

December 2015 Worship Services

Dec. 2015

Inside this issue:

Upcoming Services	1
Between Us	2
Words for Reflection	2
Worship & Music	3
Shared Ministry	4
Board of Trustees & Communication.....	5
Lifespan Religious Exploration	7
Program Council	8
Justice Council	10
The Back Page	11
Staff Contacts	12

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Office Hours:
Monday-Friday,
9:00 AM-1:00 PM
Closed Dec 24-Jan 3

www.uucorvallis.org

Sunday, December 6, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Expectations”

Rev. Jill McAllister

The story of Christmas includes Mary, the mother of Jesus, pondering many things in her heart, as she awaits the birth of her first baby. Christmas is still a time of great expectations – for peace, and joy and hope, at the very least. How are we managing with our own expectations?

Sunday, December 13, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Hope in Hard Times”

Rev. Jill McAllister

It is a season of hope – but how realistic is that? Are we being overly sentimental, especially in these times? I think not, because I think hope is an action, an undertaking, not just wishful thinking, and there is more room, and more need for hope now, than at any time in my life.

Sunday, December 20, 9:30 & 11:00 AM

“Room at the Inn?”

Rev. Jill McAllister

A traditional Mexican telling of the story of Christmas focuses on how hard it was for Joseph and Mary to find welcome in their time of need. This story has been repeated over and over throughout history, and is overwhelmingly present in the world today. Using the songs of “Las Posadas” we’ll consider the plight of people looking for welcome around the world, including in our own towns.

Monday, December 21, 7:00 PM

Wheel of the Year: Yule Worship

Join us to celebrate the longest night of the year. Together we will welcome the returning light and new beginnings. Bring your family and something from nature that expresses what this time of year means to you, and finger foods to share after the event.

Thursday, December 24: Christmas Eve

5:00 PM – Family Service of music, carols, stories and sharing for all ages, including a choir of Fellowship children and youth. Bring a batch of holiday goodies to share afterward if you can.

9:00 PM – Meditative Service of readings, carols, candles, and silence, with music from the adult choir. Bring a batch of holiday goodies to share afterward if you can.

Sunday, December 27, 9:30 AM (One Service)

“Sorrows and Joys, and a New Year Ahead”

Rev. Jill McAllister

All ages join together (babies and toddlers welcome too) to reflect on the year now passing – its sorrows and its joys – and look ahead to the new year. An abbreviated service, followed by a potluck brunch for all. Please bring food and holiday goodies to share. In the tradition of Boxing Day, we’ll do a service project together as well.

Between Us ...

Jill McAllister

For many years my extended family had a Christmas tradition of putting all our names in a hat and selecting one name each for gift-giving. Instead of 20 of us buying and getting 20 gifts, we each gave and received one. Our children are now all grown, but through this practice they and the older adults (that's my generation) have gravitated toward gifts of service and support – we send contributions to homeless shelters, the Heifer Project, the UU Service Committee and similar organizations, in honor of one another. Some years, we work together to make a larger contribution to something we all support.

This practice fundamentally changed the way I hear the question “What do you want for Christmas?” “More peace on earth” is what usually comes to mind. I can't say I've completely outgrown the joy of receiving a beautiful package, and I do appreciate the thoughtfulness of my family and friends when they choose gifts for me, and yet, if asked, I can never think of “things” I truly want. Instead, I almost immediately begin to think of gifts I have already received, and continue to receive, throughout the year.

“What do you want for Christmas?” “More peace on earth.”

At the moment, I'm thinking about some of the gifts I receive as a minister at the UU Fellowship of Corvallis. For example, in this past year, I have watched several groups of people work together toward right relations, and succeed. Where there have been misunderstandings, arguments, or hurt feelings, I have watched people have the courage and the respect to meet one another, talk through their difficulties, and come to new understandings. I have seen and heard people apologize to one another, forgive one another, and start again. I have witnessed the thoughtful process of changing minds, of letting go of some opinions, of listening more closely to others. I have seen people strive to do their best to be both honest and kind. I can hardly describe what a great gift this is for me. It strengthens my conviction that peace is possible, that love is greater than fear, and that we do make a difference in the world. For all of you who have been doing this work, and who continue to learn and grow in this calling of right relations, who help there be more peace on earth, my heartfelt thanks.

