

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.

WHERE WE ARE WITH THE ASSISTANT MINISTER SEARCH

The Assistant Minister Selection Team (AMST) has been meeting very regularly, usually weekly for the past 2 months. In between meetings, AMST members have been reading applicants' ministerial records—a detailed summary of academic, professional and life experience that relate to ministerial work. We are glad to share with you that, to date, we have had 11 very interesting and dynamic applicants. Collectively we next decide which applicants we want to exchange packets with—meaning, to whom do we want to send our UUC "resume" and from whom do we want to receive a very detailed resume (some as long as 40+ pages). We have, necessarily, had to determine our own process of decision-making about how to select and de-select applicants.

AMST members felt reasonably confident that as open-minded as we want to be and think we are, we probably still

(Continued on page 4)

ENVISIONING 2015 PREVIEW AND DISCUSSION

Our multiyear plan for the future is, as you know, called "Envisioning 2015." This plan is based firmly on our mission and Congregational Ends and is the result of the Board's listening to you about what needs to happen to achieve our goals. With the board's input, the coordinating team has worked for the last several months to put together a final version of this plan and to suggest the measurements by which we can identify success. That plan is now ready for your final input. Please join us on Thursday, January 5 at 7:00 p.m. for the latest update on our progress. Our discussion will end promptly at 9:00 p.m. and will offer you a chance to both see the thinking which has gone into this plan and to offer any suggestions you'd like.

CATHLEAN UTZIG JOINS BOARD

We are excited to announce that Cathlean Utzig has graciously agreed to fill the remainder of Board Member Eric Blau's term. Cathlean was on the UUC Board that brought Policy Governance to the UUC and will be a wonderful addition to the team. The Board is truly grateful to her for volunteering her time, energy and experience.

After much thought and contemplation, Eric decided to step down from his role as UUC Board Member. Eric came to this decision after a recent change in his job increased the amount of time required of him. This consequently impacted his ability to fully engage as a member of the Board. Eric was in his last year as a Board member and would have rotated off the Board at the end of this term. We thank Eric for his dedication and to the work he has helped us accomplish. If you see Eric around please take the time to thank him for all he has done. We wish him all the best in his new career opportunities.

—Peace, Colleen

Inside this issue:

From the Minister	2
Why I Sing?	3
How are We Doing?	4
An Experience of a Lifetime	5
Free to Choose? Who Owns Me?	6
Luna Rising...It's Time!	8
ODS Parent Education Forum	9
Year-End Tax Considerations	10
Summer is Around the Corner....SUUSI 2012	11

FROM THE MINISTER

Our daughter was in tears in the floor of Freeman Hall, sobbing as I held her. It became a powerful learning experience for me.

The occasion was the recent “Hunger Banquet” sponsored by our Children and Youth Religious Education program and made possible by the youth and their mentors in our Coming of Age program. After paying for the meal, each of us selected a slip of paper on which was written a brief narrative describing our identity for the evening. Both Annie and I drew narratives that relegated us into the impoverished group, representing the significant percentage of the world that experiences food insecurity, housing challenges, deep threats to the fulfillment of their most basic needs.

Nearby was a table of the “wealthy,” just a few participants who’d drawn the fortunate narratives that allowed them to sit at a table, be waited on, have their choice of beverage, enjoy a full meal while being serenaded by musicians.

There was another table of those who were barely getting by. They had jobs, housing of some kind, but were very vulnerable, one lost job, one health challenge, one mishap away from joining those of us in the impoverished camp.

The context was set, a few narratives were read, some jarring statistic offered then the impending meal was described. Again, those deemed “rich” were informed that they would get a full meal with choices. The middle group was told that they would get basic bean burritos, a decent enough repast. Those of us on the floor were told that our entire meal for the evening would consist of a bit of rice and a cup of water.

With that, the tears came. To a five-year-old this seemed completely unfair, cruel even. She had to hear what others were getting, had to watch as they got their food, then had to join the long line of us waiting for a little bowl of rice. She sobbed, clearly deeply bothered by being put in a situation of abject inequality.

After she regained her composure, we ate our rice sitting on the floor in Freeman Hall alongside many others who were deemed poor. We heard some of the other narratives read; got to reflect on our own experiences of poverty. And then, we joined hands to conclude, singing a song of hope that deep in our hearts we would one day overcome this reality.

I’d done this sort of thing before. I’ve read all of the statistics. I’ve seen abject poverty, witnessed it face-to-face. I’ve preached on hunger, given to organizations that fight hunger. The information, the reality wasn’t new to me at all.

