



THE BEACON

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
SOCIETY OF CLEVELAND

Volume 62, Issue 6

December 2, 2010

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UPCOMING SERVICE INFORMATION

Musical Prelude at 10:45 a.m. Service at 11:00 a.m.*

December 5, 2010, 11 a.m.

The Infinite and the Finite

Worship Leader: Rev. Colin Bossen
Musician: Lawrence Minadeo
Artists-in-Residence:
The Possibilitarian Puppet Theater

We are caught between the finite and the infinite. The time before our births and after our deaths is vast and unimaginable. What can we accomplish in finite lives? Knowing our limits may just open up vistas of the possible.

December 21, 2010, 7 p.m.

Blue Christmas

Worship Leader: Rev. Colin Bossen
Musician: Karin Tooley

The holidays can be a lonely, depressing and "blue" time for those who are alone or grieving. Every year we offer a special evening service for those who find it difficult to celebrate at this time of year. Our service this year will also include a recognition of the winter solstice.

December 12, 2010, 11 a.m.

What the Scholar Taught

Worship Leader: Rev. Colin Bossen
Musicians: UUSC Choir (Barbara Boyd, Director) and Karin Tooley

Our fourth service in our year long series on the religions of the world will explore Confucianism. This service will look at how the Confucian concepts of order and duty can enrich our lives.

December 24, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Traditional Christmas Eve Service

Worship Leader: Rev. Colin Bossen
Musicians: UUSC Choir Special Ensemble, Karin Tooley and Amy Collins, CLL

A Traditional Christmas Eve Candle light service, with stories, lessons and carols.

December 19, 2010, 11 a.m.

A Very Dickens Christmas

Worship Leader: Rev. Colin Bossen
Musician: Karin Tooley

Charles Dickens is considered by many to be the greatest English writer of the 19th century. For much of his life he was also a Unitarian. This year, during the holiday season, we will look at how he understood Christmas and how his religious message remains important today.

December 26, 2010, 11 a.m.

"24/7: Take Your Faith Into Your Life"

Worship Leader: Rev. Katie Norris
Musician: Karin Tooley

In the midst of wrapping up the holiday season, focusing on different religious traditions, and bringing many of those wonderful teachings into our lives, how can we take our Unitarian faith into our lives? Why is it important to our children, adults, and the future of our religion to express our faith in our daily life?

On Facebook?

If so, check out the Society's Facebook page. A link to it can be found on our website at www.uucleveland.org.

Wheelchair Available

The Society has a wheelchair available for use during congregational events.

Notes from our Minister

At the November Board meeting the Board voted in favor of a proposal to initiate a process for re-writing our congregational covenant. The Society's current covenant, our Bond of Union, is 59 years old and many people feel it no longer reflects the character of our religious community. Our Bond of Union reads: "The purpose of this Society, to be expressed in its Bond of Union, shall be: (a) Mutual helpfulness in the search of truth and for enduring values in ways of life; (b) Advancement of sound morals among ourselves and in our community; (c) Encouragement and protection of individual freedom of religion."

Unitarian Universalism is a covenantal, not a creedal, religion. Fundamentally we understand that how we treat each other and what we do together as a religious community is more important than what we individually believe. Our covenant is an expression of how we agree to treat each other and live together in religious community. If it does not reflect the current character of our community then a new covenant should be drafted that does.

Drafting a new covenant is a collective process. To aid us in this effort, over the next few months, we will hold a series of small group discussions focused on three essential questions:

- What does it mean to be a religious community?
- What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist?
- What does it mean to belong to this Unitarian Universalist religious community?

Each small group discussion will focus on one question and be coordinated by a facilitator and a note-taker. After each session the facilitators and note-takers will meet with me so that I can learn how members of the congregation answered each of the essential questions. Based upon what I learn from these conversations I will craft a service and a sermon on each of the essential questions. Each of the services will then be followed by a congregational talk-back.

At the end of the sermon series the Committee on Ministry and I will write a draft of a new covenant for the congregation. This draft will be presented to the congregation for discussion, then voted on by the Board and finally brought to the congregation for adoption.