I am also thankful simply to work here with the unique group of people who are my colleagues on the staff. Through these several years of transition, they have each taken turns at being models of our aims and ideals, and I watch them strive for that day after day, not to mention all the help and support they give to me. And, as if that weren't enough, the leadership of the Fellowship – Board members, committee chairs, task leaders – is remarkable. It is truly more than any minister can hope for, but still there is more. Every week you, the members and friends of the Fellowship, share the most important parts of your lives with me – your great joys and sorrows, your struggles and achievements, your questions and knowledge, your care and concern, your stories. These are the greatest gifts of all. “Thank-you” can barely express my gratitude.

Whatever holidays you celebrate in this season, may they bring you time to reflect, may they help you remember all that you have been given, may they bring you joy, and may they open you to love, that it may flow more abundantly through you into the world. And if any of that happens, there will be more peace on earth. See you Sunday— *Jill*

WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“When strangers meet, endless possibilities emerge:
 New experiences, new ways of understanding, and new ways of taking action.
 When strangers meet, each pays special attention to the other.
 Each is called to serve something larger than the self.
 Today, this morning, let's light the chalice:
 For openness, for willingness to grow,
 For rich curiosity, and for common purpose.”

– *Rev. Fulgence Ndagijimana*

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Come Celebrate Yule in Community: Dec. 21st

Join us to celebrate the longest night of the year on Monday, Dec. 21st at 7:00 PM in the UUFC sanctuary. Together we will welcome the returning light and new beginnings. Bring your family and something from nature that expresses what this time of year means to you. Please also bring finger foods to share after the event.

This event honoring the Winter Solstice, called Yule in some traditions, is one of our Wheel of the Year gatherings. We come together to honor 8 special points on the Earth's annual dance around the sun: the two solstices, the two equinoxes and the four cross-quarter days in between.

If you are interested in helping to create this event AND also learn about the upcoming year-long immersion program called NatureWise, then you can join us at the planning workshop on Saturday, Dec. 19th. See the article following below. Contact Cliff Pereira (peartree15@comcast.net or 541-760-4541) or Jessica Heiler (contact@jessica-heiler.com) for more information.

UUFC Emergency Aid Fund

The Emergency Aid Fund (EAF) is for members and friends of the Fellowship in a time of need: a one-time, emergency situation when assistance is not available through any other sources. Examples of needs include food, shelter, utilities, medical prescriptions, or transportation to a job or job interview.

All inquiries are confidential. To make a request contact EAF Committee Chair Judy Malouf (541-740-4805), or Rev. Jill McAllister (541-752-5218).

A Taste of NatureWise: Join us in preparing this year's Yule ceremony

Have you heard about NatureWise, the upcoming year-long immersion program in creating nature-connected rituals and community? Starting in late January 2016, NatureWise will offer an experience-based learning model that will support you to connect deeply with yourself, nature, spirit and your community. It will empower you to create nature-connected rituals which recognize and honor our connections to all of life, including our own ancestors and the generations yet to come.

If you are interested in finding out more about the program and would like to get a feeling for what it is like to create a ceremony in community, then we invite you to join us to prepare this year's Yule ceremony. (The Yule ceremony will be held on Monday, December 21st – see the article directly above.)

The Yule planning workshop will take place on Saturday, December 19th from 12:30-4:30 PM at the UU Fellowship. Contact Cliff Pereira (peartree15@comcast.net or 541-760-4541) or Jessica Heiler (contact@jessica-heiler.com) to sign up and get more information. Note that for planning purposes we need to know how many will be coming to the workshop, so please contact us to sign up. If you want to find out more about NatureWise, you can visit uucorvallis.org or contact Cliff or Jessica to sign up for the NatureWise email list.

Child Dedications: Christmas Eve

Fellowship members who wish to have their children dedicated at either of the Christmas Eve services (early service at 5:00 PM or late service at 9:00 PM) should contact Jill McAllister (minister@uucorvallis.org). Child Dedication is a Unitarian Universalist tradition of blessing and welcome for babies and children in our congregations.

