



The Voice

Ah, The Holidays...

December Programs Focus on Spirit Of the Season, But Also Serious Issues

Two special evenings late in the month will recognize the Christmas and Kwanzaa holidays.

But before that we will bless our animals, talk about feeding the hungry and bringing a Guest to Our Table.

After having Danish and English Christmas programs the last two years, this year we will journey to Germany. At 7 pm on Dec. 22, Leon Conyers, son of Jack and a resident of Berlin, will talk about how that country celebrates this holiest of holidays. There will be lots of music, too. Leon will perform, as will Curran Squire and possibly other children from our RE program. Catherine Squire will lead the service, and Peg Shorey will make sure the sanctuary is appropriately decorated.

The following week, on Dec. 28, Dana Roberts will again lead a Kwanzaa service. Expect good music as well.

Our month will start with what promises to be a new tradition, the Blessing of Animals. Our minister, Lynne Garner, owner of a dog named Bear and who knows how many cats, will be barking out the blessing during our regular worship service on Dec. 4.

Come early this day to participate in our First Sunday Forum at 9:30 am. It promises to be a scintillating discussion led by Amy Shuster discussing the Local Food Movement for Sustainability. We will learn how to engage and inspire a new generation to be connected to their food.

The Social Justice service on the second Sunday, Dec. 11, will bring Scott Runkle of the local Coalition for Children to the pulpit. He will speak of the long-time success of some of its programs, such as Healthy Families.

Each December, we devote one Sunday to the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee's Guest at Your Table program. This will be part of the Dec. 18 service. Contributions that day will go to the UUSC for a myriad of programs that help the needy worldwide.

A busy schedule, but it promises to be rewarding. Happy Holidays, Y'all.



Happy Anniversary: Board President Catherine Squire blows out the candles on cake commemorating third year in our church building after services on Nov. 20..



Bless You, Puppy: Sandy Bonilla will bring her dog to the Blessing of Animals service.

More Pies, Cakes At Holiday Sale

Beth Sutton and Mary Ann Freeling had tremendous success with last year's Holiday Bake Sale, and they promise this year's will be even bigger and better.

There will be an expanded line of baked goods as we sold out in less than an hour last year. Also, this year you can pre-order your favorite treats. List will be in the vestibule.

First, though, we need bakers. See sign up sheet in the vestibule, or call or email Beth at bsuttoncm@bellsouth.net, 265-8812, or Mary Ann at newcambri-akid@gmail.com, 638-0686

Don't Forget Your 2012 Pledge Cards.

Meg Musselman and Tony Tennent are campaign chairs.

DECEMBER CALENDAR SUNDAY SERVICES

- ◆ **Dec. 4** — *The Rev. Lynne Garner, "Animals I Have Known"*
—10:30 am, 1710 Gloucester
—First Sunday Forum, — Amy Shuster, Local Food Movement
—9:30 am
- ◆ **Dec. 11** — Scott Runkle, Coalition for Children
— 10:30 am
- ◆ **Dec. 18**—*The Rev. Lynne Garner, Guest at Your Table Sunday* —10:30 am
- Coming Events**
- ◆ **Each Tuesday** — *Deliver food on Wolfe Street*
- ◆ **Dec. 10** — *Unity in Diversity luncheon, 12:30 pm, Corner Cafe*
- ◆ **Dec. 14** — *Board of Trustees meeting, 5 pm*
- ◆ **Dec. 16**—*New Member Dinner, 6:30 pm*
- ◆ **Dec. 22** — *Christmas Program, Leon Conyers, 7 pm*
- ◆ **Dec. 28** —*Kwanzaa celebration, 7 pm*
- ◆ **Dec. 30** —*Work Party, 10 am*

Don't Let the Holidays Get You Down; UUCG Has Great Programs to Pull You Through

Seasons Greetings! As I type this I am shoveling the last bits of Thanksgiving leftovers in my mouth. My Christmas cards are begging to be sent out, and I'm trying to figure out when our family can get out to pick up a tree. The boxes of holiday decorations are calling my name from the attic, yet I'm certain I just put away the Halloween décor. At UUCG, the pace is no different - December has turned into our busiest month.

I say that not to cause you stress, but to excite you about the future. Because though the holidays can take a lot of preparation, the joy they bring often shows it to be well worth the effort. Fortunately, the preparation for many of our activities will be evenly spread out through different members and friends of our church. We start out this Sunday with a First Sunday Forum, put on by Amy Schuster, talking about sustainable food. Amy has a wealth of practical knowledge, and this program fits nicely into our efforts to become a Green Sanctuary. The service that day will include a blessing of the animals by the Rev. Lynne Garner, a first for UUCG. During coffee hour that day, be sure to sign up to bring or buy treats at our Holiday Bake Sale. This



year the sale will be held on Dec. 18 and organized by Beth Sutton and Mary Ann Harbaugh.