What was new was holding a sobbing daughter, so distressed, so confused about what was going on. I had a whole different experience. What if this wasn’t just an educational exercise? What if I actually had to face a daughter who was hungry and who couldn’t understand why she couldn’t have what she saw others getting? What if despite my best efforts I couldn’t find a way to provide adequately for her?

“My heart broke a little on that recent evening in Freeman Hall. I got just a tiny little glimpse into what life is like for so many in the world, in our country, in our own city. It was a powerful experience.”

My heart broke a little on that recent evening in Freeman Hall. I got just a tiny little glimpse into what life is like for so many in the world, in our country, in our own city. It was a powerful experience.

I’m grateful to my colleague Kathleen Carpenter for her leadership of a substantive, expansive program for our children and youth, and, on occasion, their parents as well. I’m grateful for all of you who make this program possible and for the amazing and profound difference you make to our kids. I’m grateful to all of the families here who understand how important participation in our CYRE program is and how what we offer here will change their kids’ lives and their family’s life forever.

I’m newly appreciative to be blessed with way more than enough. In a season so tainted by raging and outrageous consumerism, I’m grateful to be offered a strong, powerful message by my congregation, one that counters the cultural expectation of more and more and more. I’m grateful for all of those in our congregation and beyond who are committed—with your time and your energy and your finances—to help create a more just and equitable world.

I hope this season offers you occasions to pause and be grateful. I hope its many and varied messages of peace and goodwill help you continue to believe that we are co-creators of a world that is becoming a more just and equitable place. I hope, in the depth of winter’s darkness, you see some rays of hope, some star, perhaps, pointing the way.

Peace, Jay

Issues of Joy or Concern may be expressed by filling out a yellow card or by contacting Becky Whittington, Congregational Care Coordinator, at becky@uuccharlotte.org or at (704) 996-9228.

Congregational Concerns

Call (704) 996-9228

Do you or someone you know in our congregation have a concern? Are you anticipating a hospitalization? Have you experienced a death in your family? Do you know some appropriate way we can be involved in helping a member of our congregation?



We now have a special phone number through a special cell phone where you can express such concerns. Either Becky Whittington, our Congregational Care Coordinator, or Jay Leach, our Minister, will have this phone at all times.

The number to call is (704) 996-9228.

Remember Our Friendship Freezer

Our freezer with ready-made meals for those needing them is nearly empty. When you're cooking and baking, make a little extra for our Congregational Care efforts and place it in the stairwell freezer. Stickers are ready for you to indicate the date and contents of your dish.

Thank You UCC Musicians

For Shining Your Light

At this time of year, with Hanukkah and the winter solstice upon us, we celebrate and acknowledge the life-giving light in our lives and give thanks for it.



In his sermon on Sunday, December 18, Jay shared with us his thoughts on physical light as well as figurative light: that which brightens our days. Towards the top of his list was music and I was reminded of the incredible gift we are given weekly by our music program participants – members of our Adult and Chamber Choirs, Chime Ensemble, Children's Choir, Beacon Street, soloists, instrumentalists and musical staff. In the act of making music, they share a piece of their inner light with us, brightening our experience here. Thank you, UCC musicians, for your dedication, countless hours of preparation and for sharing yourself so generously. You light the path before us.

—John Herrick, Director of Music

Why I Sing

As a child, singing was easy and natural and everywhere: at school, while playing, around campfires. Then, singing somehow disappeared. I recently made a conscious choice to bring singing out of the shower and back into my life. Creating music with the choir has brought me joy, laughter, and a deeper connection to spirit and the UU community. Singing again has opened my heart and makes my world brighter.