Children and Youth Choir

All interested children and youth are invited to sing in a Children/Youth Choir at the 5 PM service on Christmas Eve. All children and youth are welcome to participate and be part of the service. Previous choir experience is not required. E-mail Music Director David Servias, with questions (music@uucorvallis.org). Hope to see you there!

Children and Youth Choir Rehearsals

Sunday, Dec. 20th, directly after the second service (approx. 12:30-1:00 PM)
 Wednesday, Dec. 23rd at 6:15 to 6:45
 Thursday, Dec. 24th at 4:30-5:00

Child Care during Choir Practice

Soon we will begin providing child care during choir practice on Wednesday evenings. If you are interested in singing with us and need child care, please contact David Servias (music@uucorvallis.org). New choir members are always welcome; rehearsals are Wednesday nights from 7:00-8:30 PM.

Please join us for the third annual Holiday Caroling Sing-Along!

The annual Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long this year is happening on Sunday, December 13, from 4:30-6:00 PM. Gather around the piano in the Sanctuary to sing old favorites and discover verses you haven't sung before! Lyrics will be projected to help you join in. Bring snacks to share in the Social Hall. It's a wonderful way to share holiday music with your family; all ages are welcome. Celebrate the season with song!

SHARED MINISTRY

Moments of Shared Ministry

Baked Goods Ministry A father and his young daughter bake something almost every Saturday to bring to the Fellowship for the baked goods table: "Daddy, who are we helping this week?" Our coffee volunteers put the treats out on a table in the Social Hall. UUFC members, friends and guests buy these delectable delights, setting their own price, often giving very GENEROUS amounts. The money raised goes to help support local, national, and international charities that a group of dedicated UUFC volunteers have already vetted. Today at the baked goods table, a middle-aged woman bought a big cookie, placed it in a napkin, and took it to a youth who was standing alone, looking a little sad. "You look like you could use a treat today," she said, handing him a cookie, "would you like a chocolate chip cookie?" Shared ministry can start with a batch of cookies.

Listening Companions Available

People have asked, "What is a listening companion?" Borrowing from materials published by Stephen Ministries, a program on which our program is based, listening companions are the "After People." Listening companions are there:

- after the phone call you hoped you'd never get.
- after the divorce papers are served and the bottom falls out of your life.
- after the funeral, when everyone has left and the emotions you've held at bay come crashing in on you.
- after the doctor says "I'm sorry, but there's nothing more we can do."
- after the nursing home director shakes you hand and says, "Welcome to your new home."
- after the last child honks the horn, waves, and drives away—and the house suddenly seems empty.
- after the gavel goes down, the handcuffs go on, and your loved one is led away.
- after the baby arrives, demanding more of you than you ever dreamed possible.
- after you find a pink slip with your final paycheck.
- after your family and friends have heard your story one too many times, but you still need to talk it out.

And, of course, pre- or post-holiday stresses are also a good time to have a companion... If you wish to be connected to a listening companion for any reason, contact Diana Vezmar-Bailey (541-740-9006, dianavb@inbox.com).

Our annual Christmas Eve offering will be dedicated this year to our global U-U network, supporting emerging and developing Unitarian and Unitarian Universalist groups and congregations in Africa, Europe, and Asia, and increasing the impact of our global movement to respond in times of crisis for our siblings around the world.

Stewardship

Anna Sontag and Virginia Shapiro

We are gearing up for the 2015-16 pledge drive, and this year we're excited to be introducing a new way to engage with our pledge drive and annual reflections about the value of the UUFC in our lives. We're aiming to make it easier than every before to plug into multimedia pledge drive materials, whenever it fits your busy schedule – providing many chances to reconnect with this congregation's good work not just on Sundays but on any day. We hope to expand the use of online pledging as well. As we plan, it is important to us that you realize the impacts of the amazing generosity of this congregation, enabling us to continue making a difference in social and environmental justice, to support a wide variety of worship services and opportunities for religious and spiritual growth, and to provide care and support for many people in need. This is possible only because together we share our time, talents and treasure; we pledge and and follow through on our commitments. Stay tuned for more details about the pledge drive, which begins in February.

Finally, we note the recent passing of Jim Deardorff, who was preceded in death by his wife, Leona. Jim and Leona left a bequest to the UUFC. They were active members at the UUFC for many years, but had lived in the Portland area in recent years. Leona was quite active on the Social Concerns Committee.

