

October 2026

Note: *This newsletter is better viewed on a screen larger than a cell phone because the layout changes.*

PUUF is currently offering in-person services at **10:30 AM** on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, with small-group gatherings on the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Weekly meditations are held early evenings on Sundays; please see below for all other events**.** An interactive Zoom option is available for those wishing to participate remotely in the services (see link below). Continue reading for details. A monthly calendar will be posted on the window outside the Fellowship.

October Sunday Service Team (SST) and Steering Committee (SC) Meetings

The monthly meeting date and times are subject to change due to the schedules of participants. The next SST and Steering Committee meetings are scheduled for **Wednesday, October 14,** with the **SST** starting at **1:30 PM** and the **SC** beginning at **2:30 PM** at the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. If you would like to attend, you may verify the date and times and also request Zoom access by emailing info@pagosauu.org or by contacting any member of the Steering Committee. The 2026–27 SC members and officers are Michael Demchak, President; Joan Ward, Vice President/bookkeeper; Nita Niece, Secretary; Kay Kaylor, Treasurer; and Pat Devin and Martine Colombey, At Large.

Peaceful Leanings

De Anna, Community Engagement Coordinator

Living the questions, the theme for this month, is about staying curious, embracing uncertainty, and being open to mystery. Building on last month's theme of interdependence, we recognize it's our responsibility to be open to wondering and listening before jumping to our own independent certainty. One of the Five Smooth Stones of Liberal Religion states that "'revelation' is continuous."

Our religious tradition is a living tradition because we are always learning new truths.

– An excerpt from the Woven Faith curriculum packet for October





I write this from New England, where the colors of fall are beginning their vibrant stage of being. We enter a season of visual change. Just as spring's budding is a reminder of the wheel turning toward growth, we look to autumn for the lesson of gathering in, a harvest of what has grown in us. The trees release their leaves, reminding us to let go, slow down, and be ready for longer nights of rest.

This darkening is also a time of mystery. Living with uncertainty and questions can find us searching for ways to overcome sadness or anxiety, and yet we may want to consider holding the questions in the unknowing, looking to nature to teach us. Grow when we can, let go when we must, and wait for the change that is sure to come.

In vibrant love, De Anna

LGBTQ
Welcoming Congregation

In Gratitude

Thank you to De Anna for leading the special Water Communion Service and to Michael for a thoughtful Mabon Service. We are grateful for all the delicious food and companionship of the potluck that followed.

Living Our Shared Values



The Sunday Service Team is always looking for ideas for speakers and topics for the Message during the Sunday Service. We look for presentations that align with our Shared Values. This can be anything from what inspires us spiritually to climate justice, social justice, belief systems, and more. It would be a great help if anyone has suggestions for speakers or a topic of your own. You can contact Joan Ward at pagosauuf@gmail.com.

Share the Plate

In our role as a *giving congregation,* we continue to support local organizations, such as our annual donation to the Pagosa Community Initiative, our contributions to the Drug Testing program, our help with the 2025 and 2026 Pride events, and offering the Fellowship Hall for sponsored activities.

Pledges and Donations

Pledges and donations are always welcome. You can find the button on our website, pagosauu.org.
Here is the link:
https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=G94QG8CX3AZZG

Another option is to use the Quick Response (QR) Code that appears farther down



in this newsletter.

SUNDAY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Monthly Theme of Living the Questions

Sunday, October 4 10:30 AM

Meditation Practice 5:30 PM

On Zoom and in Person at the Fellowship Hall

Opening to a Sweet Surrender

Presented by Mary Ocken, Lay Leader, UU Fellowship of Durango

As we open to the theme of Living the Questions, Mary will offer a homily about the role of surrender, which may serve as an invitation for what might come into the spaciousness we've made available. After reading the book *Mystical Hope,* Mary began exploring a sort of "Everyday Mysticism" and how we might use the spaciousness mysticism fosters to enhance our connection with our soul's

deepest longing.

A native Coloradoan, Mary has had a lifelong love affair with the world. As a young adult, she had a profound spiritual experience that would redefine her deeply spiritual life. Raised Catholic, she has been a UU since 2002. She lives in Durango with her husband Jeff. Her interests include hiking, biking, camping, eco-spirituality, depth psychology, soul collage, mysticism, the new cosmology, and jigsaw puzzles.

