

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

*The Newsletter of the
Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Salem, Oregon
December 2, 2009*



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Women's Alliance Annual Christmas Bazaar December 6

A wonderful addition to the annual Christmas Bazaar this year – after services on **December 6** – will be the sale of pointsettias by the Women's Alliance. There will also be a variety of crafted items and homebaked treats made by many church members and friends. Proceeds from this year's bazaar will be directed toward the purchase of a defibrillator for the church. **Donated items** may be dropped off at the church on **Saturday, December 5** between 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

*Cheryl Randall
Co-secretary, Women's Alliance*

CUUPS Book Sale

On **December 12-13** the Coven UU Pagans of Salem will sponsor a stupendous BOOK SALE after Sunday services. All kinds of books for holiday giving will be available. If you have books to donate, please contact Teena Kunkel. Proceeds will be used to fund projects for the congregation.

Kate Walker

The Season for Giving

Christmas Gift Tree

It has been our tradition to have a Christmas Gift Tree project for the homeless and ex-mental patients in our community. The Gift Tree is back at the usual location in the rear of the sanctuary. You are invited to take a gift request and bring back a gift (with request attached) no later than Sunday, December 13. Your generosity over the years is greatly appreciated.

Dick Boyle, Social Action Team.

Toiletries for the Homeless

The kindergarten through second grade class is collecting toiletries for the homeless again this year. Your help to collect toiletries (feminine supplies are especially needed) and warm socks will be greatly appreciated. A box for items will be in the Fellowship Hall until December 13.

Food Donations

Food donations are always needed. Bring non-perishable garden produce and canned goods for Marion Polk Food Share. Items are accepted as part of the offering at Sunday services.

Ministerial Meditations

Widening the Circle of Compassion

The Reverend Connie Yost
UUCS Affiliated Community Minister

Oh, the holidays yet again! Each year I approach the holidays with a mixture of anticipation, joy and dread. I feel anticipation and joy in sharing time with family and friends, in the holiday gatherings, exchanging gifts, immersing myself in the music, making merry and reflecting on the blessings and bounty of the season.

But then there's the dread. The relentless push to consume, the realization that my life isn't a Hallmark movie, and the inevitable disappointment when the season doesn't quite live up to my expectations.

So this year, amidst the rush, I'm focusing on our seventh principle – respect for the interdependent web of which we are a part. How can I make choices that affirm and promote the well-being of not just myself and my circle of family and friends, but all living things? How can I make it my business to reach out to those I don't know? How can I bring the true holiday spirit of love, compassion and forgiveness into my daily living? How can I make sure that when I influence the web, as I inevitably will, it will be in the spirit of love?

Albert Einstein said that we experience ourselves as separate beings, which he called a kind of optical illusion of our consciousness. He said "this delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security."

This year, we have an opportunity to widen our circle of compassion in our outreach to Auburn Elementary School. Several of our members are participating as reading tutors. There are opportunities to make a real difference to these children's families by sponsoring a family in need. All of the research on youth development shows that the single most important thing kids need is a positive and sustained relationship with a caring adult.

You can be that caring adult. It doesn't take a degree in education to sit with 3 students twice a week and help them with their reading. If you bring love in your heart to these children, you cannot go wrong. Love is the truly universal language, understood without words across all cultural and language barriers.

In *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, Gloria Steinem tells the story of a group of kids from Harlem, tutored by their teacher Mr. Hall, who became chess masters and successfully competed against chess teams in Russia. Kids that had been "hanging out in the street and feeling like shit" now had confidence and career plans. Steinem writes, "Was there anything in their schoolbooks that made a difference? "Not until Mr. Hall thought we were smart," explained one to the nods of the others, "and then we were."

May your compassion light the way.