The timeline envisioned for this process is as follows:

December 2010 -- Facilitators and note-takers are recruited;

January 2011 -- Facilitators and note-takers are trained; small group discussions on "What does it mean to be a religious community?" run; service on "What does it mean to be a religious community?" (January 30);

February 2011 -- Small group discussions on "What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist?";

March 2011 -- Small group discussions "What does it mean to belong to this Unitarian Universalist religious community?"; service on "What does it mean to be a Unitarian Universalist?" (March 6);

April 2011 -- Service on "What does it mean to belong to this Unitarian Universalist religious community?" (April 10); Committee on Ministry drafts new covenant; new covenant is presented to congregation for discussion; new covenant approved by the Board;

May 2011 -- New covenant is voted on at the congregational meeting.

I look forward to working with the congregation as we move through this exciting process. If you are interested in serving as a facilitator or note-taker please contact either myself or Pat Solomon (solwrite@aol.com), the Chair of the Committee on Ministry.

As is my usual practice, you will be receiving correspondence from me again later in the month when I send out my annual holiday letter. Until then I hope to see you at the Society.

love,
Colin

From Our President

With Thanksgiving just passed and as the December holidays stretch-out before us, I have been thinking about all that I am thankful for this year as a member of this community. And there is a lot to be thankful for just based on the activities of this past month. The Secondary Stewardship campaign was an overwhelming success. The Stewardship Committee was able to raise about \$12,000 in additional pledges for 2010/2011. Plus, there was a great fundraiser that raised about \$1,300. I am sorry I was not able to attend, but I was helping my mom celebrate her 65th birthday. But I did win a couple of great items from the silent auction.

The success of the pledge drive and fundraising activities are due to your generosity. Thank you for your support of this community. I am blessed to be a part of a group that is so giving of time and funds. I can't wait to see what the new year holds for us. I am looking forward to my continued participation in this community and to be a part of this family as we move through the coming holidays. Enjoy December and the winter wonderland that comes with the celebration of the solstice.

Rachel Webb

After Service Forum: Greg Coleridge

False "Corporate Persons" said to trample real human rights

Forum speaker to reveal how vast powers of corporate personhood threaten individual and community interests

The recent US Supreme Court decision, *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission* gave corporations the right to donate virtually unlimited corporate funds to political advertising. Greg Coleridge says this move has the inevitable result of suppressing the electoral power of citizens without money. "The root cause of this increasing danger to democracy are 14th Amendment rulings giving corporations essentially equal Constitutional rights afforded to human beings," says Coleridge, director of Northeast Ohio American Friends Service Committee.

On Sunday, December 12, at 1:00 p.m. in a public forum at the Society, Coleridge will discuss the decision, its implications and the new national movement, *Move to Amend* that would end corporate personhood. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Society at 216-932-1898, or e-mail Kelsey Fischer at membership@uucleveland.org, or visit the Society website: www.uucleveland.org.

Treasurer's Report

In October 2010, the UUSC received \$3,855 in primary pledge contributions plus \$2,115 in Secondary Stewardship pledge payments so far. This brings our year-to-date total to \$17,701 towards our annual pledge amount of \$65,594. Collections in October brought in \$117 for special collections and \$239 in non-pledge contributions to the general fund. The Society also brought in \$257 in other income during the month of October.

Karin Tooley, karint@ameritech.net

Board Minutes

If you would like to receive the minutes from Board Meetings via email, please contact the Society's Office. Alternatively, the minutes from the previous month's Board Meeting are posted on the Bulletin Board in the Social Hall.

UUSC News/Announcements

Possibilitarian Puppet Theater—Friday & Saturday, December 3 & 4: Come One—Come All to a Puppet Show: “The Against-Almost-Everything-and-Yet-for-Something Possibilitarian Cabaret”. The evenings festivities will include circus acts by the Thanksgiving Leftovers Mini-Circus Company, Music & Manifesto Recitation by the Wild Music Ensemble, Necessarily Unnecessary Possibilitarian Dances, and a passion play. Free show, \$5-10 donation suggested, starts at 8 PM.

First Sunday Potluck—December 5: We will be having a First Sunday Potluck lunch in the Fellowship Hall immediately following the service. The cost is \$3 if you don't bring a dish or \$5 per family. First time guests are free.