While treating ourselves we often feel inspired to assist others, so the Social Justice team has identified an opportunity through Coastal Coalition for Children for the congregants at UUCG to help out local children. December is also a great time to build relationships, so in an effort to

expand our awareness of the way other cultures celebrate the holidays, Barbara Sprouse has organized a German Christmas celebration for the 22nd, and Dana Roberts is working on a Kwanzaa celebration for the 28th. With the New Year in view, Bob Ingram is hosting a UUCG Work Day at the end of the month to get our building in tip-top shape for 2012.

It turns out the first Sunday in January falls on New Year's Day. Though some people are wearied by the end of December, many see Jan. 1 as a time of new beginnings and an increased time for religious ties. At UUCG we choose to side with the power of fresh starts, hope, and community - see you on the 1st!

— Catherine Squire

Social Justice Report

Gift Drive for Coastal Children in Need

Holiday Gift Drive for children is recommended by Coastal Coalition for Children. Look for a separate notice being sent out by Elaine explaining how the gift drive will work.

Look for a busy Social Justice weekend beginning on Saturday, Dec. 10, the date of the next Unity in Diversity luncheon. We will gather at 12:30 at The Corner Cafe (formerly Jim's Corner Cafe) on Newcastle Street. We will be planning for the International Culture and Food Festival to be held on April 13 at the College of Coastal Georgia.

On Sunday morning, Dec. 11, our guest speaker will be Scott Runkle,

Executive Director of Coastal Coalition for Children. The Coalition has led such programs as Healthy Families and the Grandparent Connection. Early intervention has proven to be the key, and I have been so inspired to learn about how they operate. I believe many other UUs will be too.

Our ethnic lunch that day will be at El Azteca (on Norwich Street, in back of a Latino grocery.).

And don't forget to bring your donations for Sparrow's Nest. Non-perishable foods, paper products, office supplies, and money are welcome (checks to "Sparrows Nest").

There will be no meeting in December of the Genoa Martin Friends of Historic Selden Park Assn. Look for a later notice of the January meeting.

— Dianne Knight

Excursion to Savannah in January

UUCG members have been invited to the Jan. 12 pre-screening of the PBS film, *Slavery By Another Name*. We will leave here at 3 pm to attend the event at the Jepson Center for the Arts in Savannah. The activities will include an exclusive UUCG audience with author Doug Blackmon, as well as, discussions with film maker Sam Pollard and artist Robert Morris, viewing of Robert Morris' exhibit and of course viewing the film.

— Starling Sutton

Dinners for 8 Return to UUCG

The "Dinner for Eight" program has been revived, with the first dinner held in November. It was great fun! Just ask attendees: JoAnn & Ted Davis, Mary Freeman, Patty O'Brien, DeLeon Peacock, Bill Smith and hostess Sally Revoile. Now, on an every-other-month basis, we hope additional members will be willing to host such dinners. If you are able to hold a potluck "Dinner for Eight" in January, please contact Sally Revoile.

Dinner for New Members

Our next New Member Dinner will be Friday, Dec. 16, 6:30 pm. Thus far, those to be honored are Johnye'a Beckham, Patti Rankin, and Amy Stark.



Bless Your Dog, Cat, Canary Toad, Goldfish, Cow or Goat

The story of Jesus' nativity involved many animals, so on Sunday, Dec. 4, we will honor our animals as fellow members of the peaceable kingdom. During the worship service, there will be readings about animals and a chance for you to speak about current or former animals you have known, or the place that animals have in your life. You are encouraged to bring your reasonably well-behaved and restrained animals (leashes, cages, etc.) to participate.

If you are allergic or afraid of animals, please don't stay away. There will be an area of the sanctuary reserved as animal-free (other than human). The religious education program will be participating as well. If you wish to attend the forum before the service animal free, please contact your noble leader, the Rev. Lynne Garner, *in advance*, so that arrangements can be made for supervision of your animal outside while you attend. See you then! (Ruff!)

— Lynne Garner

RE Corner

Ho-ho-ho" Ms Nancy and Ms Joan are hoping for a miracle as they attempt to fill the wishes from the organizers of the Trimming of the Christmas Tree, the Blessing of the Animals and the Holiday Bake Sale events on subsequent Sunday mornings and A German Christmas (Dec.



RE Teacher Joan Shinnick

22) and Kwanzaa (Dec. 28). Seems everyone wants our UU RE children to participate in everything during this festive season. Wise Men might say "No can do!", but Nancy and Joan say "Yes we can!" Happy Hannukah and Merry Christmas, one and all !!!

