



**Message from the Minister**

Dear UUCEL,

Like many of you, I have been troubled by the recent shooting of Charlie Kirk. Whenever words are met with bullets, it is not just one person who suffers — democracy itself is wounded. Whether we agree with someone’s politics or not, violence is never the answer. And so, this is not just about one man’s death, tragic as it is. It is about a creeping culture that says violence is permissible when difference feels threatening, that silencing others is acceptable when their truth challenges our comfort.

At the same time, this tragedy is part of a much larger and more troubling story. It is part of a larger storm we are living through — a storm where authoritarian voices grow louder, where differences are used as weapons, and where vulnerable groups are made scape-goats. Across the country, authoritarian voices tell us who belongs and who doesn’t. They use fear to divide us, and they target those who live outside the lines of “acceptable” identity — LGBTQ+ people, immigrants, people of color, religious minorities, and especially transgender people.

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**Sunday Services**

**Oct 5 - “Blessing of the Animals”**

- Led by: Rev. Dan

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook. On October 5th, we will be having a Blessing of the Animals intergenerational service. All are welcome to bring their furry, feathery, scaly, or slithery animal friends for a special blessing. Please use judgement as to whether or not to crate your friend. Dogs must be on a leash at all times. Also, if you have lost an animal companion in the past year, we will have a small altar set up where you can bring a token of remembrance.

**Oct 12 - “Sermon Auction Surprise!”**

- Led by: Rev. Dan

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook. Rev. Dan will be tasked with writing the sermon of the last auction winner’s choice. Topic TBA.

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**Calendar**

- 2 Thurs Personal Care Ministry @ 1st Baptist Church, 201 S. Jackson ~ 4:30-6:30 pm
- 2 Thurs UU History Class ~ via Zoom w/ Rev. Dan ~ 7:00 pm for 6 weeks
- 5 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 11:00 am
- 5 Sunday YUUMM Meeting ~ School House ~ 12:30 pm
- 6 Mon Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes
- 7 Tue Lunch w/Rev. Dan at 12:00 at Eagle Point
- 9 Thurs Ladies Lunch @ La Catrina Bar & Grill ~ 12:00 am
- 9 Thurs UU History Class ~ via Zoom w/ Rev. Dan ~ 7:00 pm #2 week
- 12 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Rev. Dan ~ 11:00 am
- 12 Sunday Soul Matters Group w/ Rev. Dan after Social Hour
- 13 Mon Board Meeting ~ 9:00 am
- 16 Thurs UU History Class ~ via Zoom w/ Rev. Dan ~ 7:00 pm #3 week
- 19 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Peg Beison ~ 11:00 am
- 20 Mon The Bellnote Newsletter, Submissions Due
- 20 Mon Church Cleaning ~ by: Vicki Haynes
- 23 Thurs UU History Class ~ via Zoom w/ Rev. Dan ~ 7:00 pm #4 week
- 26 Sunday ~~ Service ~ Led by: Cory Page ~ 11:00 am
- 30 Thurs UU History Class ~ via Zoom w/ Rev. Dan ~ 7:00 pm #5 week

## Rev. Dan's Column Continued....

As a trans person myself, I cannot help but feel fear that the current administration wants to silence, erase, and legislate people like me out of public life. Fascism always begins by deciding who belongs and who doesn't, whose voices may be heard and whose must be silenced. This is what fascism does: it thrives on fear, control, and scapegoating. It narrows the circle of belonging until only a few are left inside.

But as Unitarian Universalists, we proclaim a different vision.

Our faith affirms: The inherent worth and dignity of every person. No one is expendable. The call to practice justice, equity, and compassion, even when it is costly or uncomfortable. The interdependent web of existence, which reminds us that an attack on one group is an attack on us all. These aren't just lofty words. They are a spiritual practice — a way of being together, a way of facing the world with open hearts rather than closed fists. So how do we respond to this current situation? We speak up for those whose voices are silenced, especially our transgender neighbors, our Black and Brown neighbors, our immigrant neighbors, and others who are targeted. We practice courageous love by listening to stories unlike our own, by being willing to change, and by holding one another accountable to our best selves. We embody hope in a world that thrives on fear — by being a place where every person who walks through our doors is received as a gift, not a threat.

I know this isn't always easy. We are a small congregation in a conservative place. But friends, never underestimate the power of even a small flame in the darkness. Our small flame matters. Our circle of welcome matters. Every smile at the door, every word of encouragement, every act of kindness in our wider community — these are not small things. They are acts of resistance. Every time we choose compassion over cruelty, courage over silence, hope over despair, we are resisting the pull of fascism and building something more powerful: the Beloved Community. May we have the courage to resist hatred without becoming hateful. May we have the tenderness to welcome difference without fear. May we have the boldness to keep speaking love into a world that needs it desperately. Together, we can — and we must — be that light.

With love abundant,

**REV. DAN MIYAKE**

## Sunday Services Continued...

**Oct 19 - "Home, Sweet Home" - Led by: Peg Beison**

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

This intergenerational service on the theme of home is presented by Peg, featuring music by our favorite homegrown singers and musicians.

**Oct 26 - "Wait, That's Not in the Bible!" - Led by: Cory Page**

Masks are optional. In person or live on Facebook.

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