



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.



HOLIDAY HEADQUARTERS

Thanksgiving is over and the holidays are upon us. Whether you like to celebrate in a more traditional style or if you like to give back to others during this time of the year, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte has a variety of events and activities to suit those needs.

EVENTS

Hunger Banquet

Saturday, December 10th, 6:00 p.m.

The Coming of Age youth are pleased to offer church members an alternative to this “gimmme, gimmme” 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 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.

Celebrating the Solstice

Saturday, December 17th at 6:30 p.m.

Count on joining our UUCC community for a contemporary worship service to mark the winter solstice on Saturday, December 17. The experiential celebration for the whole congregation will begin at 6:30 p.m. in Freeman Fellowship Hall with the making of “message of hope” ornaments, coordinated by Carol Smith. A procession will then take eve-

ryone to the memorial garden terrace for a moment of reflection amidst the darkness. Participants will then be led back into the building and sanctuary for a celebration of hope and the return of light. Jay Leach, John Herrick and members of the congregation will lead the service. Music will be offered by the Chamber Choir and Beacon Street, in addition to lots of congregational singing. The service will conclude at 7:30 p.m. with a dessert potluck in Freeman Hall.

UUCC will be collecting canned food items (*see “Can you Help” on p. 5 for specific needs*) before the service. In addition, please bring a potluck dessert contribution and a jacket for the brief amount of time outdoors. Plan to arrive in plenty of time for parking and to participate in the ornament activity. Childcare will be offered for very young children beginning at 6:15 p.m., but must be reserved by contacting CYRE Director Kathleen Carpenter by Tuesday, December 13.

Kathleen will need the names and ages of your children.



Christmas Eve Services

Saturday, December 24th starting at 6:00 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m. we will offer a kid-friendly service that will include singing, the telling of the Christmas Story, and a concluding candle lighting carol. At 7:00 p.m., enjoy a cup of hot cider and some treats at our annual Christmas Eve Reception hosted by the UUCC Board of Trustees. Please contribute a dessert bite or a savory nibble from your home

(Continued on page 5)

FROM THE MINISTER

They started back in mid-September as an unlikely company of urban campers, pitching their tents in a concrete park in lower Manhattan. They were galvanized around a deep sense of discontent. They expressed certain concerns but not in ways that translated into a simple list of grievances or demands. Initially they were, for the most part, ignored. But, to the surprise of many, they had staying power. They had come to “occupy” and occupy they did, day after day and night after night.

The spark lit at the gates of Wall Street kindled a flame and the flame spread. New cities, new towns, new locations, new occupy-ers. Within a few weeks it was no longer possible to ignore them. There were efforts to deride them, efforts to co-opt them, efforts to reduce them to something that would fit the diminished attention span on what now passes for the nightly news. Through it all, they stayed on.

Now, some aspect of this movement shows up in every newspaper, every news report, every news show every day. It is now the subject of deeper analysis. What is the Occupy Movement about? What effect will it have on who we are and how we are?

The ultimate verdict on the Occupy Movement is obviously still out. Will it be a seasonal flare-up that diminishes and then disappears? Can it survive in its present form, radically oriented around consensus? Will it take on a more familiar structure, organized as something more easily recognizable and identifiable? Might it foster substantive societal change?

Here are some of my reflections on what I am reading and hearing about the Occupy Movement to this point:

- I am pleased that they are asking a critically important question and are giving dramatically heightened attention to one of the most pressing tensions in our nation: how do we distribute the wealth that we, collectively, create? “Markets aren’t ‘natural,’” a recent article in *The Nation* reminds us. Rules and regulations “can be written and rewritten to either promote or fight inequality.” The Occupy Movement is prompting new discussions about how we have and will control our financial system. That is most certainly a good thing.
- While they may not be offering some simple answer to this dilemma, they are clear in their declaration that our

current financial system is unjust and immoral. I agree with them that a system fostering gross inequity and gross inequality is morally untenable.