— Nancy Stewart

Chalica-A new UU holiday

Chalica is a weeklong holiday, starting on the first Monday in December, with each day focused on one of the seven UU Principles. Chalica has modern roots. It was celebrated for the first time in 2005 after a group of UU young adults discussed that it would be nice for UU's to have a holiday that is truly our own. It was celebrated more widely in 2007 when Daylene Marshall (one of those

young adults-who is now an RE director at First Unitarian church of Albuquerque) sent out an event invitation on Facebook. That year, nearly 300 people RSVP'd to say that they would try out the



new holiday.

Sydney and I first celebrated Chalica in 2007. That year, Bobby was deployed over the holidays and we were finding lots of ways to keep ourselves busy. When I heard about the holiday, I embraced it vigorously! Each evening before dinner, we lit our chalice, talked about the day's corresponding UU principle and made a plan for how we would take action on the next day's Principle. We used the kids' booklet at <http://www.chalica.blogspot.com/> as our guide. Since then, we found some good examples of how to observe each day at <http://www.uuidentity.com/chalica>. Here are some ways we have celebrated Chalica in our home:

This year, Chalica begins on Monday, December 5th. If you choose to celebrate Chalica, I hope that you have fun making it your own and that it reinvigorates your own commitment to and understanding of our 7 precious UU Principles!

— Sarah McGettrick

Minister's Musings

I have a cousin who loves to shop on what has unfortunately come to be called "Black Friday." When I asked her on Thanksgiving if she was going out tomorrow, she replied, "Oh, I'm going out at 11 tonight!"

No doubt, my cousin gets a lot of pleasure out of her annual bargain hunting rush.

However, I would suggest an alternative for the rest of the season. Rather than trying to get the best deal available on some item that may even be returned by the recipient (and was very likely made at the expense of some low-paid worker in China or Bangladesh), perhaps we can use the holiday season to make things a little better, both locally and internationally. Here at UUCG, on the third Sunday of December, we will be highlighting the "Guest at Your Table" program that helps support the very worthy work of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. You might consider a donation in honor of someone who really doesn't need that extra box under the tree. Another worthy cause among many is Heifer International. For a very small amount, you can buy a cow or other domestic animal and make a difference in a struggling family's life. There are many other such worthy international organizations that you can think of that will truly make this holiday season special.

Another alternative is to think locally when choosing gifts. There are all kinds of local merchants who really need and will appreciate our business. If you buy a book at an independent bookstore rather than from Amazon, it might cost a bit more. However, you are supporting local jobs and the taxes from your purchase go to support local needs. The same is true if you purchase gift certificates from local places..

So this holiday season, I urge you to consider your priorities. Where do you really want your money to go? Those who receive gifts that will change our community and our world will no doubt appreciate that their gift was one that reached out to others. Wouldn't it be wonderful if UUCG did our small part to make the holidays just a little less commercial, and did some good besides?

Wishing all of you a more peaceful and fulfilling holiday season.

— Lynne Garner



Transgender Workshop Held

"Transgender and Allies Perspectives" was the workshop offered by the Welcoming Congregation Team on Nov. 20. The two-hour workshop heard Dr. Jean Cardin, who reminded the the audience of the distinction between gender identification and sexual orientation. A retired physician, she said she developed great compassion for the courage of her transgender patients in choosing to be true to themselves.

Amy Williams told about her father "coming out" as a transwoman three years ago, and Carson Hendrix told how he had "come out: as a man during his senior year in high school. Handouts and videos are available at the church.

— Mary Freeman

December Helpers

Lay Reader: Mary Ann Freeling

Music: Miguel Carbone

RE: Nancy Stewart, Joan Shinnick

Ushers: Ron Yost, Jean Cardin, Mary Freeman, Onnalee Willnow, Pam Duffett, Patti O'Brien

Song Leader: DeLeon Peacock

Hospitality: Tia Van Loan
House: DeLeon Peacock, Ron Yost, Bruce Beard

Greeters: Mary Freeman, Ellie Legg, Sally Revoile

Voice editor: Ron Willnow



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Minister's Sermons Now On Our Website

Missed a Sunday service and wondered what the Rev. Garner had to say. You can now find several of her sermons on our website, www.uuacg.org. Also, you will find a Calendar with up-to-date information on church events, old Newsletters, many pictures and lots more.



Vision of Justice: Jerry Hegstrom and the Rev. Lynne Garner hold up a banner presented to Unitarian Universalists of Coastal Georgia for its support of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee. More than \$600 collected on Association Sunday Oct. 2. Another opportunity to give to the UUSC will come at the Sunday services on Dec. 18 when Guest at Your Table, a UUSC program, will be recognized.