BOARD AND COMMUNICATION

Board Adopts Goals for Current Year

The Board of Trustees has adopted two main goals for the current year ending June 30. The first deals with our current buildings and the second involves improving the congregation's ability to meet its mission.

Here are the two goals and the processes the Board will use to implement them. The Board will:

1. determine how, if possible, building modifications will be made to accommodate congregational needs. This process will include:
 - a. understanding how public regulations will impact modifications.
 - b. a process to refine congregational needs and expectations
 - c. a determination of facility priorities by the congregational meeting.
2. facilitate activities to enhance the congregation's ability to meet its mission. This process will include:
 - a. expanding congregation's understanding of shared ministry.
 - b. creating policies that support carrying out of the mission.
 - c. developing process to amend the bylaws so that the governance structure supports shared ministry.
 - d. d supporting development of a "Participants Guide to the UUFC" that promotes participation in the life and governance of the congregation.

Future Structures for UUFC: Task Force Report and Request for Assistance

The Building Research Task Force was appointed by the Board of Trustees to look at how changes to our current building might intersect with city planning and zoning ordinances. The Task Force will report to the Board on December 14 at 7:45 PM, during the Board's regular meeting. As always, members are welcome to attend.

The task force is asking basic questions such as:

If we expand our building's "footprint," what kinds of requirements kick in? Would we need to upgrade utilities throughout the building? Meet earthquake and energy efficiency requirements? Parking? Get a new conditional use permit?

If we are just changing the interior, such as adding restrooms and a larger kitchen, what permits will be needed? If we need to request a conditional use permit, how much will the permit cost? How much will the entire permitting process likely cost?

The research is following up on the Future Structures Task Force report from last spring. That report can be read on our website at <http://uucorvallis.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Future-Structures-Task-Force-Report.pdf>

In January, the Board will appoint the next-phase task force that will:

1. Create a preliminary outline of a future UUFC structure using our current structure as a starting point. This shall include phased development and rough cost estimates. This likely will include preliminary drawings.
2. Carry out processes aimed at ensuring the congregation, its renters, neighbors, and other partners feel included in developing the outline.
3. Communicate frequently with all participants and stakeholders.

If you are interested in being a member of the task force, please contact Kyle Jansson. The Board plans to appoint the task force at its Jan. 11 meeting.

Policy Adopted to Operate Justice Fund

The congregation at its annual meeting several years ago voted to set aside 10 percent of undesignated financial bequests into a charitable and educational endowment for social justice. At the recommendation of a committee which created a draft policy, the Board recently adopted Policy 3.10 to guide use of this Justice Outreach Fund. The Justice Outreach Fund will make grants that are focused on high-impact projects aimed at seeding and achieving social, economic, racial, environmental and other kinds of justice.

Getting an Item on the Board Agenda

If your committee or council wants to get an item on the Board of Trustees, please contact president Kyle Jansson at least one week before the Board's regular monthly meeting (the second Monday.) The Board's agenda for its two-hour meetings is typically full with ongoing business. Kyle will help make sure that the item is prepared so that the Board will be able to fully consider it, or help you find a better solution for the item.

Budget Planning Beginning for Next Fiscal Year

It may only be December, but planning for the UUFC's budget beginning July 1 is beginning. Committees are being asked to submit their budget requests during December and January, and then briefly present them at a congregational budget forum January 24. The requests will be used to prepare a draft budget used for the pledge drive this spring. A final budget will be adopted by the congregation at its annual meeting May 15. For more information, contact UUFC Treasurer Leslie Chartier or president Kyle Jansson.

Email Distribution List Change

The time has arrived to move our email traffic over to email distribution lists specifically for the UUFC – after having made the About UUFC Google Group carry our traffic for many years, we are finally able to host our own email distribution lists, including adding a new list for more general discussion. Sign-up instructions are available online at http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=3015 or on paper in the UUFC foyer. We are aiming to switch all traffic over starting January 1; a fresh start for a new year. Questions? Contact Monica Jacobson-Tennessee, UUFC Communication Coordinator (news@uucorvallis.org).