—Lisa Lackey, a member of the Adult and Chamber Choirs

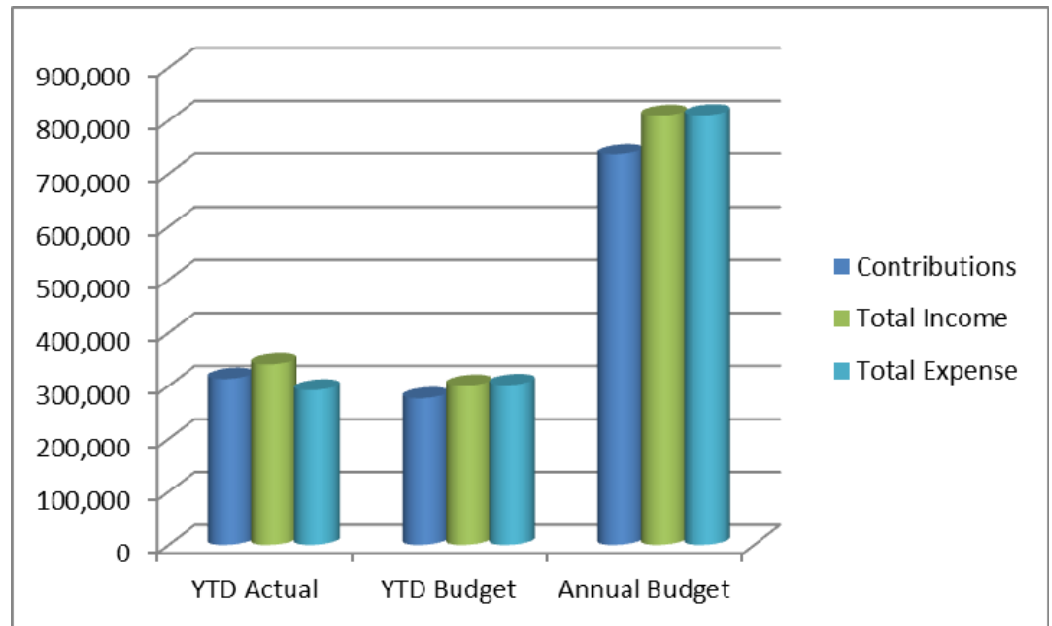
There will be no music program rehearsals the week of December 26. Rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, January 4. Any interested singers are most welcome at the 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir rehearsal. Anyone interested in joining the Chime Ensemble should contact John Herrick for more information.

FINANCES: HOW ARE WE DOING?

Our December results aren't quite ready yet but we can report on our progress through the month of November. So far this year we have collected \$339,764 and have spent \$291,437. This financial picture is slightly ahead of the one we projected but is appropriate for this time of year. Like many retail establishments, our best months tend to be late in the year. Collections and contributions tend to drop off as we enter the New Year.

You can anticipate receiving a statement of your contributions made during this calendar year. These reports will be prepared in January and distributed as soon as they are ready.

If you need additional statements or assistance with our free bank draft, please let us know. As always, please know that we appreciate your support of our mission and programs. Without you and your support none of this would be possible.



("Assistant Minister" continued from page 1)

individually and collectively have a few blinders on regarding our own bias and areas of close-mindedness. Because of our commitment to a fair and truly open search for our Assistant Minister, we met with two "Beyond Categorical Thinking" trainers one evening, invited them to lead the December 4th Sunday services, and joined with some of you that same afternoon in further discussion of the variety of social and cultural bias to which we are all vulnerable.

While none of us can claim to have reached some sort of elevated status in this regard, the AMST wants you to know that we are reading each applicant's record carefully and, if we think there might be a fit, spending more time in review of candidates' packets. We are unlikely to be able to select a candidate that meets our wishes to expand our diversity in every arena possible, nor do we want to reject a candidate because he's a man, she's a woman, a person of color, not a person of color, gay or lesbian, straight, challenged by a physical handicap, not challenged by a physical handicap, too young, too old. We are committed to selecting the individual we think will best meet our significant needs for an Assistant Minister and be best suited to help us make strides towards becoming the community we aspire to be.

Assistant Minister Search Team

Your 2011-2012 Board of Trustees & Contact Information	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Colleen Beale, Chair	board@uccharlotte.org
Greg Schropp, Clerk	board@uccharlotte.org
Michael Elder	board@uccharlotte.org
Kelly Greene	board@uccharlotte.org
Jim Lay	board@uccharlotte.org
Katy Ridnouer	board@uccharlotte.org
Carol Rousey	board@uccharlotte.org
Brad Smith	board@uccharlotte.org
Cathlean Utzig	board@uccharlotte.org

An Experience of a Lifetime

Little could I know what volunteering with the Homeless to Homes program would mean to me when I began three and a half years ago. It sounded like an interesting opportunity, and eight of us from the church joined together to volunteer with a new group of H2H neighbors. Over the years together, we have had potlucks, Bingo games with prizes, picnics, fishing, Christmas stockings and more. Members of our team have enjoyed tutoring neighbors for their university classes and even helped one neighbor get his citizenship.

I have come to firmly believe that with housing, support of a caseworker, and a team of caring folks, our homeless neighbors will turn their lives around. I have taken under my wing one woman – she suffered a stroke a couple of years ago and has been in a nursing home. She has greatly improved and hopes to get an apartment in Moore Place next year. I have enjoyed visiting her - we have a lot of laughs. I have taken her to lunch or a treat of ice cream, to the Imax theater with 3 other H2H women, and most recently joined in celebrating her birthday. Out of the few items I gave her, her favorite was a tea candle lighted by a battery in a small Christmas glass. She was so excited. I marveled at the joy in my friend.