Sunday, October 11 10:30 AM

Meditation Practice 5:30 PM

In Person at the Fellowship Hall

Going Deeper Circle

This facilitated small-group gathering is a place for sharing and a practice in deep listening. We do this as a way to build community and grow our spirits. We allow space for reflection for whatever else is on our hearts. The broad topic of *Living the Question* will no doubt be food for the soul, so bring your open mind and loving heart. Light refreshments may be offered.

Sunday, October 18 10:30 AM

Meditation Practice 5:30 PM

On Zoom and in Person at the Fellowship Hall

Meet the Moment Grounding Questions

After service today, we will be reviewing the ballot amendments, propositions, and ballot issues, including two anti-trans propositions. Bring your ballot if you haven't already voted!

We will watch excerpts from *Meet the Moment*, a program of the Unitarian Universalist Association, and discuss answers to its questions. Meet the Moment | UUA.org

Meet the Moment is a framework for conversation, discernment, and strategizing about how our faith can have the most impact in the context of new realities for Unitarian Universalism, religious life in North America, and the geopolitical landscape.

UU leaders across the nation answered three questions for Unitarian Universalism broadly, and their answers are provocative and inspiring:

What is the moment we are in? "There are some very daunting challenges facing our planet, our nations, our faith. But as the great Black American cultural critic and philosopher James Baldwin said, not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." "We are in a moment of profound crisis. . . . It seems like injustice is running rampant. . . . the democracy that we have known is under attack."

What are the most urgent needs and important opportunities of this moment? "What do our shared values call us to do in response to this moment? What are we most compelled, equipped, and/or positioned to do? UU communities are places where we can do this together and not on our own."

What do our shared values call us to do in response to this moment? "One of our most pressing tasks as UUs is to claim religion loudly, boldly, unapologetically in public, and join together with other liberal religions to tell a different story of faith from the one that white Christian nationalists are telling; they have spent decades twisting and perverting religion, poisoning people with a theology of scarcity and fear, all for the sake of building political power. It is essential for us not to seed religion to the far right."

As a UU congregation, we participate in protests, write postcards to get out the vote, and coordinate the Pagosa Pride Event each year.

Action Sunday! October 25 10:30 AM

Meditation Practice 5:30 PM

In Person at the Fellowship Hall

As we engage our lived values in the world, we take actions to learn and respond to justice making. As we near election day, we will learn more about the work of UU Colorado Action Network – UUCAN.

UUCAN: Solidarity Summit on October 3, 9 AM – 8 PM

The Colorado Solidarity Summit, hosted by UUCAN and the Boulder Valley UU Fellowship in Lafyette, will be the first in-person, statewide convening of UUCAN on Saturday, October 3, at Boulder Valley UU. The focus of the summit, hosted by the Rev. Ruth Rinehart, will be on defeating the two Colorado anti-trans ballot measures. As part of "UU the Vote 2026: Ignite Solidarity, Reimagine Democracy," solidarity summits like this one are regional interfaith justice training and practice gatherings designed to strengthen relationships, capacities, and skills. Link to register: Colorado Solidarity Summit

We will plan a time for learning from those in attendance from Durango or the surrounding area. This will help us build a spiritual community and ground in joyful connection while learning together!

Social Justice Opportunities

For information on local rallies, Equality Pagosa sends emails out regularly. Contact them at psequalitymarch@gmail.com. Indivisible Colorado offers an Action Network, including speakers on Zoom; sign up via indivisiblecolo@gmail.com.

A useful website or app for contacting our legislators is 5 Calls, http://5calls.org, which identifies lawmakers with an area search, lists multiple active topics, gives a background on them and how your representatives voted, and provides a script

to use for the calls, along with informative and links.

Care Kits for the Unhoused

Friend of the Fellowship, Kristen Roth, has taken the initiative to assemble care kits for our unhoused population. If you would like to help in this effort, Kristen's suggested care kits for both men and women, as well as a resource guide to services within our community, can be found using this link:

https://pagosauu.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/homeless-care-kits.pdf

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Your Caring Committee

If you would like someone from the Fellowship to call periodically to say “hello” and check in to see how you’re doing and whether you need anything, please contact Pauline Benetti or Pat Devin with the Caring Committee at info@pagosauu.org . We’re here to help!

In Memory

We offer this space to honor loved ones who have passed, whether human or animal. If you would like to share a passing, please send a photo, if you choose, and memoriam to info@pagosauu.org.