Newsletter and Announcement Submission Process

All items for the UUFC monthly newsletter are due to news@uucorvallis.org by the evening of the deadline – usually the third Wednesday of the month. All items for the weekly announcements are due to news@uucorvallis.org by noon on Thursday. Items will be edited as needed for the newsletter and the weekly announcements.

2016 Newsletter Deadlines:

- January 20
- February 17
- March 23
- April 20
- May 18
- June 22
- July 20
- August 24
- September 21
- October 19
- November 16
- December 14

RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION

CHILDREN & YOUTH

RE for Children & Youth Calendar:

December 6 & 13: Christmas, Chanukah and Solstice Stories for children; youth meet for their usual sessions

December 20: Las Posadas intergenerational worship service

December 27: No RE sessions or Infant/Toddler Care – one service at 9:30 AM with brunch afterwards. All are welcome to worship together.

Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Education

December 6, 12:30-2:30 PM in room 6: Parent Orientation for K-1 OWL

Parents for all OWL classes: Turn in permission slips for all OWL classes this month. Classes begin January 2016, for K/1st, 5th/6th, 7th/8th, and 9th-12th grades.

For more information contact DRE Michael Molk (molk@uucorvallis.org, 541-752-5218 x225).

Interested in being a youth advisor?

We currently need 2 more people to be youth advisors for our high school youth group, YRUU. If you enjoy youth's company, are a good listener and communicator, like to play games and discuss and learn together, and can be present and participate with the youth, consider volunteering for this important ministry with great rewards. Advisors work with an experienced team of other adults, and receive support and training from DRE Michael Molk. If you are willing to give some of your time and energy to support and encourage youth in their ethical and spiritual development, talk with DRE Michael Molk to learn more or to apply (molk@uucorvallis.org, 541-752-5218 x225).

Want to support the children's RE program?

We need a couple more people to serve on our RE Children's Support Committee. This committee works with DRE Michael Molk and other volunteer congregants, to support the Children's RE program in various ways: with teacher appreciations, family socials, lesson ideas and craft projects. This is a fun and meaningful way to contribute to our Fellowship's mission. To learn more about this opportunity, talk to DRE Michael Molk (molk@uucorvallis.org, 541-752-5218 x225).

ADULT RELIGIOUS GROWTH AND LEARNING

UUFC Men's Retreat 2015

Alan Kirk

Thirty-two men of the Fellowship went on a journey together over the Halloween weekend. It was the 14th annual Fall Men's Retreat, held in a beautiful setting on the Columbia Gorge – the Menucha Retreat & Conference Center. It was a journey of personal reflection and sharing about life transitions – both the joyful and the difficult – and what we have learned from them. Leading the retreat were Tim Barraud, Jerry Zygmuntowitz, and Don Morris, who combined their excellent facilitation skills with poetry, music, ritual, and guided relaxation to encourage us to connect with our hearts as well as our heads.

Drawing upon our reflections about past transitions, we were invited to apply what we have learned to current and future transitions. We also organized ourselves into small groups for mutual support in facing transitions ahead. The retreat experience was further enriched with hearty meals, time for socializing, and delighting in our creative talents in the Saturday night variety show, which has become an annual tradition. We have been on a journey together, and we have returned with stronger bonds of friendship and appreciation. The Fall Men's Retreat is part of the Adult Religious Exploration program at UUFC. For more information, contact Alan Kirk – alan.r.kirk@gmail.com.

UUFC Women's Retreat 2015 Reflection

Beth Runciman

When I first read that the topic of the women's retreat was "Bringing Forth Your Best Self," I joked to my wife, Rachel, "Oh, I can't go to that. I already am my best self. This is as good as it gets, people!" Of course, I went anyway. Once there, I felt loved and supported. People told me some really personal things, and there was singing, and really good meals, and the cabins had heat. I made a little journal there, with the intention of recording some of my good deeds, so I have that record to go back to when I am feeling really crummy about myself, or about the state of the world. If you've never done this, try it! It helps, especially when you write down the things you were able to do that surprised you, or that demonstrated to you that your capacity to respond with love and wisdom was greater than you thought it was. We value the things we take the time to record and measure. It is good to celebrate our little baby steps to move towards who we want to be and how we want to act. I am getting better at staying calm within myself when my kids are loud and needy, which is one of my biggest current challenges. Next year, the boys will be old enough to stay overnight with Grandma, and Rachel and I are planning to both go to both nights of the retreat. She snores. But I am used to it.

