuality. As Unitarian Universalists (UUs), we not only open our doors to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, we value diversity of sexuality and gender and see it as a spiritual gift. We create inclusive religious communities and work for LGBTQ justice and equity as a core part of who we are. All of who you are is sacred. All of who you are is welcome.

## 8th Principle News

February is Black History Month. We hope you will take advantage of opportunities this month to deepen your understanding and connection to black history.

Mosaic Templars is a great way to start. Take the family. The newest exhibit is about the Rosenwald Schools. [Click here to learn more.](#)



On Thursday, February 19th from 6:00 to 7:30 pm there will be a Community Cafe at McDermott. Everyone is invited to come join to eat and fellowship with our neighbors. UUCLR will have a table and also need volunteers. Contact Margot Cameron at 501 912 5118 for more information.

Our next 8th Principle meeting will be February 24 at 5pm in the Pehrson Room.

[Learn More about the 8th Principle](#)

## RE-Questors started a new book on Sunday, February 1st.

The book for discussion is *A Brief History of Everyone Who Ever Lived: The Human Story Retold Through Our Genes* by Adam Rutherford. We meet on Sunday mornings at 10 AM in the UUCLR library. You do not have to read the book to join in the discussion. If you would like more information or an invitation to participate online, contact Joe Meehan ([josmeehan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:josmeehan@sbcglobal.net)).



### What can you do?

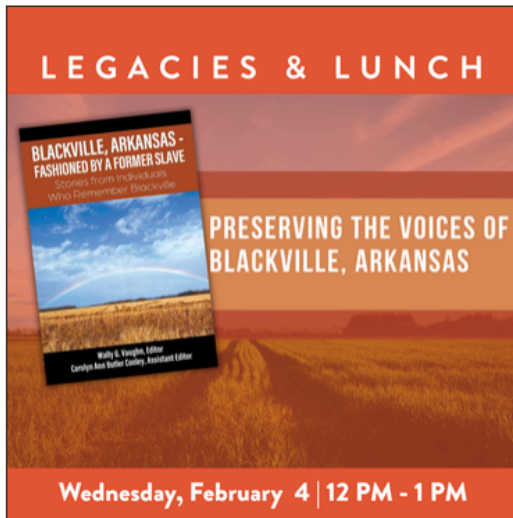
First, learn about Black history, history that the federal and many state administrations never want you to know or want you to forget. There are many resources for learning. One to start with is [BlackPast.org](http://BlackPast.org). It is the largest online encyclopedia of Black history. Check it out and learn. Then you will be ready to take action.



## The Best Ways to Celebrate Black History Month in Little Rock

Little Rock's identity is inseparable from the contributions and courage of Black Arkansans. As part of the United States Civil Rights Trail, the city offers powerful ways to honor that legacy and reflect on its lasting impact.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.



**Legacies & Lunch**  
**Wednesday, February 4 | 12 PM - 1 PM | Main Library**

Join Wally G. Vaughn and Carolyn Ann Butler Cooley as they discuss their book, *Blackville, Arkansas, Fashioned by a Former Slave*.



**2026 Black Family Expo**  
**Saturday, February 7 | 11 AM - 2 PM | Main Library**

Celebrate Black History Month with CALS! Enjoy activities including digital archiving and interactive exhibits. Free and open to all.

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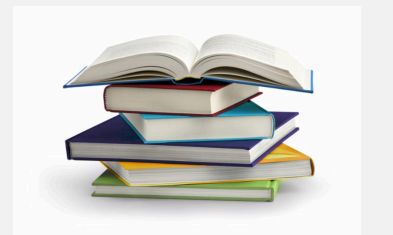
## Short Stories Discussion Group

**Story:** "Soon the Light" by Gina Ochsner (from Ploughshares) in anthology Best American Short Stories 2022

**Date:** Friday, February 20th

**Time:** Noon

**Location:** Pehrson Room



If you would like to join via zoom, please contact the office. The link is the same each month. Please note that this group is shifting their meeting day to **THIRD Fridays**.



Feb. 8, 1-3pm, Downstairs RE

**Focus Together: Admin Edition** is a cozy, low-pressure group work session where we come together to finally tackle those lingering personal admin tasks like emails, forms, scheduling, paperwork, taxes, any and all of those little things that keep getting pushed to "later."

We'll be body doubling, which simply means working quietly alongside each other (virtually or in person) to boost focus, motivation, and accountability. You work on your own tasks, at your own pace with the comforting energy of others doing the same to help keep you going.

Come as you are, bring your to-do list, and a water bottle. Leave feeling lighter, more organized, and very glad you showed up. *Cheers, Sarah Walker*

## No-Cost Workshop

### Exploring Class and Classism: Centering Love, Justice and Power

Sunday, March 1, 2026

4 p.m. ET; 3 p.m. CT; 2 p.m. MT; 1 p.m. PT


Our free UU Class Conversations hour-long online training will introduce you to the concepts – and real-life significance – of social class and classism. Explore the many ways that your social class background has shaped your worldview, and discuss the many ways that classism negatively impacts our UU communities and those far beyond our walls.