Blessings, Connie



LIFESPAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS
Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem
December 2, 2009

Religious Education Dates to Note

Weds. Youth/Adult – Meditation 7-9 pm

Sundays Youth/Adult – Readers' Forum, 9:15 am, Hanneman Hall; **Child/Youth** – Children's Choir, 9:45 – 10:20 am, RE Commons. **All** – bring toiletries for the homeless til Dec. 13 (before the service) for the kinder-2nd class.

Sat. Dec. 12 High School Youth – Mini-con sleepover at UUUCS, 5 pm. Regist. by Dec. 2.

Tues. Dec. 15 Youth/Adult – All welcome. RE Team meeting. Request childcare by Dec. 13—ask Lise, 503/364-0932.

Thur. Dec. 17 Older Child/Adult – Dances of Universal Peace, 7 pm.

Sun. Dec. 20 All – Multigenerational Christmas service, including a performance by our Challice Circle Players. Bring mittens for the mitten tree! No RE, but nursery care available.

Thur. Dec. 24 – All - Christmas Eve service, 7:30 pm. Children welcome, but it is a quieter service. Nursery care available.

Lise's Letter

Well, we're in the thick of it now, aren't we? Thanksgiving is over and Christmas is only 22 more shopping days away. Solstice is even sooner than that. Are you ready?!!

Now. Take a few deep breaths, close your eyes, and relax. Let's remember that the holidays aren't about getting everything perfect, rather it's about sharing time with loved ones and doing things we *like* to do. But what if you are missing some loved ones this year? How does that change things? Do you want to do everything the same or be gentle with yourself? What would your ideal holiday time include? What would you leave out? Can you take a few minutes now to make a list about what's really important to you before it all gets out of hand? Again?

As I spend more time in the hospital doing my chaplaincy for my ministry studies, I think I am coming to understand the holidays in a

more profound way. Last weekend at the hospital I met people who were disgruntled with the hospital holiday food, I met others who were grieving because they were going to be without a loved one during the coming holidays, and still others were delighted that their family was able to gather with them over the weekend, despite their current condition. The folks having the most difficult time were those that were in avoidance mode. They knew they were feeling horrible, or maybe they weren't feeling at all, but they couldn't bring themselves to talk about it or ask for help with whatever was bothering them. They felt they had to be "strong and tough it out."

I'd never realized that some folks treat a death like they do the holidays—an unpleasant reality where one just needs to grit one's teeth until it's over. But does it really get over? The holidays come back again *every single year*. If one tries to dismiss a death or ignore it, those buried sad feelings will erupt someday. Like the holidays, they won't go away either. Yet trying to deal with everything all at once is often overwhelming. That's why many recommend taking small steps. Sit down and make that holiday list, take a half hour and write about a good memory of your deceased loved one, limit your gift giving budget, buy some cheap watercolors and paint how you're feeling. What can be most helpful is to share how you're feeling with someone who will *listen* empathetically and not try to solve everything for you. The holidays can be stressful enough without the extra burden of grieving alone for a loved one.

There's an old gospel song I learned in grade school that seems fitting somehow—*Rocka my soul in the bosom of Abraham*. The middle part goes: "So high you can't get over it, so low you can't go under it, so wide you can't get round it, gotta go through the door." As difficult as it may be, I encourage us all to open the door at least a crack to what ails us this time of the year and trust in the bosom of Grace to help us open the door wider still.

Lise Adams Sherry, Director of Religious Education
Office Hours: Wed. 9:30-3:30; Mon./Fri. by appt.
503-364-0932

The Unitarian Universalist

published by

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This issue was edited by Lois Nodlande. NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 11:30 a.m. Sunday, December 13. Send news to editors@uusalem.org (or to Lois Nodland, Kathleen Ehli, and Elsa Struble gstruble@willamette.edu), put it in workroom newsletter "mailbox," or mail it (marked "newsletter").

Dances of Universal Peace

Around the world, the 13th-century poet and Sufi spiritual leader, Hz. Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi, is honored on December 17, the day of his passing. A Rumi Celebration will be held at UUCS on **Thursday, December 17** from 7 to 9 p.m.