PROGRAM COUNCIL

WHAT IS THE PROGRAM COUNCIL?

Wendy Sutton

The main question we hear about the Program Council is one that I, too, have asked: "People are always referring to the Program council – but what does it actually do?" Here are a series of (mostly) true answers:

The mission-driven answer: The UUFC mission statement – Explore. Love. Act. – gives directive to the three councils: the RE Council to Explore, the Justice Council to Act and the Program Council to Love. The Program Council assists in building deep connections between UUFC members.

The historical answer: The Program Council's original role was to coordinate all the programs and events of the Fellowship, so that the Board could focus on policy and finance. That meant it covered RE, justice, fundraising, covenant groups, events, building and grounds, etc. At Council meetings they would spread out a calendar and schedule the entire church year (thank goodness for computers!). They checked in with every committee monthly to ensure leadership was in place and responsibilities were being met. They recruited committee chairs. They developed Adult RE programs. As the Fellowship matured and the many ways to be involved with its work increased more specialized leadership was needed. The Program Council is now one of three councils that encompass many but not all of committees currently working to keep the Fellowship moving forward.

The flow-chart answer: Currently the committees falling under the Program Council's umbrella are Membership, Library, the annual fund raisers (Holiday Bazaar, Services Auction and Rummage Sale), the annual events (Labor Day Tuna Roast and Thanksgiving FestEvent), the Living with Chronic Debilitating Diseases Group (the most recent addition), Sunday Coffee teams and Connect Up. The chairs of these committees meet with the Program Council executive committee quarterly.

The heartfelt answer: The Program Council's role is very straightforward – we facilitate the success of the committees that form our council: the people who are doing this amazing work. You don't know who we are or what we do because our roles are behind the scenes – like finding new Rummage sale chairs, assisting with organizing the Holiday bazaar or hosting a Connect up event. Our goal is to give each and every one of us the opportunity to get to know each other, create deeper connections and relationships, and to have a meaningful place in our community.

Want to find out more? Come to a meeting or contact us directly at connect@uucorvallis.org.

CONNECT UP

To be a community we need to know each other. Connect Up was created by the Program Council to give people opportunities to meet in small groups to form deeper personal relationships. Once a month (on the last Sunday of the month) the Connect Up table goes up and everyone in the Fellowship has the opportunity to host an event and/or attend an event. Events can take place anywhere - at the Fellowship, in people's homes and in the community. A "host" comes up

with something they're interested in doing and offers it as an event. Want to have a potluck? Want to learn or play a game? Want to have a cookie exchange? Want to share mandalas as spiritual practice? Want to learn to make pasties? Want to see a movie or play? Want to read a book and talk about it? You'll be amazed at what you learn about people in a small casual gathering. People share their pasts, their passions, their hopes, their humor, their whole selves. Who wouldn't want to be part of our community?! Come share yourself – meet someone new – learn something new about someone you know. Come to have fun and build community at the same time. Join us! The next Connect Up Sundays are November 29th and December 27th.

HOLIDAY BAZAAR: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015, 9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

Contributions

Bake Sale items, which may be spiced nuts, candy, homemade crackers, and soup mixes, baked goods and labeled vegan and gluten-free items, need to be brought to church on Friday, December 4, between 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM. For pickup on Friday before 4:30 PM, or for more information, contact Andrea Dailey (541-368-5212, 2daileys@gmail.com).

Greens and Swags: drop off greens for swag-making by leaving them on the deck on Thursday, December 3. Swag-making for the Holiday Bazaar will happen Friday, December 4, from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM in the Social Hall. No experience necessary, bring gloves and clippers and join in creating beautiful swags for sale at the Bazaar. For more information, contact Nancy Kyle (n.kyle12@gmail.com)

Bring your family and friends to the Bazaar!

Come to the Fellowship on Saturday, December 5, 2015 between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Enjoy coffee, scones, or lunch in the café, pick out handcrafted items from artists or from the recycled gifts area for the loved ones on your list, and a fresh swag of holiday greenery to hang on your door. Don't forget to grab your favorite baked goodie to enjoy during the holiday season! Questions? Email uuholiday.elves@gmail.com See you there!

