



The Mission of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte is to inspire children, youth and adults to discover and articulate deeper spiritual meaning evidenced in lives of integrity, compassion and stewardship of the earth.

La misión de la iglesia Unitaria Universalista de Charlotte es: inspirar a los niños, jóvenes y adultos para que descubran y articulen un significado espiritual profundo, evidente en una vida de integridad, compasión y en el manejo de los recursos de la tierra.

36TH ANNUAL CITYWIDE INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Tuesday, November 22 7:00 p.m. at Temple Beth El

Celebrate Charlotte's 36th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, Tuesday November 22nd, 7:00 p.m. at Temple Beth El (5101 Providence Road). All are warmly welcomed to this free citywide event to give thanks through the beauty and the rich tapestry of faith traditions in our region. Sponsored by Mecklenburg Ministries, this interfaith celebration invites Charlotteans of different races, cultures and faiths to join together as one and give thanks.



The evening will be filled with music by both our 200 person-strong Interfaith Adult and Children's Choirs, the words of the Mecklenburg Ministries' Youth Council as well as many interfaith Clergy from throughout Charlotte. The central message will be delivered by Msgr. John McSweeney from St. Matthew

Catholic Church. His message this year will focus on "The Gratitude Factor."

Start your Thanksgiving week off on the right foot by coming together with the broader community and offering gratitude. If you are interested in joining the Interfaith Adult Choir (high schoolers welcome), or the Interfaith Children's Choir, please contact John Herrick.

(for more information see page 3.)

CONTEMPORARY, EXPERIENTIAL WORSHIP RETURNS

Celebrating the Solstice; Saturday, December 17

Our next quarterly contemporary service will be held on Saturday, December 17 and will focus on the occasion of the Winter Solstice. Carol Smith, John Herrick and I have been working on a service for the whole congregation—children, youth and adults—that, I assure you, is not like any service you've attended here.

We'll offer a beginning art component, a procession out of doors, a return to the sanctuary

where we'll celebrate hope ritualized in the return of the light and marked by lots of different kinds of music. And, if that's not already enough, we'll conclude with a grand desert potluck in Freeman Hall afterward.

The service will begin in Freeman Hall at 6:30 p.m. Plan to arrive in plenty of time for parking and for the opportunity to participate in an activity as a family or with other UUC friends. The service will conclude by 7:30 p.m. with desert to follow. Our early start will accommodate families and will allow you to participate in our seasonal social opportunities later in the evening should you wish.

If you have questions about the service, talk with Carol, John or me. We hope you'll make this a part of the upcoming season.

—Jay Leach, Minister



FROM THE MINISTER

A question arose in a conversation with a member of our professional staff here. So, I took it to our core staff meeting. (Every other Tuesday morning I'm joined by four others—Kathleen Carpenter, Director of Religious Education for Children and Youth, John Herrick, Director of Music, Alesia Hutto, Administrative Assistant, and Jeter Walker, Director of Administration—around the tables in the library.) The question we pondered: who are the current leaders of the UUCC?

I invited our core staff to offer immediate responses: who comes to mind right away as one of our key leaders here? Names were mentioned. Nods, agreement. A lull. More names.

Then, some deeper discussion ensued. What does it mean to be a leader in the congregation? How does someone come to be perceived as a leader? What's the correlation between presence/participation and leadership? Does a relatively long record of service equate to leadership even if someone is not currently very involved? Is leadership about influence? setting direction? having a sense of responsibility for what goes on here? taking initiative rather than waiting to be asked?

We wondered: are there more or fewer leaders than at other times in our history? In what ways might our structure here encourage or discourage people from exerting leadership? How might the complexities and demands of life make it harder for some to assume leadership? What inspires some to jump in and take responsibility? How does the consumerist attitude some members seem to have—I am here mostly to *get* what *you* can create, provide, fund, and offer to *me*—work against the willingness to accept responsibility or provide leadership?

In the end, we came up with an impressive list of those we think of as our current leaders. On it were women and men, younger and older people, relatively new members and members of long standing. I, for one, was heartened by the reminder of what some are offering here.

So, I'll pass along some of our questions to you. Who do you think of as current leaders of the UUCC? Why? Are you one of our leaders? What inspires you to lead or what keeps you from leading? Do we need more leaders? What do we need leaders to do here?

While I offer these questions for your reflection, I'd also welcome hearing responses from some of you. If you are reading this electronically, you can reply immediately by clicking on this: jay@uuccharlotte.org. If you're still reading a paper copy (and I hope you'll consider the benefits to

the planet and to our congregation by switching to our electronic version—see the article on page 6) you can send me a message at the email address above.