Inspired by Rumi's poetry and Sufi spiritual practices, the evening will be a mixture of poetry, song, Dances of Universal Peace, and Mevlevi zikr including the whirling dervish turn honoring Rumi's life. A donation is requested, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Pamela Prichard

Women's Alliance

The Women's Alliance will meet on **December 17** at 6:00 p.m. to decorate the church for the holidays. Refreshments will be served during this traditional gathering, and a good time will be shared. All who wish to participate are welcome.

Cheryl Randall, Co-Secretary

Chamber Music Concert

Plan to attend the Annual Chamber Music Benefit Concert December 6 at 2 p.m. in our sanctuary. Proceeds will help fund private lessons for talented students from financially disadvantaged families.

Christmas Play in Rehearsal

The Chalice Circle Players will not have their usual monthly meeting until **December 21** because "The Unitarian who saved Christmas" is in rehearsal for presentation during the **December 20** service. The play, based on a concept by Rick Davis and written by Phil Cogswell, is directed by Cherie Ulmer and will feature three well-known UU actors and two young ones.

from Dennis Ehrp

Landscaping

Thanks to **Jo Bateman** and **Dick French** for helping to prune, pull weeds, and sweep at the last UUCS landscape work party. That was the last work party for the year. We will resume work in spring or earlier if need arises. For more information please contact Sharon Dearman.

Sharon Dearman

SOCIAL ACTION

SIHN

From November 8 through the 15, UUCS hosted four families from the Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network. The congregation provided warm beds (many thanks to Joan Stembridge for bringing space heaters!), warm food, and friendly company for the families as they transition to a more stable living situation.

Our next hosting weeks will be **February 14-20** and May 23-29, so mark your calendars!

Many thanks to all the volunteers who showed incredible flexibility and a wonderful nature of giving over the week. Special thanks to Teena Kunkel, Joan and Jim Stembridge, John Maluski, Bob and Mary Burton,

John Drake, husband of Office Administrator Rose Drake, died suddenly “right after he got his coffee and newspaper” Monday morning, November 30. As Rev. Rick said, he was a kindhearted man with a great sense of humor and a great interest in helping people. John’s health had been fragile the last several years, but he and Rose had 32 good years together.

Suzette will fill in for Rose for a while. The office will probably be open from 9 until noon—and perhaps longer—but it would be good to phone before making a trip to the church.

Lorraine Stuart, Lydia Gutierrez, Jill Baker, Ed and Jackie Klimowitz, Angela Gross, Phil and Beth Malouf/Smith, Susan & Skip Farris-Gosser, Donna Canning, Mary Joe Eyler, Pam Vorachek, Bev Herrin, Stephanie de Prume, Barbara and David Stebbins-Boaz, Chuck and Ellen Howard, Janet Stevens, Dom & Colleen Spedale, Kristen Hunt, Deann Rathbun, Ryan Nelson, Candace Kennedy, Lois Stanley and Stanley Wood, Lee Coyne, Nancy Taylor, Valerie Neevel, Kelli and Steve Allan, George and Elsa Struble, Brian Reeder, and John Gorman. Thank you for all your help!

If you would like to participate in the Salem Hospitality Network, please contact Miranda Wood or if you'd like to keep tabs on SIHNs news and announcements, please join the new SIHNs email list.

Clothing Drive Thanks

Many thanks for your generous response to the recent Winter Clothing Drive, and for the continuing food and money contributions for Marion-Polk Food Share. On Sunday, November 22, there were 5 huge bags of clothes (the biggest one-day collection ever) and 146 pounds of food items!

Dick Boyle, Social Action Team

Foster Parents’ Night Out

Anyone interested in joining these enthusiastic volunteers please contact Janet Neuberger.