December Art Exhibit

We are fortunate to be able to enjoy the work of three Corvallis artists, who work in various media, from December 8 until January 18th: *Joey Azul*, *Jan Dymond*, and *Barbara Weber*.

Joey Azul hasn't met a medium she doesn't like to use for making art. Much of her work is mixed media, and sometimes 3D. The subject of her work is often a concern for the human condition and its interface with nature.

In this exhibit, *Jan Dymond* is delighted to share her current series of oil paintings named *I AM*, which recognizes the oneness of the earth, air, fire and water that we are. Her travels to other countries have inspired and influenced her work, and her deep connection to beauty and the life force has been created in Oregon's mountains, coast, rivers and lakes where she has been deeply nurtured and inspired to express her gratitude and awe through various media.

Barbara Weber has been involved with art since the '60's and has maintained a studio since then, when she decided it was her life's work. She is motivated by her deep love of nature and is inspired by the 19th century British poet John Clare who said, "I found my poems in the field." She has a BA in Art from OSU; and though printmaking is her first love, (because it is the most democratic medium), she is trained in drawing, watercolor, and sculpture.

Corvallis Community Choir
Holiday Concert

Begin your holiday celebration at the Corvallis Community Choir's Holiday Singing for Family and Friends on December 15! The choir's 60-plus members have been learning some new Christmas and Chanukah songs and would love to perform them for you. Free and suitable for all ages, the concert is scheduled to begin at 7:30 in the UUFC Fellowship Hall.

JUSTICE COUNCIL

Adopt-a-Highway Committee: Next “Meeting”

On Saturday, December 12, we will leave from the NW parking lot of the 53rd Street BiMart at 9:00 AM. “Grabbers,” reflective vests and bags for the garbage will be provided. Dress for the weather, keeping in mind that “layering” is helpful for the changing temperature as the day warms. Because some of the area we pick up includes ditches that are likely wet, expect to get your feet wet and muddy – wear suitable footwear. Please join us. Questions: Bob Ozretich, The Trash Tsar, boboz@peak.org.

Oregon UU Voices for Justice: UPDATE

The 6th annual Oregon UU Voices for Justice meeting was held at the UU Church of Eugene last month. It was decided that last year’s campaigns – “Ending Corporate Personhood and Money as Speech with a 28th Constitutional Amendment” and “Healthcare for All” – will be continued into 2016. Both of these campaigns have strong advocates within the UUFC congregation. Those at the meeting initiated the development of a new campaign, “Environmental Justice” for 2016. It was recognized as a very large topic and a survey of Oregon UU congregations will be used to narrow the focus to something manageable.

Work continues on passing the 28th Amendment ending corporate Constitutional rights and money as speech. At the Federal level, bill HJR 48, the We the People Amendment, now has 14 co-sponsors including our state’s own Peter DeFazio and Earl Blumenauer. At the State level, a bill applying to Congress for an Article V Constitutional Convention to address these two problems will be introduced in the short, 2016 session that starts in February. If you would like more information about work on the 28th Amendment campaign contact Bob Ozretich (boboz@peak.org).

Immigration Justice Trip Reporting

Come hear about Nancy Kyle and Roberta Smith’s experiences touring the border in Arizona and Mexico. Their first session focused on *exploring* what they learned and witnessed. In the second session, Thursday, December 3 at 7:00 PM in Room 6C, they will share *love* for the people they met. The third session, Sunday, December 13 at 1:00 PM in the Sanctuary, will be a look at how to *act* according to our principles.

Boxing Day Service Project

This year on December 27 we’ll observe Boxing Day: one service (at 9:30 AM) followed by a potluck brunch and a chance to work together assembling small bags of toiletries for Community Outreach to distribute to homeless members of our community.

Stone Soup Crews, December 26 and 27

UUFC members and friends will have an opportunity to make and serve meals at Stone Soup on the weekend after Christmas. Crews of ten or so people will be needed for each day, to make and serve breakfast on Saturday (arrive 8:00 AM, serve 10:00 AM, then clean up) and to make and serve dinner on Sunday (arrive 3:00 PM, serve 5:30 PM, then clean up.) Sign-up sheets will be available beginning Sunday, Dec. 6.