[Learn more...](#)

Sign up today for this free Zoominar:

[No-Cost Class Zoominar](#)

2.19.2026



ARKANSAS HUNGER RELIEF ALLIANCE

**THE ALLIANCE IS TURNING TWENTY-ONE  
AND YOU ARE INVITED!**

Join us as we celebrate on  
Thursday, February 19  
beginning at 4:30 PM

200 WEST CAPITOL AVE, 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72201

RSVP BY FEBRUARY 2  
TO [JOWENSBUIE@ARHUNGERALLIANCE.ORG](mailto:JOWENSBUIE@ARHUNGERALLIANCE.ORG) OR (501) 951-0374

## Prom Dress Drive and Giveaway @ McMath Library

Accepting donations until March 31



## PROM DRESS DRIVE

McMath Library is accepting new or gently used prom dresses, cocktail dresses, shoes, jewelry, and accessories. The deadline for donations is March 31. Once items are collected, there will be a giveaway on Saturday, April 11, 9 AM - 6 PM.

## [CALS Announces Spring Speaker Series](#)

This spring, bestselling authors and literary experts will discuss their latest works at CALS Ron Robinson Theater. ReShonda Tate will discuss her newest novel, *With Love from Harlem*. Rebecca Romney will discuss Jane Austen's *Bookshelf: A Rare Book Collector's Quest to Find the Women Writers Who Shaped a Legend*. Ross Gay will discuss *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* as part of a series of programs connected to nature. Richard Kreitner will explore the shifting dynamics of Jewish life in America during the Civil War in *Fear No Pharaoh: American Jews, the Civil War, and the Fight to End Slavery*. [View schedule.](#)



**SPRING  
SPEAKER  
SERIES**

February 19	March 26	April 10	May 14
ReShonda Tate	Rebecca Romney	Ross Gay	Richard Kreitner



## Winter Weather

Ice and snow hit the region hard on Saturday, January 24th. Though there were luckily few power outages, freezing temperatures made for an extended period of unsafe road conditions. In-person Sunday activities were cancelled on January 25th and February 1st. All activities are set to resume at the church on February 8th.

## Are you getting all the news you need?

We have several ways of communicating!

Friday Email Blast  
Sunday Morning Email Blast  
Sunday Order of Service Insert  
Bulletin Boards (Mehta & RE Wing)  
Outer Circle - Monthly Newsletter  
Parent GroupMe Chat  
Website - [www.uuclr.org](http://www.uuclr.org)  
Facebook - /UUCLR



**So many beautiful people!** If you'd like to take a photo for your directory listing, please contact the office. Thank you, Membership Team, for your work to keep our records up to date!

## February Birthdays

February 01 Paul Clifford  
February 01 Rebecca Roetzel  
February 01 Colby Qualls  
February 02 Jeremy Lusk  
February 03 Eileen Wetherall  
February 08 Selma Blackburn  
February 08 Alyce James  
February 08 David McCullough

February 14 Horace Morgan  
February 16 Jerry Blackburn  
February 19 Phil Peters  
February 20 Sharon Marcum  
February 20 Chris Thomson  
February 21 John Perez  
February 25 Deanna Cannon

*See a birthday that is missing or incorrect? Please let Membership or the office know!*

**CHURCH ADDRESS:**

1818 Reservoir Road  
Little Rock, AR 72227

**WEBSITE:**

www.uuclr.org

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Tuesday-Friday, 8am-1pm

**OFFICE CONTACT:**

Rebecca Roetzel  
Church Administrator  
(501) 225-1503  
uuchurchlr@gmail.com



**MINISTER:**

Rev. Paul Beedle  
Contact for appointment.  
(504) 458-2254  
revpaulbeedle@gmail.com

**DIRECTOR OF RE:**

Stephanie "Fin" Judkins  
dre@uuclr.org

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:**

Kendi Jensen-Loving

**AV DIRECTOR:**

Chad Loucks

**WORSHIP ARTS TEAM LEADS:**

Margot Cameron & Laurie Smith Prud'homme

**FACILITIES TEAM LEAD:**

Michael Roetzel

**GROUNDS TEAM LEAD:**

Joanne Kriehn

**MEMORIAL WOODLANDS:**

Margaret McLellan

**CARING TEAM LEAD:**

Sue McDonald

**FELLOWSHIP TEAM LEAD:**

Kater Reynolds

**MEMBERSHIP LEAD:**

Lisa Brents

**FORUM COORDINATOR:**

Jan Bowen

**RE-QUESTORS COORDINATOR:**

Joe Meehan

**RECONNECTIONS COORDINATOR:**

Zenyth Propst

**CUUPS COORDINATOR:**

Stephanie Webb

**COMMUNICATIONS & RENTALS:**

Rebecca Roetzel

**HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM LEADS:**

Phil Peters & Sherman James

**TECHNOLOGY TEAM LEAD:**

Scott Lee



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