Joan Stenbridge

January Election

Oregonians will be voting in January on **Measures 66 and 67**, which the legislature passed to avoid further cuts to the budget. Petra Berger can arrange an **information and discussion** session on these measures at UUCS. If you’re interested, contact her. She also recommends several web sites, including <http://VoteYesForOregon.org>.

Note that if these measures do not pass, as many as 2/3 of corporations doing business in Oregon will continue to pay just \$10 a year in income taxes! See more at the oregonlive.com/opinion website

Your Budget Ideas

It’s time to think about what our Congregation’s Operating Budget should support *next year*. Team leaders have already been asked for their requests and recommendations. But good ideas can come from anyone. Send your requests or ideas to George Struble **by January 3**.

In January, the Budget Committee will review the requests and ideas and forward them to the Board, which will prioritize them; those priorities will be the basis for our Stewardship Campaign in the spring and then for the shaping of the actual budget as it is prepared for Congregational adoption in May.

George Struble

News of the UUCS Community

Newsletter co-editor **Lois Nodland** has every reason to be bursting with pride at the recognition being given to daughter Jillian Nodland’s co-production of an 18-minute, award winning film titled “[Ana’s Playground](#),” being shown in her home community of River Falls, Wisconsin. The film’s an allegory about the moment a child is forced to choose between humanity and ideology. A soccer ball in

the playground is kicked into a sniper zone in some war-torn country, and the 11 year old lead actress is sent in to retrieve it. She thus becomes a sniper's target in what Jillian calls a game of cat-and-mouse.

The film's goal is to raise awareness and promote organizations and efforts that help children in war zones, where about two thirds of all civilian war casualties are children, Jillian said. "[Ana's Playground](#)" has won awards at three movie festivals, including one for best in the entire fest, not just the short film category, and it soon will be featured at the Nobel Peace Prize Forum in Minneapolis and as part of a Winter Olympics event in February, just prior to opening ceremonies at the games in Vancouver, Canada.

Both of UUCS' most critical patients on our prayer/watch list, **Dave Cozart** and **Kay Cogswell**, are now out of the woods and resuming their normal lives! Hallelujah!

Dave writes, "As you all know, at the end of August I suffered a "brain bleed" with major motor impairments, all of which have either disappeared or diminished. My vision is the exception since I experience double vision at any distance over three feet but I've reached a milestone there too. Lenses prescribed by an optometrist, referred to me by my ophthalmologist, have corrected my vision and allowed me to return to reading!"

Kay Cogswell's pneumonia and resultant respiratory distress is now under control and she no longer needs oxygen. Full recovery is slow, but it's happening!

Barbara Hanneman's granddaughter Sarah Batty has been reassigned from Washington, D.C. to the German offices of the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. Granddaughter Molly Hanneman Hagan and her new husband Matt live in Annapolis, Maryland, where Molly works for the Defense Department. Molly's brother Paul will soon deploy to Iraq for his third rotation in Defense Special Services. The only Hanneman grandchild nearby is OSU senior Annie, completing her studies in education and mathematics to become a middle school math teacher like her Aunt Laurie.

Liz McGuinness, who often attended UUCS with Delores Lusk, died on November

19, the victim of Alzheimer's Disease. There will be memorial services held for her in Minnesota.

An error in the last newsletter had the wrong joint being replaced! It was **Rhea Devery's** knee and not her hip that was replaced. She needed only a brief stay in nursing care, and is rehabilitating well at home.

Travelling for the end-of-the-year holidays? How about sharing your news and of course of your other joys and concerns.

I am back from Puerto Vallarta, so again send your news to me.

Joan Erickson

Community Events

Climate Crisis Candlelight Vigil: New Time and Place

The time and place for the interfaith candlelight vigil on climate change have changed. Now, it will be in Salem on the northeast corner of Chemeketa and Liberty Streets from 5 to 6 p.m. **Friday December. 11.**

Candles and paper cups will be provided. Please bring signs and warm clothes. For more information on global warming see www.350.org or contact me.