- I appreciate the fact that, with very few exceptions, this movement has conducted itself creatively and with dignity. Even in the face of indignity, it appears that the overwhelming majority of those connected with the Occupy Movement have been non-violent and respectful. There is a difference between vigorous, even disruptive dissent and destructive abuse. With tens of thousands of participants, remarkably most have consistently opted for the former and avoided the later.

“Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted, the indifference of those who should have known better, the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most that has made it possible for evil to triumph.”

Haile Selassie as he opened a special session of the UN General Assembly, 4 Oct 1963

- I applaud the Occupy Movement’s refusal to align itself in any way with either of the two major political parties. They seem to be quite aware of the fact that Democrats and Republicans have colluded in creating our current system in which rules and regulations written over the past three decades have contributed to dramatically increased inequality.

• I’m deeply impressed with how often they are using the word “responsibility.” Luis Rodriguez, local participant in Occupy Charlotte (and a UUC member) explained in a Charlotte *Observer* editorial: “For those still wondering what the Occupy Movement is all about, I can sum it up in one word: responsibility.” A statement from Occupy Wall Street urged “we must take responsibility for how things are and for how they could be.”

- I am intrigued by the Occupy Movement’s efforts to convey part of their message in the very way they are organized. In opting for radical inclusion and energetic, participatory democracy and in striving for substantive consensus they are suggesting not only an important agenda but a way to address that agenda.

I am not offering some unfettered endorsement of every single thing that has taken place or that is being said under the enormous umbrella of the Occupy Movement. However, like many others, I hear from this movement deep and resounding echoes of liberal religion’s longstanding call for justice and equity. As such, I’m impressed with and grateful for the courage and engagement of the Occupy Movement. May they continue engaging and disturbing us all.

—Peace, Jay

CONGREGATIONAL CARE ITEMS

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, our
Congregational Care Line.

T“True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.”

Martin Luther King, Jr. from *Beyond Vietnam: A Time To Break the Silence*, April 4, 1967

MUSIC NEWS

A Musical December

Along with winter comes a wealth of seasonal music, from secular to sacred, sleigh songs to solstice chants, holiday ditties to Christmas carols. You'll have a chance to witness a sampling this December with the musical offerings at UUC. You're even invited to join the Adult Choir for the month, if singing from the pews doesn't scratch that musical itch! The Adult Choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. See John Herrick for more information.

Musical Offerings:

- **Sunday, December 11th:** Adult Choir sings “Life Has Loveliness to Sell,” based on a poem by Sara Teasdale and set to music by David C. Dickau.
- **Saturday, December 17th:** UUC Chamber Choir and

Beacon Street lead the congregation in a rousing celebration of the winter solstice.

- **Sunday, December 18th:** “Seventh Son” from the Gay Men’s Chorus of Charlotte sings in both services.
- **Saturday, December 24th:** Children’s Choir sings at the 6 p.m. service; Adult Choir and Chime Ensemble for the 8 p.m. service; special selections and traditional Christmas carols are planned.

A fun musical fact: “Jingle Bells,” one of the best known and commonly sung winter songs (it was also the first song broadcast from space!), was written by Unitarian Music Director James Lord Pierpont while he was serving a congregation in Savannah. The Unitarian Church of Savannah is also known as “The Jingle Bells Church.”



WHY WE CONTRIBUTE

About once every quarter we have the opportunity to review how we're doing in terms of pledge income. We prepare pledge progress statements to let people know where they stand in terms of keeping their annual pledge current. These statements are a part of our communications to you to let you know what's going on in terms of the business of operating our congregation.

Occasionally I have reactions from members that question the necessity of pledging or even of contributing resources at all. It makes me scratch my head and wonder how these questioners imagine that we can do what we do without significant support. It takes a lot to make our congregation operate and everyone's help is needed.

Our bylaws require that all members make a financial contribution of record. No amount is specified and we leave the degree of commitment up to the individual member. If, in the course of a year or more, we have received no contributions, we need to question whether or not that particular person wishes to continue in membership. Occasionally I am required to send letters to such members and it isn't a job I particularly enjoy.