At our recent Holiday Dinner the UUCS team held for 15 H2H neighbors at the church, there was one man who was very quiet and stayed off to himself. I asked the caseworker if he was new to the program. She said no, that he had been in the program for 3 ½ years, but had never come to any of our activities until that night. He had always told the caseworker we seemed like kind people. What a big step for him to come! I hope we will see him again and have a chance to get to know him.

—Sandy Vermillion

Ongoing Social Justice Opportunities

Room in the Inn: Room in the Inn provides a warm bed and 3 meals each day from December through March for our local homeless. As a part of this effort, our congregation provides shelter for 9 adults each Sunday night. If you would like to consider being one of the approximately 20 volunteers who make this shelter happen each week please email Marsha Kelly at riti_marshall@yahoo.com or sign up on the Social Justice bulletin board next to the Chapel.

Men's Shelter's Dinners: Anyone interested in joining this worthwhile and rewarding endeavor, please contact Larry Bennett.

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!

Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte ENDS Statements

As a congregation, we courageously name these ends to which we aspire:

- We are a joyful, dynamic community of people who care about and are connected to each other. Here people are welcomed, heard, included and respected.
- We are a sanctuary for those on a liberal religious path and a beacon of progressive thought and action in the larger Charlotte community.
- We cultivate lives of generosity and responsibility, sharing our personal abundance.
- We are intentionally growing in our diversity as a congregation, each of us working with others to overcome the barriers that divide the human family.
- We strive for peace, justice and equity in our hearts, our interpersonal relationships, our community and our world.

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: OLD OFFERINGS RESUME

For more information or to register for any of the following courses email aresd@uuccharlotte.org or visit the ARES table in Freeman Hall after services on Sundays.

“What is the Right Thing to Do?”

First Sundays at 2:00 p.m. in the Chapel

January 1 — Free to Choose and Who Owns Me

Part 1 –With humorous references to Bill Gates and Michael Jordan, Sandel introduces the libertarian notion that redistributive taxation—taxing the rich to give to the poor—is akin to forced labor.

PART 2 –Students first discuss the arguments behind redistributive taxation. If you live in a society that has a system of progressive taxation, aren't you obligated to pay your taxes?

2nd Sunday Topic Discussion

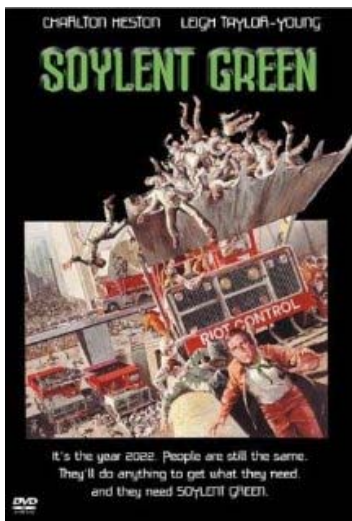
Sunday, January 8th

This will be an opportunity to meet with the Minister to share your thoughts, ask questions, and hear other's views relative to the sermon topic for that day. Begins promptly at 10:30 in the Bernstein Chapel. January Topic: **Pluralism**

Science Fiction Sunday

Showings are at 2:00 p.m. in the Chapel and free-of-charge.

January 8 — *Soylent Green* (1973)



A harrowing look at a future in which overpopulation and global warming has resulted in near-total environmental destruction. With the world facing widespread starvation, the government introduces Soylent Green, a high-protein cracker intended to feed the masses. A New York City cop (Charleton Heston) stumbles across the terrifying secret behind this new foodstuff while investigating the murder of a high-government official. You are what you eat.

Spirit In Practice

The 10 sessions begin Tuesday, January 12th at 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel with Kathleen Moloney-Tarr; Enrollment Limited to 20

Developed in response to many Unitarian Universalist adults' desire to engage in life-giving spiritual practices, ten sessions of *Spirit in Practice* provide avenues for deepening spirituality and affirming spiritual growth. Participants are invited to reflect, share, and grow together, exploring ways to nurture their connections with the sacred in everyday life.

As one in a series of *Tapestry of Faith* curricula for adults, *Spirit in Practice* weaves UU values, principles, and sources with four "strands:" spiritual development, ethical development, faith development and Unitarian Universalist identity development. This interactive experience includes group participation, mini-lecture, stories, singing, individual reflection and application.