12 Days: A Workshop—Sunday, December 5: Would you like meaningful winter holidays? This two hour workshop starts at 1 p.m. today and introduces you to 12 days, a flexible, up-beat, spiritual practice to complement your holiday traditions. Facilitated by Rev. Mary Grigolia. Suggested donation is \$15-\$25 (includes materials). For more information call 216-539-3784, or email: mary@marygrigolia.com.

Reading to Refugees—Tuesday, December 7: We will be going to Green Road to read to the Bhutanese refugees at 7 p.m. (first Tuesday of every month). If you would like to help by reading to children, helping with homework (especially math and science), or conversing with the adults, please contact Claire Brugnoletti at clairebrugnoletti@comcast.net; Kelsey Fischer at fischer.kelsey@gmail.com; or Rev. Bossen at minister@uucleveland.org.

Holiday Bazaar—Sunday, December 12: Calling all crafters and all shoppers! Sunday 12/12 we will have our Annual Holiday bazaar during coffee hour. A percentage of all proceeds will be donated to the Society, so plan to pick up your unique gifts while supporting a good cause. If you'd like a table, please contact Amy Collins at 216-739-1928 or e-mail amycollins@sbcglobal.net. There will be jewelry, painted glass, watercolor paintings and cards, crafted items by some of our Bhutanese friends and more!

Young Adult Discussion Series—Tuesday, December 14: The Young Adult Discussion Series at Algebra Tea House in Little Italy will be held at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting topic is “Spirituality Without Religion”. For more information contact Kelsey Fischer at membership@uucleveland.org or 216-932-1898.

Spirit Song Circle—Wednesday, December 15: This is a continuation of a nine series session. Does your mind need a rest and your body a recharging? Learn songs and chants from the spiritual journey. We'll create sacred space so our singing arises from the heart of silence. Fee: Dana (pay what you choose). Facilitated by Rev. Mary Grigolia. For more information call 216-539-3784, or email: mary@marygrigolia.com.

Holiday Book Drive: The RE Committee is sponsoring a Holiday Book Drive for the nursery. This holiday season we will be collecting books that have been awarded the Caldecott Medal, such as *The Lion & the Mouse*, *My Friend Rabbit*, and *Saint George and the Dragon*. Look for the “Fill Our Bookshelf!” display and you will be able to pick out the title that you would like to donate to our nursery. We will welcome either books or a monetary donation toward the books. Contact Linda Coulter at lacoultah@gmail.com.

Circle Suppers: Want to meet and get to know other members of the congregation? Come to our Circle Suppers, generally held on the second Saturday of each month! These are semi-potlucks held at various Hosts' houses in the area. Sign-up sheets are available at Sunday services, or you can e-mail Ken Nightingale at father.nature@sbcglobal.net or call him at 216-470-7642 to ask questions.

InterAct Cleveland Homeless Stand Down: Help reach the goal of distributing 2,000 Personal Care Kits, Bagged Lunches and RTA All-Day Bus Passes by contributing these essential items. Monetary donations are the greatest needs and will be used for the purchase of boots and bus passes. HSD events are Sunday, Jan. 30—Winter Clothing; Saturday, Feb. 12—HSD Care-Van; Friday, Feb. 18—Health Fair. Locations to be announced. For more information see www.interactcleveland.org.

UUSC Office Closed for Holidays: December 24, 2010—January 1, 2011: The Society office will be closed from Christmas Eve until New Year's Day. Regular hours will resume on January 4th.

Beacon Deadline—December 16: Due to office closing, the deadline for January is December 16th.

UUSC News/Announcements

Earth-Centered Spirituality Gathering—December 19: As the days get shorter and fall becomes winter, we will celebrate the Winter Solstice at the UU Society of Cleveland. We meet downstairs at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 19th. First a ceremony, then a potluck meal. The ceremony will honor the time of looking within, by looking without...out to the sun and the planets and the tilting of the Earth on her axis. It will be accessible both to those who are limited by mobility issues, and those who are physically active. It will be meaningful for those who have pagan experience and those who are curious about earth-centered spirituality. There will be music and candles. There will be darkness and light. For questions, contact Mary Schatzman (maryschatzman@sbcglobal.net) or Zoe Economos (mse14@case.edu).

RE-VIEW

Each month, the Religious Education (RE) team will give you a glimpse into what goes on in RE. If you miss an inter-generational service, or usually attend service upstairs on Sundays, you may not know too much about all RE offers or how it works.