Thanks for supporting our Fellowship!

Donate by

- **Cash**
- **Check**
- **PayPal** – QR code on right
- **Venmo** – Pagosah Unitarian (remember the *h*)

Qigong Classes

Mondays 1 PM

Jeanette Pike

Qigong is a Taoist energy art that uses gentle movements to support health by lessening tension and stress in the body. The goal of this class is to create a sense of space and peace inside our bodies, thereby enhancing our ability to share that peace with the world around us.

Jeanette Pike has been practicing and teaching qigong for more than 10 years. Her primary training is in the Water tradition.

Class starts promptly at 1 PM and lasts about an hour. An online Zoom option is also available. For the Zoom link, or any other questions, please contact Jeannette at lavender.moon.peace@gmail.com. This class is offered on a donation basis.

Love, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity

Tara Pagosa Meditation Group

Sundays 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Please email dandmpstr@gmail.com *to be added to the instructor's email list for information about any changes.*

Dan Dempster

Diminish pain, conflict, and stress through the practice of patience, kindness, and compassion. Learn how training in love and compassion for others can make you more joyful and attractive.

A world of extraordinary beauty and subtlety lies just beneath the surface of our apparently mundane and fearful existence. With guidance and practice, learn to recognize the exquisite interdependence of our sacred web of life and rediscover the joy and magic in your life.

These are simple yet profound and beautiful practices based on cultivating the Four Immeasurables (Love, Compassion, Joy, and Equanimity). Come regularly to deepen your Dharma practice. Attending group practice will encourage, support, and reinforce your daily home practice, which we can help you establish.

Just bring a kind heart and an open mind. We can even help you to find those! Newcomers are always welcome. Meditation instructions are reviewed every week so that those new to meditation will gain confidence and those more experienced will continue to deepen their practice.

After meditation practice, we are currently studying the Heart Sutra, following Lama Migmar's book, *The Wisdom Gone Beyond, Teachings on the Heart Sutra* (available on Amazon: https://a.co/d/fVTeuPa). It is followed by a short Dharma talk and discussion. Please bring your favorite cookies to share over tea.

Can't attend in person? Join us on Zoom. See the note above. Emails you will

receive may include a short Dharma message, notifications about upcoming Dharma events, or cancellations. Stay connected and stay informed!

Dan Dempster, CA, is a certified meditation instructor and authorized Dharma teacher and for more than 20 years a student of Khenpo Migmar Tseten, Buddhist Chaplain at Harvard University.

Wise and Wakeful Circle

Second and Fourth Saturdays 10 AM

Elaine Harding and Sam Johnson

In the Wise and Wakeful Circle, we connect heart to heart in a one-hour gathering for meditation, inspiration through a spiritual reading and discussion, and healing affirmations to support our healing, awakening, and manifesting a compassionate life and world. Led by Elaine Harding and Sam Johnson, the group is open to all individuals who align with the values of respect, peace, and authentic connection. If you have any questions, please contact Elaine at elaine@elainekharding.com.

ONLINE SERVICES

UU Fellowship of Durango – Sundays, 10 AM

You are welcome to join with the congregation of UUFD for their Sunday morning service with the following link:

https://durangouu.org/worship/upcoming-worship-services/

Foothills Unitarian – Sundays

9 AM, Interactive on Zoom; 11 AM, Livestream

The Fellowship has partnered with Foothills Unitarian in Fort Collins, which welcomes online participation with this link:

https://foothillsuu.org/watch/

First Unitarian Church of Albuquerque – Sundays, 10:30 AM

Join with the congregation of First UU of Albuquerque in their Sunday worship service via Zoom at 10:30 AM. The Zoom and live service are combined into one as of late 2025. The Virtual Vespers service is every Wednesday evening at 7 PM.

Use this link to their website, https://uuabq.org/sunday-services/ , and click on Virtual Worship to join the meeting.

Unitarian Universalist Multiracial Action Council (UUMUAC) –

Third Wednesday

The primary goal of UUMUAC is Multiracial Unity, described by Martin Luther King Jr. as the "Beloved Community." Reaching this goal requires unification of the progressive peoples of the world in the struggle against inequality and injustice.

For more information, see uumuac.org. Their services are on YouTube with this link: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI_LLePt59InvDs47ylqVSw