Peace, Jay

“Cautious, careful people, always casting about to preserve their reputation and social standing, never can bring about a reform.”

—Susan B. Anthony

BEYOND CATEGORICAL THINKING

Join the Assistant Minister Search Team for this Workshop

Please join the Assistant Minister Selection Team (AMST) on Sunday, December 4th at 12:30 p.m. for lunch in the Library, followed by the UUA *Beyond Categorical Thinking* Workshop at 1:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This program includes both Sunday morning services with BCT workshop facilitators, followed by a three-hour workshop Sunday afternoon. In the workshop, UUCC members will:

- ◆ Consider the hopes, expectations, and concerns they have for an assistant minister
- ◆ Learn more about the ministerial search process, and
- ◆ Explore how thinking categorically about people sometimes interferes with choosing the best candidate.

RSVP: We need to know how many lunches to have ready, so you must let us know if you're coming. Please respond to Nancy Hershey.

“These are times in which a genius would wish to live. It is not in the still calm of life, or the repose of a specific situation, that great characters are formed.”

—Abigail Adams

MUSIC NEWS

'Tis the Season ... for Singing

If you are not currently in the UCC Adult Choir or Chamber Choir, but love singing and are looking for some seasonal opportunities, please read on. . .

Want to join the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service Choir?

36th Annual Citywide Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Last year's event drew close to 200 singers with 1,500 in attendance overall. Want to join the interfaith choir? Choir rehearsals -- only one is mandatory -- will be held at the temple on Sunday evening, November 20th and Monday evening, November 21st, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. Choir directors this year will include Dr. Shawn-Allyce White, Director of Choral Activities at Johnson C. Smith University, Dr. Andrew Bernard, Cantor of Temple Beth El and UCC Director of Music John Herrick.

There will also be a Children's Choir and a special "Directors Choir" this year made up of directors and music leaders who will render a beautiful version of "Hineih Mah Tov" with Dr. John Blizzard as baritone soloist. The UCC Adult Choir will review the Thanksgiving music at its rehearsal on Wednesday, November 16th at 7:00 p.m. -- all sr. high youth and adult singers are welcome. The Children's Choir will rehearse on Monday evening, November 21, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Temple Beth El. For more information or to volunteer, please contact John Herrick. For more information about the service, visit the Mecklenburg Ministries website at meckmin.org.



Christmas Eve Services

Please join the UCC Adult Choir for our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on December 24th at 8:00 p.m. The

Adult Choir will sing seasonal selections in addition to leading traditional carols. Rehearsals for this service will be held during regularly scheduled Wednesday evening rehearsals in the sanctuary, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m., November 30 through December 21. Contact John Herrick for more information and/or to sign up.

SERVICE AND COMMUNITY: MY STORY

How Jim Lay Came to Unitarian Universalism

When I came to UCC 17 years ago, I realized I had found my church home, but only after getting involved in serving our wonderful church did I discover I also had an amazing, extended family. I was a non-participant here until I met my wife Sheila, a year or so after I found UCC. She was a previous member here and was encouraging me to get involved. With some trepidation, I started working with the openers and closers, and I started to meet and get to know a few people outside of the social time between services in Freeman Hall.



I later became the church coordinator with the Red Cross Bloodmobile. As a lifelong blood donor, this was an easy fit, and I did this for a few years, and met more people.

My first committee participation was the Building and Grounds Team. It was a startup group, with lots of work to do, so I jumped in, and with a great group of dedicated people, we started to make improvements and repairs around here, and again, I met more people.

From here I was asked to serve on the Finance Team, which I also enjoyed, and again, met more people. Being nominated to the Board of Trustees this year was a great honor and a privilege. It is very exciting to be in a position to help in the visioning of who we are and where we are going.

As a canvasser for our pledge campaigns, helping with the music for our services and cleaning up our grounds on Saturday work days, I've got to know many of you. Our church has some of the most wonderful people in the world, and if you haven't yet, I encourage you to go to our webpage and click on the Programs/Getting Involved tab and see where your talents might be used. I cannot imagine my life without UCC. This church has enriched my and my family's life more than I can begin to tell, and I will always be grateful for that fateful Sunday morning 17 years ago I first stepped in this wonderful place.

Jim Lay, Member, Board of Trustees

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Habitat for Humanity

Next Work Date is Saturday, December 17th



Our 4th and last Habitat volunteer date for 2011 is Saturday, December 17 where we will be painting at a new home. We will meet at the work site at 8 a.m. To register for the volunteer day, please go to www.habitatcharlotte.org/unitarian-church. Questions, contact Habitat's Volunteer Coordinator, Stephanie Murphy at smurphy@habitatcharlotte.org, or

(704) 716-7077. Volunteers that are 16-17 years old need to fill out a minor's release form http://www.habitatcharlotte.org/images/stories/pdf/Vol_Minors_Release.pdf.