Cold Weather Men’s Shelter

The Cold Weather Men’s Shelter is again open, providing a place for homeless men in our community to sleep, and the UUFC will have a week to staff. Watch for dates and sign-ups for this volunteer opportunity; information coming soon.

Task Force on Anti- Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multi-culturalism

Are you interested in the work of addressing racism and oppression, and increasing skills to live with our differences? A new Fellowship task force is forming to help us move forward in this work. Contact Jill McAllister if you are interested.

THE BACK PAGE: HOLDING OUR DIFFERENCES, BEING TOGETHER

It's December again, that time of year when it's popular to share articles about northern and eastern European words that capture the particular feeling of coziness in a warm home while a snow storm blows outside. These articles are popular not just because they say something about winter, but perhaps also because they speak to a need we have all year round: the need to create communities and spaces in which we feel welcomed and safe, refuges from the storm of the world. The words we borrow – *Gemütlichkeit*, *gemytlig*, *hyggelig*, *hygge*, *yiom*, all usually translated as “coziness,” an incomplete translation, because there is no true English equivalent – carry with them a sense that these places of refuge meet the needs of many who dwell within them, even when those needs are not identical. Author Jessica Alexander writes, “It isn't only because of the candles, the nice food and the cozy atmosphere. Hygge is about something much deeper. It is about the power of presence and *really* connecting to others in a drama free way. It is focusing on what is really important – *being* together. Hygge is a safe place where no one tries or wants to be better than anyone else. That would not be hyggeligt. It's a place to just be together with nothing to prove.”

The Riverside Church in New York City currently serves people from more than 40 ethnic groups, as an intentionally diverse community. UU minister Rev. Rachel Lonberg writes, “Sunday morning remains the most segregated time in America, but the Riverside Church is a multicultural, multiracial, and multiethnic church with 2,400 members. It is also an ecumenical community – made up of all sorts of Christians. It is affiliated with both the United Church of Christ and the American Baptist Church. And they hold these two distinct traditions together. It is not easy. There are divergent opinions about worship.

“A decade ago, someone asked the Rev. Dr. James Forbes, now the minister emeritus of the congregation, how he made worship work in this integrated community. He responded,

“A truly diverse congregation where anybody enjoys more than 75 percent of what's going on is not thoroughly integrated. So that if you're going to be an integrated church you have to be prepared to think, “hey, this is great, I enjoyed at least 75 percent of it,” because 25 percent you should grant for somebody's precious liturgical expression that is probably odious to you; otherwise it's not integrating. So an integrating church is characterized by the need to be content with less than total satisfaction with everything. You have to factor in a willingness to absorb some things that are not dear to you but may be precious to some of those coming in.””

What would it look like if this year, as part of our peace and justice work, we each took these ideas seriously? If we came together with nothing to prove and focused on our ability to *be* together, which includes our ability to give up some of what we want so that others are able to be with us? Perhaps we could grow concerned not when we get less than 100% of what we want, but rather when we get more than 75%. In other words, could we welcome the 25% of moments in which something doesn't suit us and see those moments as affirmation of the welcome and inclusion of others? Could we slow down our judgements, of ourselves and others, and see them in the context of a bigger picture? Our ability to be together is challenged not only by fear of losing out on what we need but also by our fear that maybe we aren't good enough to simply *be* together. And yet we are: we are good enough to relax into our community, and generous enough to appreciate that which doesn't serve us yet serves another.

The real Christmas message and miracle is that people still hope! It is that they still keep alive the poetry of love and peace and goodwill even when life seems to dim all prospects of such a vision. The impossibility of Christmas is that it comes. Its coming is more than an event of the calendar. Its coming is a revitalization of the spirit – where people still hope, still see visions of peace, love and fellowship. The impossible becomes plausible and life takes on a dimension richer than the obvious.

Richard Woodman



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Explore. Love. Act.

We gather as an inclusive religious community to search for meaning, build deep connections, and inspire action toward a better world for all.

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Looking for the calendar?

For the most up-to-date information, see our website at http://uucorvallis.org/?page_id=211
Our online calendar is updated frequently!