Meinrad Craighead:

Praying with Images

Mystics and Metaphysics Documentary & Discussion
Tuesday, January 17th in the Chapel, 6:45-8:30pm

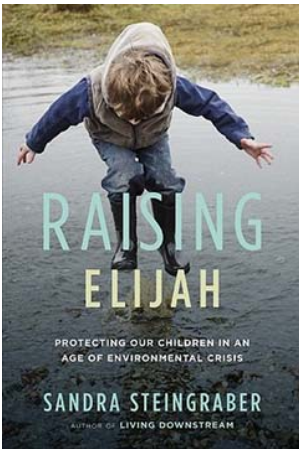
The Mystics & Metaphysics Group invites you to view and discuss the visually and emotionally stirring documentary that chronicles the life and work of a remarkable artist, mystic, and teacher whose sometimes startling work spans centuries and continents. Weaving together elements of Catholicism, Native American shamanism, and ancient mythology, Meinrad Craighead's paintings erupt in expansive images of God as Mother.



As she explains the dreams and shamanic journeys that have often been the inspiration for her art, viewers are introduced to images of the Divine Feminine that have appeared around the globe throughout human history. Craighead discusses the Black Madonna and her lifelong fascination with animals as the sacred emissaries of divine messages. (2009, Amy Kellum, Executive Producer in association with The Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South) Register at the ARES table on Sundays or contact: Carol Smith, smithcarolc@gmail.com.

Raising Elijah

Thursdays beginning January 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel
with June Blotnick



Dr. Sandra Steingraber, biologist, cancer survivor, and author of *Raising Elijah: Protecting Our Children in an Age of Environmental Crisis*, will speak in Charlotte on March 20. In preparation for this event, book clubs around the region are being encouraged to read this book and discuss the issues Steingraber raises. Each chapter focuses on one of the universals of childhood—milk, laundry, playgrounds, pizza—and explores the hidden social, political

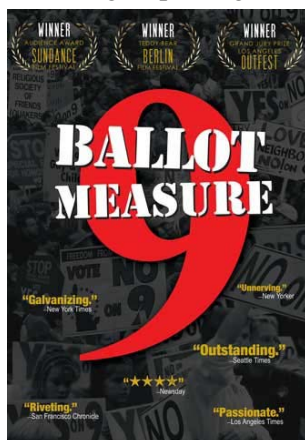
and historical forces behind it. Steingraber demonstrates how closely the intimate, private world of parenting connects to the public world of policymaking and how the ongoing environmental crisis is, fundamentally, a crisis of family life. The group will be led by June Blotnick, Director of Clean Air Carolina, the sponsor of Dr. Steingraber's presentation in March. Guest speakers and co-facilitators will assist June.

Documentary Film Series

Showings are at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary and free-of-charge.

January 20 — *Ballot Measure 9*

Ballot Measure 9 was an anti-gay amendment proposed to Oregon voters in 1992 by the conservative group, Oregon Citizen's Alliance. This documentary goes behind the scenes of the fight to stop Measure 9. It contains portions of anti-gay videos produced by the Citizen's Alliance as well as news clips and interviews with the people who successfully fought passage of Measure 9. Donna Redwing, an outspoken activist for gay rights and a principle actress in the Documentary is scheduled to attend the movie and address the group. She has been labeled "the most dangerous woman in America" by the Christian Coalition for her gay rights activism. Child care provided if registered with the Kathleen Carpenter by Monday, January 16.



This I Believe—This I Practice

Sunday, January 22nd at 10:30 a.m. in the Chapel
Speaker: Susan Cox

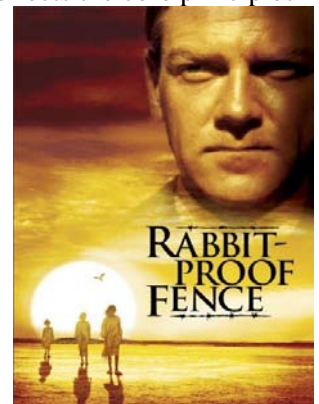
How does one move from unchurched/agnostic/maybe even atheist to spiritual beliefs of reincarnation/karma and a connectivity in the universe? And make all of that fit within the UUCC? Susan Cox has long since grown accustomed to skeptical looks when she talks about her beliefs and no longer feels any need to try to convince anyone she is not crazy. Come hear what helps her make sense of the world in all its glory and pain.

4th Friday Film Series

Showings are at 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary and free-of-charge.

January 27 — *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (Australia, 2002) (Pluralism) –

The Adult Religious Education Committee is continuing the Fourth Friday Film Series which reflects the core principles embodied in the UUCC's ends statement. Directed by Phillip Noyce. Starring Everlyn Sampri, Tianna Sansbury, Laura Monaghan. In 1930s Australia, three half-Aboriginal children begin a death-defying trek across the Outback in defiance of a government policy which decreed that mixed-race children be taken away from their Aboriginal mothers. Rated PG. 94 min



UU History with Loyd Dillon

Sunday, January, 29th at 10:30 a.m. in the Chapel.