(Continued on page 4)

(*"Why We Contribute"* continued from page 3)

That makes my gratitude for the support that you offer all the greater and particularly during the season of Thanksgiving. Your support of our congregation has made possible things we could only dream of 10 years ago and is undoubtedly making a great deal of difference in the lives of the members of our congregation. Please note that your support is appreciated and that it is making a profound impact on our community. Thank you for all you do.

Jeter Walker, Director of Administration

"There is enough in the world for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed."

Mahatma Gandhi

ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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

"The Ancestry of the Star Goddess"

Women's Moon Circle; December 10th, 6:00 pm, Chapel

Join us on this night as we celebrate the starlit glory of a cold, clear December night sky. Archetypally, women have long been associated with the moon, the night and the ocean, giving birth to the world. Anthropologically, each evolving culture has revered its own generation of the Star Goddess to watch over them and offer guidance and protection. Ancient seafarers on their night sea journeys have called upon Isis, just as 19th century seamen called on Mother Mary. From the Sumerian



Inanna down through the Jewish Matronit to Mary Magdalene. From the Egyptian Nut to the Greek Artemis, Roman Vesta and Celtic Brigid--She of a Thousand Names. *"Hear the words of the Star Goddess, the dust of whose feet are the hosts of Heaven, whose body encircles the universe: I who am the beauty of the green earth and the white moon among the stars and the mysteries of the waters, I call upon your soul to arise and come unto me."* (from *Charge of the Goddess*," In lieu of something for the altar, please bring something for the table--a cozy holiday refreshment for our cold pre-winter night (even if it comes from the store!). More info, contact Melissa Ritchie or Cindy Thomson.

2nd Sunday Topic Discussion

Sunday, December 11

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. December Topic: **Wonder**

Science Fiction Sunday

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

December 11 —

Ted Chiang, "Hell Is the Absence of God"

This Hugo and Nebula award-winning novelette asks the question, "What would the world be like if heaven, hell, and God were a matter of certainty?" (**Note: A copy of this reading will be provided prior to the session.**)

PARTNER CHURCH FUNDRAISER

The Partner Church Team thanks the generous members of UUC for participating in the recent, successful, annual fund drive. Over \$1800 in donations were received which will be sent to our Partner Church in Szabed, Romania for use in essential Church infrastructure repairs, operations, and outreach programs. The team would also like to thank the nine UUC chefs who baked the outstanding Hungarian-Romanian cakes for the fundraiser concert reception. The team sends a special thanks to Tanja Bechtler, Rosemary Furniss and John Herrick for their wonderful musical contributions.

For the latest correspondence from our partner church minister, Sandor and his wife, Tunde, recent photos from the life of the Szabed congregation, and/or information on 2012 pilgrimage trips to Romania stop by the Partner Church table Sunday, December 11.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (CYRE)

Our Whole Lives Sexuality Classes

For Elementary OWL Classes; December 11

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.

The orientation for the two younger classes will be held December 11th at 1:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. It is not mandatory but recommended.

(*"Holiday Headquarters"* continued from page 1)

to share. Help us help the environment; let's forgo the forks! Your food contributions will be collected in Freeman Hall prior to the first service. We are looking forward to yet another opportunity to build community and to celebrate the season. Join us! (If you are attending the 8:00 service, please note that the reception will end at 7:45.) The 8:00 p.m. service is our adult-focused service with carols and readings, plus selections from the Chime Ensemble and Adult Choir directed by John Herrick and accompanied by Scott Whitesell. Both services conclude with candle-lighting and the singing of "Silent Night."

Christmas Day Service

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.

ACTIVITIES

Room in the Inn

December 4th, 2011—March 25th, 2012

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, and our first date this season will be December 4th. 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 ri-ti_marshallkelly@yahoo.com or sign up on the Social Justice bulletin board next to the Chapel.



CAN You Help?

The UCC Food Bank currently serves 25 families with 22 children at our two monthly food distributions. We also serve 15 Seniors who are living on fixed incomes (Social Security). Recently it has been reported that there are food shortages at our local food pantries.