Ongoing Social Justice Opportunities . . .

Service Day at Second Harvest: On November 19th, from 2:30-5pm, the Social Justice Team and the Youth Social Justice team have planned a service day at Second Harvest Food Bank. We need volunteer to help with a fundraiser they are holding that day and with any other sorting they need done. This is a family friendly event although very young children are probably not appropriate. Email kathleen@uuccharlotte.org to sign up or for questions.

Room in the Inn: Have you signed up yet to receive weekly updates and volunteer opportunities for our Sunday night shelters which start Sunday, December 4. *If you are not already on the list*, email Marsha Kelly at riti_marshakelly@yahoo.com or sign up on the Social Justice bulletin board next door to the Chapel.

Men's Shelter's Dinners: Anyone interested in joining this worthwhile and rewarding endeavor, please contact Larry Bennett. **Next meal:** Tuesday, November 22nd

Your Cans Can Make a Difference: With rising gas and food prices, the 25 families we help each month at our Food Bank are facing even more difficulties stretching their food dollars. Your donations of canned goods and other non-perishables can help fill our Food Barrel to overflowing. If everyone would bring *just one can*, we really CAN make a difference.

Mark your Calendars for November 2012 for the next Social Justice Goods and Services Auction.

Gleaning Fields, Feeding the Hungry

A good time was had by all who came out to glean Saturday October 29 at the Riverbend Farms in Midland, NC. We enjoyed the fall air while harvesting turnips and turnips greens. Gleaner Leah Barnes (11) shared, "I felt happy that I was helping the community and also having fun!" Her sister Hallie (9) added, "I helped hungry people have fresh food, not just stuff in a box." UUCC member Janan Richrath, was appreciative of the opportunity stating, "I forced everyone in my family to go because it was a chance to see/feel non-mechanized farm work, to get outside, and to do service work with tangible results. My children are still figuring out "needs" vs. "wants," and food is a need for all." Reportedly, we gleaned 4,500 lbs. of produce in just two hours to feed those served by Bethel Ministries in



Charlotte and in a low-income elderly neighborhood in Pineville. We plan to glean again for The Society of St. Andrew in the spring or summer, so come out and join the fun.

--Beth Kinny, 2011 Gleaning Coordinator

"Operation Sandwich"

On Sunday, October 30, over 50 people helped make almost 500 sandwiches in under an hour for our homeless neighbors in Charlotte. CYRE youth, Stella Park (10), shared, "I liked that I knew I was making sandwiches for people that didn't have any food. It made me happy to know that I was helping people while having fun." UUCC member Stacie Taylor found the experience rewarding, "We were all very surprised at the amount of food that was needed. There was always something for everyone to do/prepare. The energy in the kitchen was uplifting!"

"Operation Sandwich" takes place here at the UUCC on scheduled Sundays after services. Jill Morin enjoyed the convenience of this activity citing, "I liked that I could participate in something right here at church. I didn't have to go looking for an opportunity to help out. It came to me. With so many demands on our time and attention, it's nice to have something all set up and ready to go." The money to pay for the ingredients come from the collections held in the CYRE classes every Sunday. We need donations of \$125 a month to continue to make the quarterly sandwiches happen. Please, parents, encourage your children to donate each Sunday in class.

--Samantha Singer, Fall "Operation Sandwich" Coordinator

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This I Believe – This I Practice

4th Sunday of the Month, 10:30 a.m. Bernstein Chapel
Speaker: Katy Ridnour

I was a good Catholic once. I admired the nuns in their layered habits with their faces framed in starched white and their hands rubbing the black rosary beads that cascaded from the folds at their hips. I'd write Sister Camille and Sister Regina love letters in the form of unassigned essays. I wish I could call those pages back, for I wonder about the content of those paragraphs. The nuns' response will have to suffice: they'd bring me shells. Tiny, flat shells rimmed in purple--the color every fourth-grade girl adores. I felt special, even more importantly, I felt seen.

You see, our school, St. Mary Star of the Sea School, sat on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay. When the sisters gave me the shells, they told me how they had thought about me as they walked along the water's edge in the evenings. Even though my eyes never saw their black shoes making imprints in the sand, walking along the shore is how I picture them still.