Update on Covenant Groups / Small Groups

Our Covenant Groups have only had one meeting so far and there's still plenty of room in them. If you haven't joined a Covenant Group yet please take a look and consider joining one. There are still sign-up sheets downstairs in fellowship hall but I don't think anyone would kick you out if you just showed up to a group meeting.

Bicycling Group (The Cycling Fuuls) - Dana Bjorklund, Linda Coulter: Dana and Linda lead participants in 10-20 mile bike rides, some urban and some on bike paths. December meeting is an organizing meeting.

GLBT Discussion Group - Nate Brown, Ellen Fry: 2nd Sunday of each month: Our extremely popular GLBT discussion group will meet again this year but with brand new topics. All are welcome to attend. Come share in food and conversation of topics important to the gay and lesbian community. Email: thepuppetdude@yahoo.com or fry.ellen@gmail.com.

Stand Up Comedy - Nate Brown: 4th Sunday of each month: Come join up and coming comic Nate Brown and learn how to write original jokes and perform them in your own voice. Participants will create a short set of original jokes that they will eventually perform in front of the congregation. Email: thepuppetdude@yahoo.com.

Movie Night – Mary Schatzman: 4th Sunday of each month: The themes are a variety of social justice issues. We watch the movie quietly, then have some discussion about it. No need to sign-up or commit: just join us! For questions, see or email Mary Schatzman: maryschatzman@sbcglobal.net.

Nursery Update

As you know by this point we're updating both the look and the supplies of the Nursery. You've hopefully noticed the new bright coat of paint but keep checking back throughout December and January for more changes. We're currently asking members to donate specific Caldecott winning children's books to our Nursery library. We've had a great response so far but there are plenty of books left on our list. Just make sure to check in with Linda Coulter during coffee hour to get a specific book so you don't buy the same one as another member.

December Mini-Goal: Helping More Families Discover Our RE Program

Over the summer, the number of children participating in RE programs has increased by one-third! Introducing families to our Religious Education is a good way to increase overall membership. The RE team is going to work again with you on this, using a method successful in other congregations: asking members if they know families who might like to hear about our RE programs. So, expect that, over the next couple months, someone will ask you if you know anyone. If you have any questions about our mini-goals, please contact our Director of Religious Education, Nathan Staples at dre@uucleveland.org or 216-932-1898.

Membership Committee

A Message from the Membership Committee:

Good news, "Visitor" rate is up. Less good news, "New Member" rate is flat. This forces us to take a hard look at some realities of "Membership Drives" in religious congregations.

We can think about it from a personal perspective: When I'm asked to work more to help bring new members to the Society, I know this will take new time and effort I may not have much of. But also, deep down: Do I really want to change the size and makeup of a group in which I'm presently comfortable?

Right now, we all know everyone's names, at least those we want to know. We can enjoy ourselves with friends at Society functions without having to endure the stress—and sometimes embarrassment—of having to meet too many strangers. Do we really want to change this?

For some of us, the answer might be no, we really don't want to take on this effort. We might think: I'll increase my pledge, but I don't want to tell my friends and associates about the Society. If new visitors do come, I will talk to them about our community then – or maybe I'll wait until later.

Yet our minds tell us that to continue having a full-time professional minister, staff-led programs, and increased outreach to our communities, we must grow. Membership must increase. Here's the cold, factual reality: Significant sustained congregational growth can only be attained by present membership's commitment to that goal and personal participation in the effort.

In brief, each of us must envision a new reality, where the Unitarian Universalist Society of Cleveland is its own constantly productive Membership Committee, in which all members play a part. In future messages, we'll show how we can make this happen.

The Membership Committee

New Member Spotlight

This month we welcome three new members into our community:

Amy Harmon is a lover of knowledge and of all creatures big and small. An activist, artist, watcher of clouds, librarian and intellectual freedom fighter, Amy is goofy and makes a mean vegan chili. She is all sorts of things wrapped up in a conundrum wrapped in a dodecahedron wrapped in a piñata full of many joys to cherish. Amy currently works at the West Side Market, spinning crepes and slinging coffee, teaches at the Cleveland Free Clinic, and dog sits. She owns a cat and a dog. Amy looks forward to continuing this spiritual journey & learning from others in this wonderful community.