Your regular donations of canned goods and non-perishables helps off set those shortages here at the UCC food bank. Below is a listing of items that are needed most:

- Canned foods with protein (tuna, salmon, stews, chunky soups, ravioli, sardines). Water-packed and low sodium are healthier choices.
- Canned vegetables - green beans, corn, baked beans, etc.
- Canned fruits - light or no-sugar added are best
- Powdered milk, coffee.
- Pastas, rice.
- Dry mixes (like hamburger helper, mac and cheese, etc.)
- Dry cereals - healthy ones, without lots of sugar and frostings.
- Juice packs - ones that are 100% juice.

Habitat for Humanity

Saturday, December 17th at 8:00 a.m.

We will meet at the work site at 8 a.m. To register please go to www.habitatcharlotte.org/unitarian-church. Questions, contact Volunteer Coordinator, Stephanie Murphy at smurphy@habitatcharlotte.org, or (704) 716-7077.

Men's Shelter's Dinners

Thursday, December 22nd at 3:30 p.m.

Anyone interested in joining this worthwhile and rewarding endeavor, please contact Larry Bennett at BennettLH@hotmail.com. Dinners are served off site at the Uptown Men's Shelter



MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT TRUST

New Chalice Society Members

The Memorial Endowment Trust provides a perpetual, prudently-managed fund for generous giving to support the Unitarian Universalist Church of Charlotte, its present and future members, and its liberal religious mission.

The UUCM Memorial Endowment Trust Board of Trustees wishes to express its appreciation to the following members of our congregation who have joined the Chalice Society in the past year by naming the Endowment as a beneficiary in their estate planning documents:

Phyllis Bertke
Judy Jones
Cathy and Dan Neuspiel
Anne Todd
Carter and Cathlean Utzig
Barbara and Bill Whitman

When Phyllis Bertke was asked what prompted her to make this commitment to the long-term vitality of our church, she responded:

How could I not? The UUCM is home and family. It is where I go for friendship, support, laughs, and inspiration. All that I receive from my membership here is my wish for future generations.

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

“Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration.”

Abraham Lincoln, Dec. 3, 1861

“Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”

Nelson Mandela, speaking at the launch of Britain's Make Poverty History campaign

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome New Members:

Annie Flint

Lee & Cyndi Martinec

VISITOR'S CORNER

“Meet the Minister”

Sunday, December 18th

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, December 5th

The Open Mind Book Club will meet on Monday, December 5th at 7:30pm in the Library for our holiday gathering. Please bring a poem to share that has special meaning for you and a used book to exchange.

Upcoming Book: January 2nd: *Crossing to Safety* by Wallace Stegner.

Outdoor Adventure Group's December Hike

Saturday, December 10th



The next hike will be Saturday, December 10th when we will meet at 8am in the UUC Charlotte parking lot and head to the Wilson Creek area, returning to

Charlotte after 6:00 p.m. Please dress appropriately, bring snacks, lunch and water. Questions contact Rita Heath-Singer.

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
Room In the Inn	Starts Sunday, December 4 th
Hunger Banquet	Saturday, December 10 th
Celebrating the Solstice (see pg. 1 for details)	Saturday, December 17 th
Christmas Eve Services	Saturday, December 24 th Services at 6 & 8 pm
Christmas Day Service	Sunday, December 25 th ONE SERVICE ONLY AT 11:15
Office Closings	December 26 th & 30 th
New Year's Day Services	Services at both 9:15 & 11:15 CYRE Classes will be held
Open Door School's Parent Education Forum	Thursday, January 12 th , 2012 at 6:30 p.m.
Office Closing (MLK)	Monday, January 16 th , 2012
Luna Rising: A Celebration of Womyn & Girls	Saturday, January 28 th at 8:30 a.m.

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 8 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)
Mystics & Metaphysics	Schweitzer	NO MEETING IN DECEMBER	Judy Reynolds jlcreynolds@bellsouth.net
Parabola Series	Schweitzer	7:00 p.m. Tuesday, December 13 th	Carol Smith smithcarolc@gmail.com
Preschool Parent Support Group	Freeman Hall	6:00 p.m. 3 rd Friday (December 16 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 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

Volume 36, Issue 21

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, December 18, 2011 for the next issue which will be published on **Wednesday, December 21, 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