The Rev. Theodore Parker was a fiery, controversial Unitarian minister, Transcendentalist and abolitionist whose huge Boston congregation (7,000 members!) included such luminaries as Julia Ward Howe, Louisa May Alcott, William Lloyd Garrison, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. His liberal, reformist writings greatly influenced many then and now and were either paraphrased or quoted by Abraham Lincoln (who collected his sermons), Martin Luther King, Jr. and Betty Friedan. Parker's huge private library (probably the best in Boston) was where Thomas Starr King got most of his education. Let's learn a bit more about this amazing Unitarian man as UUCC member Loyd Dillon continues his series on UU history.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (CYRE)

CYRE Classes Will Be Held on January 1

We'll have a special celebration of the New Year - hope to see you here.

Eat Pancakes and Help Others

For the second year in a row, our high school youth are offering members a chance to contribute to our congregation's Social Justice Fund – simply by eating breakfast! Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 22nd when our hard-working teens will serve up pancakes and all the trimmings for less than you'd pay at IHOP. Details to follow in the next issue of *Voices*.



Luna Rising – It's Time

Festivities Take Place Saturday, January 28th

Tickets for this day-long celebration of women and girls go on sale Sunday, January 1st. This year's event will be held Saturday, January 28th starting at 8:30 a.m. Workshops will include "Praying with Images;" Discover Your Inner Goddess using SoulCollage®; Lives in

Process: The Power of Our Personal Story; The Tricks They Play: How Advertisers Get Girls and Women to Buy In; YOU, A GODDESS - Living In Your Divine Beauty, Power, Wisdom, and Wealth; Nia - Fancy Dancing; Making and Baking Sacred Bread; Candle Magic; Drumming; and Creating Your Own Goddess Crown (for young girls and the young-at-heart).

This is a wonderful event for all ages and particularly for mothers and daughters, aunts and nieces, grandmothers and ... well, you get the drift. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$6 for those under 18 and can be purchased in Freeman Hall beginning January 1st or from Kathleen Carpenter Kathleen@uuccharlotte.org. Please indicate if you can help with our opening and closing ceremonies or with set up or clean up when you purchase your ticket. Luna Rising is open to girls age 6 and older.

Another Worship Experience for All Ages

Volunteers Needed to Help Plan Service

Each year, the CYRE Program is responsible for a worship service. While these services include children and youth in them (along with adults), they are not children's services; they are designed as true multigenerational experiences.

Last year's service introduced us to children who decided they had no choice but to take on the mighty "Toxic Vapors" in a bid to save the world. They challenged the congregation to understand that the purpose of life is not to be happy - but to *matter*, "to make some difference that you have lived." The year before, the congregation witnessed a little boy accidentally leave his teddy bear on a park bench, where it was discovered by a homeless man. We were reminded that our homeless neighbors are real people, just like us in many ways. Another year, we heard the story of a middle school girl from the wrong side of the tracks and her fight against discrimination at her school.

This year, our CYRE services will be Sunday, February 5th. If you are interested in joining the service planning team, please contact Kathleen@uuccharlotte.org. We will meet 3-4 times to discuss goals, brainstorm themes, and think creatively.

Will You Be My Valentine?

Congregation-Wide Secret Valentines Party

Looking for a new friend from another generation, a surrogate grandparent (or grandchild), a cool teen friend for your child? People ages 4 to 104, sign up for our annual Secret Valentines Party before January 22nd, and



you just may find that special someone you've been looking for. Our Cupid Connection Team will pair up Valentine buddies, who then leave secret communications on the bulletin board in CYRE in the weeks leading up to the big reveal.

Mark your calendars for February 11 from 5-7 p.m., when your Secret Valentine will be announced. All ages and stages will join together in Freeman Hall for potluck, games and some love-inspired community building. Look for sign-up sheets on the table immediately inside the CYRE double doors, in Freeman Hall and on the CYRE page at www.uuccharlotte.org. Email janetchaas@gmail.com if you would like to volunteer.

OPEN DOOR SCHOOL (ODS) NEWS

Open Door School will be closed December 23-31.