Allie McNeil is a mom, nurse, writer and researcher, a hopeful gardener and Zen Buddhist. She works on many humanitarian projects and believes that prayers and compassion can heal more than we know.

Melissa Vandergriff is originally from Texas and recently moved to Cleveland from Austin to join her fiancé, a longtime Cleveland resident. She works at the Cleveland Clinic as a process improvement specialist, and in her free time enjoys singing, traveling, learning foreign languages and spending time with her family and friends. She is thankful to have found such a wonderful spiritual community and looks forward to getting to know everyone.

Join me in extending a warm welcome to Amy, Allie and Melissa!

Kelsey Fischer
Membership Coordinator

December 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Awakening Your Brain to Meditation 7-8:30 pm	2 Shifting Gears 1:30 p.m. Joseph Campbell Round Table 7:30 pm	3 Possibilitarian Puppet Theater 8 pm	4 Possibilitarian Puppet Theater 8 pm
5 Choir 9:30 am 1st Sunday Potluck 1 pm 12 Days: A Workshop 1-3 pm	6	7 Reading to Refugees 7 pm	8	9	10	11 Circle Suppers (in home) 6:30 p.m.
12 Choir 9:30 am Rel. Ed 11 am GBLT Disc. group 1 pm After Service Forum 1 pm	13	14 Young Adult Disc. Group—Algebra Tea House 7:30 pm	15 Spirit Song Circle 7-8:30 pm	16 <i>Beacon Deadline</i> Board of Trustees Mtg. 7 pm	17	18
19 Choir 9:30 am Rel. Ed 11 am Earth Cent. Spirituality 6 pm	20	21 Blue Christmas 7 pm	22	23	24 OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Eve Svc. 7 pm	25 OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Day
26 Choir 9:30 am Stand Up Comedy 1 pm Movie Night 5 pm	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28 OFFICE CLOSED	29 OFFICE CLOSED	30 OFFICE CLOSED	31 OFFICE CLOSED	1 OFFICE CLOSED

**THE UNITARIAN
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OF CLEVELAND**

2728 Lancashire Road
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106
Phone: 216-932-1898
Fax: 216-932-1516
Email: office@uucleveland.org
www.uucleveland.org

Rev. Colin Bossen
Minister

Tues. 9:00 - 11:15 a.m., Wed. 9:00. - 3:15 p.m.,
Thurs. 9:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m.

Shirley Nelson
Administrator/Beacon Editor

Tues. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Wed. 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.,
Thurs. 9:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m.

Amy Collins
Commissioned Lay Leader

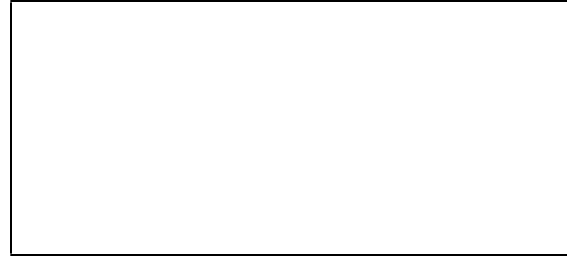
Nathan Staples
Director of Religious Education
Wed. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and
Sun. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Kelsey Fischer
Membership Coordinator

William Shorter
Custodian

Barbara Boyd
Choir Director

Rev. Peggy C. Clason
Minister Emerita



UUSC DEADLINES:

Beacon Articles: Deadline for January is December 16th

Order of Service/Announcements:

Wednesday a.m. before the Sunday Service

Board Reports: Tuesday a.m. before the Board Meeting

Birthdays and Anniversaries

This is only a partial list, to make it complete, send your special dates to the Office at office@uucleveland.org or just call and leave a message on the machine. Thanks!!

December

Betty Lau	3
Taiesha Collins	3
Bill Fraser	5
Samantha Cohen	6
Shirley Skellenger	13
Paul Minkler	20
Valerie McFadden	22
Karin Tooley	30



UUSC Board of Trustees

Rachel Webb President
Mary Schatzman Vice President
Beverly Austin Secretary
Karin Tooley Treasurer
Ben Faller
Sarah Thuerk
Elaine Weaver

*Board Meetings are held on the
4th Thursday of the month at
7:00 p.m.*