
January 2025: Outlaw's Bridge Universalist Church

Welcoming Congregation

The Bridge

You are encouraged to join us for 11:00 a.m. church services.

No Sunday School programs and no childcare.

The playroom is clean and open for parents who wish to use it.

January 5: "Greek Tragedy" – Jimmy Merritt – How public executions have unfolded over time from Jesus of Nazareth, to the duties of Johann Sebastian Bach, to Rainey Betha (the last United States criminal to be publicly executed).

January 12: "Do the Right Thing" – Ed Clark – Subtitle: **Profiles in Courage** for the 21st century. Five stories worth remembering.

January 19: "Only Being Is" – Reverend Brian Clougherty – The title is from Parmenides, a 'pre-Socratic' Greek philosopher of about 515 BCE. I also found it in a fortune cookie. Parmenides carried this idea to the extreme, believing that our sense of there being many things is an illusion. Let us look into "Only Being Is."

January 26: "UU Ministers' Thoughts on the New and Coming Year" – With Ann Malpass



Dates to Remember

January 9: AUW Meeting at 1:00 p.m. Meet at the church at 11:45 to go for lunch.

January 12: Following services, covered-dish lunch and Board meeting.

January 20: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: Make it a Day of Service.

Welcome to New Year 2025

PSYCHOLOGY TODAY: MARISA G. FRANCO PH.D.

The start of a new year is always buzzing with talk of resolutions – commitments to eat healthier, exercise more, or finally tackle that big goal we've been putting off. But resolutions don't have to be limited to personal achievements; they can also focus on strengthening the relationships that enrich our lives. If one of your hopes for the year ahead is to maintain or deepen your friendships, why not set a few friendship resolutions?

Here are 4 science-backed friendship resolutions you can consider setting for the new year:

1. **Reach Out More Regularly:** One study found that believing friendship happens based on luck was related to more loneliness five years later, whereas thinking that friendship takes effort was related to less loneliness. If you want to maintain or deepen your friendships this year, try reaching out more regularly.

Friendship Resolution: *Commit to checking in with your friends more, whether it's through a quick text, call, coffee date or monthly dinner.*

2. **Celebrate Friends' Wins:** Being there as a support when friends are going through difficult times is an important part of friendship. And research shows that when people celebrate our good news, it is even more important for our relationship satisfaction than just their supporting us through the bad times. So, this year, when friends experience success, celebrate with them – take them out to lunch, send a card or even just call to tell them congratulations can go a long way.

Friendship Resolution: *Do one thing to celebrate your friend's achievement.*

3. **Get More Comfortable with Conflict:** Conflict with friends happens and in itself, it isn't a bad thing. How we navigate conflict can lead us to strengthen our relationships. One study found that when betrayal occurred, confronting the perpetrator in an open non-blaming way is linked to a deepening in the relationship. Another study found that those who were good at conflict (e.g., admitting fault, de-escalating, listening and taking the other person's perspective), were more popular, less depressed and less lonely.

Friendship Resolution: *Have a difficult conversation with a friend that you've been putting off. Bring the tools of empathy, honesty and perspective-taking.*

4. **Express More Gratitude:** Finding things every day that make you feel thankful can positively impact how socially connected you feel, even if you're alone. In one study, researchers had individuals self-report experiencing gratefulness and appreciation in daily life as well as feelings of isolation. The more gratitude they reported, the less isolated they were. Additionally, other research suggests that when we express gratitude in relationships, it increases the motivation of the other person to stay engaged in that relationship. Having a regular gratitude practice whether by acknowledging things in your life that you're grateful for or telling your friends how much they mean to you makes you feel more connected.

Friendship Resolution: *Tell your friends how much they mean to you with small gestures like handwritten notes, thoughtful gifts or heartfelt compliments.*