Open Door School's Parent Education Forum

Thursday, January 12th at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary



On Thursday, January 12, 2012 the Parent Council will host An Evening with Connie Glass @6:30 p.m. in the UUCC Sanctuary. In her book *I Wanted to Marry Emma* (a collection of anecdotal stories from years of teaching at ODS), our Educational Consultant Connie Glass captured the words and ideas of the children along with their delightful spontaneity. Her observations are not only cute and humorous, they are filled with an underlying wisdom and understanding of how children see the world. This will be a festive occasion, with wine and snacks, and is open to friends, family, and UUCC members as well as the ODS community.

Priority Registration

Priority Registration for currently enrolled Open Door School families and UUCC members will begin January 10th and run through February 7th. The registration fee for UUCC members is at a reduced rate. If you might be interested in enrolling your child at Open Door, contact the ODS office. If you have never had a child attend Open Door School, a tour is required prior to registration.

Open House

Prospective Parents, mark your calendar for our annual Open House on February 7, 2012 at 6:30pm. General Registration (open to the public) will begin that night and run through February 28.

Link Your Harris Teeter VIC Card to Support The Open Door School

Link up your H-T VIC card to the Open Door School Account, Code #2752, for this school year. Even if you are linked to another school, you can link up to as many as five schools. Simply present your VIC card to the cashier along with the school code, and the school will receive cash for all H-T products you purchase through May 31. This is something you only have to do once a year. It does not cost you anything, but it could really benefit the school if our entire church community participated in the program rather than only the school parents and staff. The school's fundraising efforts make it possible for us to grant scholarships to needy families and to improve the building, equipment, and playground areas. Our church houses a preschool we can be very proud of--let's all help support it!

Principles & Purposes

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT TRUST

Year-End Tax Considerations

December is the month in which we have the pleasure of giving to whom and what we hold dear. April, alas, is the month we are required to give to the IRS and North Carolina Department of Revenue. Because the UUCC Memorial Endowment Trust is recognized as a 501 (c) (3) charitable fund, your donations to it are tax-deductible.



The holiday season, then, is an excellent time to contribute to the long-term financial strength of our church while taking advantage of the tax benefits. Gifts of appreciated property, stocks, and bonds are particularly attractive in maximizing your ability to give to what you hold dear.

Please consider giving to the Endowment before the end of the year in honor of someone important to you, in memory of a loved one, or just for the satisfaction of supporting the religious community that embodies your deepest, best values.

For questions regarding how you can support the Endowment, contact Dana Hershey, Tom Nunnenkamp, Cathlean Utzig, or Randy Whitt.

The Memorial Endowment Trust provides a perpetual, prudently managed fund for generous legacy giving to support the UUCC, its present and future members, and its liberal religious mission.

Reminders

- ★ **Sunday, December 25th:** We will offer one service at 11:15 AM only. Parents please note that there will no CYRE classes nor childcare offered on Christmas Day.
- ★ **Monday, December 26th and Friday, December 30th:** UUCC Offices will be closed.
- ★ **Sunday, January 1th:** We will hold 2 services at 9:15 & 11:15 a.m. CYRE Classes will be held.
- ★ **Monday, January 16th:** UUCC offices will be closed for the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday.

SUNDAYS AT THE UCC

Help us have fresh flowers in the Niche

Did you know that most of the ordered flowers for the niche on Sunday are locally and sustainably grown? Jane Henderson, who makes these arrangements state, "I grow most of what is used in the church arrangements, locally, sustainably grown flowers (and vegetables)...I try to extend my seasons using unheated greenhouses and a makeshift greenhouse . . . they fit UU values in general." So acknowledge that special occasion while adhering to UU values. Commemorate a birthday, an anniversary or acknowledge a special person or event by donating fresh flowers for the niche. Call Alesia in the office (704) 366-8623 to reserve the Sunday you want. Then send a check for \$43 to the office, and we'll handle the rest.

Podcasts of Jay's Sunday Sermons Available on UUCC Website

If you have missed a recent Sunday service or you would like would like to hear a podcast of just Jay's Sunday sermons, please visit or website at http://www.ucccharlotte.org/all_podcasts.asp. Sermons are also available on iTunes and our RSS feed.

VISITOR'S CORNER

"Getting to Know Us"

Sunday, January 1st

Every 1st Sunday after each service, visitors are invited to an informal Q&A with a long-standing UU Church of Charlotte member. Grab a cup of coffee from Freeman Hall and meet downstairs in the Chapel immediately following either 1st or 2nd service. Hear about another person's journey to finding her/his spiritual home here at the UUCC.