These women helped me realize that I could impact another person's life with a small gesture, and although I will never get my gestures back, I just might find Sister Regina or someone as special as she was, smiling back at me. The response will have to suffice. Come hear Katy's journey on Sunday, November 27th at 10:30 a.m. in the Chapel.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (CYRE)

Snacks with Santa

Saturday, December 3

Parents of young children and the young at heart should mark their calendars for our "almost" annual *Snacks with Santa* event



to be held on Saturday, December 3, 10:30am-Noon. This festive time includes making holiday crafts, listening to cheerful music, playing games, - and, of course, a visit from

the jolly old elf himself! We ask that all attendees bring a canned food item to fill the Church's food barrel to assist in feeding those in need this holiday season. This act of giving is a wonderful way for our young children to help those hungry in the community. (See message in Hunger Banquet article.)

Volunteers are needed to help set-up & clean-up, to bring snack food, to run the craft tables and to help with storytelling and singing. Contact Coordinator, Carmina Day or the CYRE Office to volunteer.

"The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity."

— Dorothy Parker

What Message Are You Fostering:

Greed or Gratitude?

Every November-December, I hear parents complaining about the messages their children are hearing about the holiday season. The commercialization of Christmas has made the most prominent message one of greedy expectation rather than the celebration of a man who preached that we should love our neighbors as ourselves and care for those less fortunate. Instead of creating an atmosphere of love and generosity, too often today's families find themselves in the midst of frenzied anxiety as they try to get their children to every single possible party and holiday celebration. So why do they do this? Good question. Does it make them better parents? And more importantly, does it support the values they want to model for their children?

The Coming of Age youth are pleased to offer church members an alternative to this "gimme, gimme" mentality: a Hunger Banquet. Our biannual, youth-led Hunger Banquet is much more than just a dinner. It is theater. It is an educational evening for young and old. It is fun and full of surprises. It is sobering. It is multigenerational. And most, important, the focus is on sharing and appreciating what we already have. The parting gift will not be in the form of a goodie bag or candy; it will be new insights on making the world a better place.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 10. More details will be in the next *Voices*. This event is great for families, but is also a great opportunity for non-parents and empty nesters to be part of a meaningful multigenerational event. Childcare is provided for young preschoolers.

Our Whole Lives Sexuality Classes

Orientations Scheduled

Our congregation is proud to offer its families the gift of comprehensive sexuality education for its children. We use the *Our Whole Lives* (OWL) program, jointly developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ about ten years ago. This program offers classes for all age levels: K-2nd, 5th-6th, 8th, and 10th-12th. The 8th grade class is offered every year, while the others alternate years, with 2012 being a year for 5th-6th and K-2nd. However, we are short a male facilitator for the 5th-6th class. Contact Kathleen if interested in serving in that position. Members only, please. I will train the person on using the program. All classes will begin in January and run for about 10 weeks.

All parents with children in 8th grade were emailed an invitation to attend the OWL Parent Orientation for that age group to be held November 20. Please note: it is mandatory. The orientation for the younger children will be held in December, date to be confirmed as soon as the facilitators are finalized. It is not mandatory but recommended. Because we have a small 8th grade class, we are opening that OWL class to the public. Interested parents should contact Kathleen and should plan to attend the orientation (required). There is a minimal cost to non-members for all classes.

SAVE A FEW TREES AND "OPT IN"

Sign-up to receive the electronic version of *Voices*



Have you been added to the electronic *Voices* mailing list? We now offer an electronic version of *Voices* on our website, but did you know that you can have that same version sent directly to your email account? You can receive a color version of *Voices* on the date it is published, which means you will receive news much sooner. Not sold yet?

Did I also mention that the electronic version is assessable from your portable internet devices such as a Blackberry, Droid, iPhone, iPad, Kindle and/or Notebook? *Voices* reader Robert Muhlestein, says "I appreciate being able to load *Voices* on my Kindle regularly." Join Robert and be a bit greener and opt out of the paper version by contacting Alesia with the email address where you'd like your *Voices* sent and we'll take you off of our postal service distribution. Save some trees and some time by joining Robert and others by "opting in!"

SHEILA LOCKLEAR IS ODS DIRECTOR

Managing Team concludes successful search

It is with great pleasure that The Open Door School Managing Team announces the appointment of Sheila Locklear as Director effective Nov. 1, 2011. Sheila's years of experience in the Child Development field and her love and knowledge of Open Door School are invaluable. As ODS teacher, Master teacher, Program Coordinator and Interim Director, Sheila has proven that she is wonderfully capable. We are confident that under her leadership ODS will continue to provide excellence in progressive education.