Phil Carver

12 Days, 12,000 Books

From **December 1 to December 12** the Marion County Children and Families Commission is seeking 12,000 books for infants, toddlers and kindergarten children through 12th grade. We can help make this drive successful by adding new or gently used books to our Marion Polk Food Share. Thank you,

Keith York

Community Menorah

On **Sunday, December 13** at 4 p.m at the Salem Center Mall downtown, the Chabad Jewish Center (JewishSalem.com) will be building a community menorah out of donated food cans. Everyone is invited to attend, it's free of charge and the donated food goes to Marion Polk Food Share. *Erin Zysett*

UUA Events

Register Now for PNWD AGM

Please consider going to the Unitarian Universalist Pacific NorthWest District Annual General Meeting in Bellevue WA February 19-21. The registration is at www.pnwd.org.

Register before January 14 to get a discount. Two highlights are Bill Harley, a renowned storyteller, and the Rev. Peter Morales, the new UUA President.

- Share knowledge, experience, and resources
- Learn new skills and expand your understanding of UUism at stimulating workshops
- Be a delegate and participate in making district decisions at PNWD Annual Meeting
- Above all have *fun* learning, laughing, and worshipping with new UU friends

If you are interested in being a delegate, send an e-mail.

Phil Carver

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SUNDAY SERVICE AND CHURCH SCHOOL

10:30 a.m. (Child Care Available)

Sunday, December 6 “How We Help Mrs. Somkhit and Her Neighbors Out of Poverty”

Presented by UUCS Microfinance Steering Committee members

Carol Doolittle, Ann Hanus, and Phil Cogswell

Introductory Homily by Rev. Richard R. Davis

Over a year ago several UUCS members began discussing the possibility of forming our own micro-credit program to help alleviate poverty in the developing world. Our efforts have been fruitful and productive; we have made substantial progress. Now it's time for us to share our story and invite you to join us in this compassionate endeavor. *During this service we will receive a special offering for our UUCS micro-credit finance project in Laos. Please come with a generous heart and remember to bring your checkbook!*

Sunday, December 13

Judge Pamela Abernethy

Judge Abernethy has been instrumental in working with those who come into her courts charged with substance abuse related crimes to get their lives back on track.

Sunday, December 20 "The Unitarian Who Saved Christmas" Chalice Circle Players

On this Sunday before Christmas, the children will bring mittens to put on the tree.

Friday, December 24

Our traditional Christmas Eve Service, 7:30 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Salem
5090 Center Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97317

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THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST

December 2, 2009

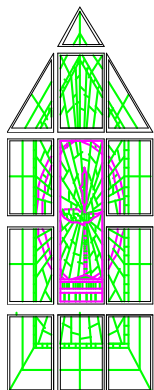
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UUCS Calendar



- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, December 2 | UU Meditation, 7 p.m. (every Wednesday)
CUUPS, 5:30 p.m.
Chat & Craft, 7 p.m. (1 st & 3 rd Wed.) |
| Saturday, December 5 | Set-up for Bazaar |
| Sunday, December 6 | Readers' Forum, 9:15 – 10:15 a.m.
Christmas Bazaar , after service
Chamber Music Concert , 2 p.m.
Men's Group, 7 p.m. (Info: Quentin Smith) |
| Monday, December 7 | Foster Parents Night Out |
| Wednesday, December 9 | UU Meditation |
| Thursday, December 10 | UUCS Board Meeting, 7 p.m. (Everyone welcome) |
| Sat-Sun, December 12-13 | CUUPS Giant Book Sale |
| Sunday, December 13 | Readers' Forum, 9:15-10:15 a.m.
Newsletter Deadline, 11:30 a.m. Please include THREE weeks worth of news; next deadline January 3. |
| Wednesday, December 16 | UU Meditation, 7 p.m.
Chat & Craft, 7 p.m. |
| Thursday, December 17 | Dances of Universal Peace, 7 p.m. |
| Friday, December 24 | Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:30 |