"Meet the Minister"

Sunday, January 15th

You've seen him behind the pulpit...now here's an opportunity for visitors to get to know Jay Leach on a more personal level. Stop by the minister's study for an informal chat on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 10:30 AM.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

Open Mind Book Club

Monday, January 2nd

The Open Mind Book Club will meet on Monday, January 2nd at 7:30pm in the Library. We will be discussing *Crossing to Safety* by Wallace Stegner. Please RVSP to Gwynne Movius at (704) 366-9409 if you plan to attend.

Outdoor Adventure Group's

January Hike

Saturday, January 7th

The next hike will be Saturday, January 7th when we will meet at 8am in the UUC Charlotte parking lot and head to the Uhwarrie Forest, returning to Charlotte after 6:00 p.m. Please dress appropriately, bring snacks, lunch and water. Questions contact Rita Heath-Singer at (704) 364-6333 or jsinger@carolina.rr.com.



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."

Sure It's Only December – But Summer is Around the Corner

SUUSI 2012: July 15-21

With people planning their summer vacations months in advance, we wanted to make sure you have the dates for this year's Southeast Unitarian Universalist Summer Institute (SUUSI) as soon as possible. This second largest gathering of UUs in the world will be held July 15-21 in Radford, VA – a mere 2.5 hours from Charlotte. Come experience the fun at this all-ages-summer-camp that includes something for everyone- from dancing and nature trips to worship and workshops! More details will follow. Or contact Lisa Lackey.

Why go to SUUSI? The biggest reason heard over and over from participants is the community. "I go to be with 'my family'--friends and people who accept me", says 17 year old Charles Sterner who has attended for over 12 years.

Straight Spouse Support Group

First Tuesday of each Month

This is a group to provide personal, confidential support to straight spouses or partners, current or former, of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender mates and mixed-orientation couples. We meet in the library on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. If you would like more information about this group contact Sage Brook.

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 (January 12 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 (see staff listing p.8)
Parabola Series	Schweitzer	7:00 p.m. Tuesday, January 10 th	Carol Smith smithcarolc@gmail.com
Preschool Parent Support Group	Freeman Hall	6:00 p.m. 3 rd Friday (January 20 th)	Mark Fleming (704) 299-6134 flemingma@gmail.com
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
What is the Right Thing to Do?	Chapel	2:00 p.m. 1 st Sunday	Bob Gorman gormanr@winthrop.edu Vivian Brenner socklady@aol.com
Women's Moon Circle	Schweitzer	7:00 p.m. Monday, January 9 th	Cindy Thomson (704) 442-2915
Women's Support Group	Priestley	7:00 p.m. 2 nd Tuesday	Karen Achor (704) 847-2081
Yoga	Sigismund	7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays	Bill Cooke (704) 364-2107

VOICES

Volume 36, Issue 22

USPS 346-850

Published biweekly by the

Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte

234 N Sharon Amity Rd

Charlotte NC 28211-3004

Postmaster: Please send address corrections to above.

Periodical
Non-Profit Organization
Postage Paid
Charlotte, NC

Church Office hours:

Monday – Friday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Phone: (704) 366-8623 / fax: (704) 366-8812

E-mail: uucc@uuccharlotte.org

Website: <http://www.uuccharlotte.org>

Kathleen Carpenter: *Director of Religious Education for Children and Youth*

ext. 225 e-mail: kathleen@uuccharlotte.org

Donna Fisher: *Children's Choir Director*

email: donnfish@bellsouth.net

John Herrick: *Director of Music*

ext. 230 e-mail: john@uuccharlotte.org

Alesia Hutto: *Administrative Assistant*

ext. 221 e-mail: alesia@uuccharlotte.org

Richard Kushmaul: *Adult Religious Education/Spiritual Development Coordinator*

ext. 229 e-mail richard@uuccharlotte.org

Rev. James C. Leach: *Minister*

Ext. 223 e-mail: jay@uuccharlotte.org

Rev. Melissa Mummert: *Affiliated Community Minister*

Courtney McLaughlin: *Membership Coordinator*

ext. 231 (messages only)

e-mail: courtney@uuccharlotte.org

Belinda Parry: *Administrative Assistant*

ext. 224 email: belinda@uuccharlotte.org

Jeter Walker: *Director of Administration*

ext. 222 e-mail: jeter@uuccharlotte.org

Scott Whitesell: *Accompanist*

email: seguenc@aol.com

Becky Whittington: *Congregational Care Coordinator*

Congregational Care Line: (704) 996-9228

email: becky@uuccharlotte.org

Open Door School (ODS)

Phone: (704) 364-1521

Sheila Locklear, Director

e-mail: sheila.locklear@opendoorschool.org

Address Label

The deadline for the next **VOICES** is

Sunday, January 8, 2011 for the next issue which will be published on **Wednesday, January 11, 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