Our sincere thanks to the staff and Parents' Council for providing honest and valuable feedback during the search. The level of support from the entire ODS community is exceptional and irreplaceable.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

Annual Harvest Bake Sale

Sunday, November 20 after each service in Freeman Hall

There promises to be a wide variety of sweets, soups, home-canned goods, and more.



Make sure to bring cash or your checkbook that day so that you can purchase a little snack, or a meal or dessert for later. Citipass coupon books will also be available for purchase. This is always a special fundraiser for Open Door School and an exciting day for food aficionados at the church.

SUNDAYS AT THE UCC

Reminders

Office Closings

UCC Offices will be closed on Thursday, November 24th and Friday, November 25th in observance of The Thanksgiving Holidays.

Voices Schedule

Voices is now on a three-week schedule for the holidays and will resume its normal two week schedule starting January 8, 2011.

Sound Advice: Audio Techs Needed



Charlie Clayton, our soundest member, is looking for help with operating the Sanctuary sound system on Sundays and for special events. "Experience is helpful but not necessary," says Charlie. If you're familiar with laptops and digital projection, that's even better! The pay is low (none really), but it's lots of fun. Contact Charlie Clayton at charlieclayton@windstream.net if you are interested in joining.

Save the Dates:

Here is your one stop place for upcoming events. Below is a listing of upcoming events to mark on your calendars:

Event	Date
Loving Hearts, Loving Hands Craft Party	Saturday, November 19
Thanksgiving Interfaith Service <i>(see pg. 1 for details)</i>	Tuesday, November 22
Office Closings	November 24 & 25
Snacks with Santa	Saturday, December 3
Beyond Categorical Thinking <i>(see pg. 2 for details)</i>	Sunday, December 4
Room In the Inn	starts Sunday, December 4
Hunger Banquet	Saturday, December 10
Celebrating the Solstice <i>(see pg. 1 for details)</i>	Saturday, December 17
Christmas Eve Services	Saturday, December 24 at Services at 6 & 8 pm
Christmas Day Service	Sunday, December 24 th <i>ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 11:15</i>
Office Closings	December 26 & 30
New Year's Day Services	Services at both 9:15 & 11:15

ONGOING GROUP MEETINGS

Newcomers and drop-ins are welcome! For more information about these groups please visit www.uuccharlotte.org and select "Programs/Get Involved."

Meeting	Location	Time	Contact
Bible Workbench	Library	Sundays 5 mins. after first service ends	George Weir (704) 708-4211
Economics and UU Principles	Schweitzer	7:00 p.m. Wednesdays	Paul Gubert (704) 554-0611
Exploring Humanism	Library	7:00 p.m. 2 nd Thursday (December 13 th)	Rich Greene rkgreene66@gmail.com
Jabberwocks	Library	10:00 a.m. 3 rd Friday	Doris Thomas Browder
Lotus Path	Schweitzer	8:00 a.m. Sundays	Richard Kushmaul <i>(see staff listing p.8)</i>
Mystics & Metaphysics	Schweitzer	7:00 p.m. in Schweitzer (November 15 th) NO MEETING IN DECEMBER	Judy Reynolds jlcreynolds@bellsouth.net
Preschool Parent Support Group	Freeman Hall	6:00 p.m. 3 rd Friday (November 18 th)	Mark Fleming (704) 299-6134 flemingma@gmail.com
Sci-Fi Sundays November	Chapel	2:00 pm. 2 nd Sunday (December 11 th) Showing: <i>Incredible Shrinking Man</i>	Bob Gorman gormanr@winthrop.edu
Sunday Morning Meditation	Schweitzer	8:30 a.m. Sundays	Rich Vreeland (704) 290-8620; Debbie George (704) 763-2193
Straight Spouse Support Group	Chapel	7:00 p.m. 1 st Wednesday	Sage Brook (704) 366-7983
Women's Moon Circle	Schweitzer	7:00 p.m. Saturday, December 10 th	Cindy Thomson (704) 968-1404
Women's Support Group	Priestley	7:00 p.m. 2 nd Tuesday	Karen Achor (704) 847-2081
Yoga	Nursery	7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays	Bill Cooke (704) 364-2107

VOICES

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Address Label

"In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now. "

—Wangari Maathai

The deadline for the next **VOICES** is **Sunday, November 27, 2011** for the next issue which will be published on **Wednesday, November 30, 2011**. Please include your name and phone number on your submissions in case there are questions. The *Voices* editor reserves the right to edit all submissions to the newsletter for brevity, grammar, clarity and consistency as space will allow. The preferred submission is by email to: uucc@uuccharlotte.org